

## DeKalb County School Board of Education Norms and Standards (2013)

### Introduction:

As a collective body of the DeKalb County Board of Education, we value public education and embrace the opportunity to serve as responsible stewards in partnership with the superintendent, administrators, teachers, staff, families, and other community stakeholders. We strive to establish an educational system of excellence, which fosters high academic achievement for all students. We recognize that we are accountable for our actions, as well as our decisions. We will act in a manner which promotes responsibility, accountability, decisiveness, and transparency as we carry out our duties as servant leaders of the DeKalb County Board of Education. To this end, we will work collaboratively, forming coalitions and not engage in competition. We will operate as a collective unit and engage in professional development as a board and as individuals. In the areas of board interaction, community engagement, communications, and time management we commit to the following guiding principles.

- **Board Interactions**
  - **We will treat each other with respect at all times by being cordial and engaging in active listening.**  
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  - **We will respect differences and opinions of other board members.**  
We will build trusting relationships by engaging in courteous, open and honest dialogue.
  - **We will exhibit respect for each other at all times.**  
We will respect differences and opinions of other board members as demonstrated in our communications.
  - **We will practice active listening. We will be aware of nonverbal as well as verbal behaviors and we will be accountable for self-behaviors and their impact on board activities.**  
We will be accountable for self-behaviors. Being mindful of our nonverbal as well as verbal behaviors as we understand the implications of our demeanor.
- **Communication & Constituent Interactions**
  - **We will respect staff, employees, parents, students and other stakeholders verbally and nonverbally at all times.**  
We will verbally and nonverbally respect all individuals and groups reporting to the board, attending meetings, and in our daily interactions, including other board members, the superintendent, administrators, teachers, staff, parents, and other stakeholders.
  - **We will speak with one voice.**  
We will respect different opinions of each board member; engage in compromising and consensus until we reach a decision as a collective board, while supporting the decision in words and actions, privately and publicly.
  - **We will recognize and respect a single official voice as that of the board chair (or vice chair, as appropriate).**

The chair (or vice chair, as appropriate) will respond to any and all official and public inquiries directed to the full board; providing official statements and responses on behalf of the full board.

- **We will speak with clarity about the role of the board.**  
We will respect and remain mindful of the different roles within the school system, including, but not limited to the school board, the superintendent, the administration, teachers, and staff.
- **We will seek to understand and respect diverse opinions and perspectives espoused by board members and others.**  
We will respectfully engage in effective listening as we seek to gain understanding and clarity of different opinions put forth by board member and others.
- **We will assist parents, the community and other stakeholders in following the designated protocol for the chain of command.**  
We will inform and guide parents, the community and stakeholders of the stated protocol in following the chain of command when dealing with issues and concerns within the DeKalb County School District. (i. e. Principal, Regional Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, Superintendent)

#### **Interaction with District Administrators & Staff**

- **We will do our best to remain informed of incidents within the District.**  
We will review information pertaining to the District regarding incidents and occurrences within the District, as much as possible, to remain informed.
- **We will recognize that the Superintendent is the only employee that reports directly to the Board of Education.**  
We will not assume the role of evaluators or administrators in working with staff within the DeKalb County School District. This is the role of the Superintendent.
- **We will not attend staff meetings and/or staff training unless invited.**  
We will only attend any and all staff functions if and when invited by staff.
- **We will respect all administrators and staff of the DeKalb County School District.**  
We will show respect to all personnel, administrators and staff, in words and deeds, respecting their feelings, opinions and their thoughts. We will not engage in bullying tactics.

#### **Interpersonal Relationships**

- **We will engage in continuous interpersonal learning and growth.**  
We will engage in responsible, intentional, and continuous relationship building with board members, the superintendent, the administration, teachers, staff, and other stakeholders.
- **We will support and build effective interpersonal relationships with the superintendent.**  
We will work consistently to respect, support, and empower the superintendent as he carries out his duties to the school district and the community.
- **We will engage in culture building.**

We will strive to become culturally competent, respecting the cultural difference of board meetings and others.

- **We will build trusting relationships.**  
We will strive to encourage open and honest communication with board members, the superintendent, the administration, teachers, staff, parents, students, and other stakeholders on a consistent and continuous basis.
- **We will form board cohesion.**  
We will strive to work with board members with a spirit of harmony, cooperation, respect, and connectedness.
- **We will work to empower the board as a whole, to carry out its responsibilities.**  
We will consistently work to encourage and support the board during the course of carrying out its duties.

#### • **Time Management**

- We will use best efforts to be on time for all meetings and when unable to do so to provide the chair and staff with notice of said delay.
- When late or absent board members will assume responsibility to be briefed on the items or information missed.
- We will read all materials provided in preparation for all regularly scheduled board meetings.
- We will respect each other's time, by being brief in our comments, adhering to reasonable time constraints and avoiding the repetition of comments already made by other board members.
- We will not rush discussions or deliberations for personal reasons
- We respect time allotted for all presentations at board meetings and if the allotted time has ended we will follow Robert's Rules of Order for extending the discussion.

#### **Media and Public Relations**

- **We will speak with one voice.**  
We will respect different opinions of each board member; engage in compromise and consensus until we reach a decision as a collective board, while supporting the decision in words and actions, privately and publicly.
- **We will recognize and respect a single official voice as that of the board chair (or vice chair, as appropriate).**  
The chair (or vice chair, as appropriate) will respond to any and all official and public inquiries directed to the full board; providing official statements and responses on behalf of the full board.
- **We will speak with clarity about the role of the board.**

We will respect and remain mindful of the different roles within the school system, including, but not limited to the school board, the superintendent, the administration, teachers, and staff.

– **We will engage in constructive communication with the media**

We will ensure that any communication with the media about the DeKalb County School District is helpful, and not harmful.