



Board Policy BBD:
Board-School Superintendent Relations

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This policy establishes the roles, responsibilities, and working relationship between the DeKalb County Board of Education and the superintendent to ensure effective governance, accountability, and a shared focus on improving student outcomes and organizational performance.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Board of Education

The board serves as the legislative, judicial, and evaluative body responsible for setting policies, approving budgets, and ensuring the district's strategic goals are met. The board will:

- Operate in a transparent, collaborative, and ethical manner at all times.
- Focus on policymaking, long-term planning, and oversight.
- Approve budgets, set tax millage rate, review financial reports and audits, and monitor district financial health.
- Support the superintendent in carrying out board policies while refraining from micromanaging operational matters.
- Evaluate the superintendent's performance annually in alignment with district's strategic plan and established evaluation criteria.
- Engage with the community, seek input, and maintain open communication about district matters.
- See also Board Policy BH: Board Code of Ethics.

2. Superintendent

The superintendent serves as the chief executive officer of the district and is responsible for implementing board policies, overseeing daily operations, and managing staff. The superintendent will:

- Operate in a transparent, collaborative, and ethical manner at all times.
- Develop and recommend policies, budgets, and strategic plans to the board.
- Develop administrative regulations and implement board policies in alignment with the district's strategic plan.
- Effectively manage district operations and promote a positive organizational culture.
- Evaluate and develop staff to ensure instructional excellence and positive student outcomes.
- Represent the district to the community, advocate for public education, and maintain positive relationships with stakeholders.
- Serve as secretary to the board and be present at all meetings of the board, except when the superintendent's contract, salary, or performance is under consideration.

Communication and Collaboration

To develop and maintain a productive and effective relationship between the board and the superintendent, both the board and the superintendent will communicate in a manner that is honest and transparent and builds upon mutual respect and trust.

1. Communication Protocols

- Board members and the superintendent will communicate with each other in a timely manner and make reasonable efforts to avoid surprises.
- The superintendent will provide the board with accurate, relevant, and complete information on all matters of concern, including operational updates and educational trends.
- Board members will seek to be well-informed and direct requests for information or clarification to the superintendent. See also Board Policy BBI: Board-Staff Relations.
- Information requested by one board member that is related to pending board action will be shared with the entire board to ensure transparency.
- The superintendent will provide a calendar of district events and activities to the board to facilitate participation and foster connections with the community.
- The superintendent will notify the board promptly of any emergencies or incidents that may significantly impact the district, its schools, or its students.

2. Communication Frequency

- The superintendent and board chair will meet at least weekly, unless waived by both individuals.
- The superintendent will meet with individual board members at least twice per month, unless waived by both individuals.
- The board and superintendent will meet for teambuilding activities at least once per year.
- The superintendent will attempt to balance communication equally between all board members, with the following exceptions:
 - The superintendent will meet more frequently with the chair and vice chair
 - The superintendent may choose to meet more frequently with new board members

3. Mutual Support

- The board and superintendent will work collaboratively to achieve the district's goals and improve student outcomes.
- The board and superintendent will share credit and responsibility for district successes and failures.
- Board members and the superintendent will make reasonable efforts to protect the integrity and positive image of the district by criticizing privately and praising publicly.
- Board members will respect the superintendent's role as the educational leader and decision-maker in operational matters.
- The superintendent will respect the board's role as the governing body and will implement its policies with fidelity.
- Communication between the board and superintendent should be courteous and professional.

Evaluation and Accountability

1. Superintendent Evaluation

The board will conduct an annual formal evaluation of the superintendent. This evaluation will include the following steps:

- Collaborative goal setting
- Superintendent self-evaluation
- Midyear check-in and assessment
- Direct-report leadership feedback
- Final evaluation by the board
- Contract and compensation review

The board's evaluation of the superintendent will be guided by the following principles:

- Goals will be clearly outlined and developed with input from both the board and the superintendent.
- Midyear check-in and final evaluation will allow opportunities for a dialog between board members and the superintendent.
- The superintendent will have an opportunity to respond to board feedback, including the final evaluation.
- The final evaluation will be provided in writing and will identify areas for continued professional growth and development.

2. Board Self-Evaluation

The board will engage in an annual self-evaluation, guided by an independent facilitator. Based on the results of the self-evaluation, the board will develop an action plan, to ensure continuous improvement of district governance and board operations. The self-evaluation will include the following domain areas, which are outlined in the Georgia State Board of Education Standards for Effective Governance:

- Governance structure
- Strategic planning
- Board and community relations
- Policy development
- Board meetings
- Personnel
- Financial governance
- Ethics

3. Conflict Resolution and Dismissal of Superintendent

- Disagreements or conflicts between the board and the superintendent will be addressed promptly and professionally.
- The board chair and superintendent will work together to resolve issues or engage a neutral mediator to maintain a positive working relationship.
- Dismissing the superintendent should be considered only as a last resort, following a thorough review of concerns and attempts to address issues collaboratively.