

# Mercer County CUSD #404 Board of Education

## ***Board Agreements***

**Approved**

**10-21-20**

### **1. Handling Staff Resignations:**

When a staff member wishes to resign, they must submit a Resignation Form to accompany their written letter of resignation. The form clarifies the terms of resignation, with a date and signature of the person resigning. The form is found on the District website.

### **2. Staff Addressing the Board:**

- A. First, staff members must follow the chain of command with issues. See the Building Principal with concerns, then Superintendent if it cannot be resolved with the Principal. The Board is the last level to address.
- B. Any requests to speak before the Board in closed session must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent at least 7 days prior to the monthly School Board meeting. In the request, staff members must give a detailed explanation of the issue they want addressed and who will be in attendance with them.
- C. The Board has the right to reject staff requests to speak in closed session.

### **3. Placing Items on the Monthly Agenda:**

If a Board Member has an item they wish to be placed on the next monthly Board meeting agenda, they are to submit their request in writing to either the Board President or Superintendent. The items will be discussed at the monthly Board President / Superintendent Agenda meeting.

4. **Board Members Asking Questions about Agenda Items:**

If any Board Member has a question concerning monthly Board meeting agenda items, they should submit those questions to the Superintendent in writing. This allows the Superintendent to be able to answer those questions quickly and immediately forward them to all board members.

5. **Communication Between Board Members:**

- A. A Board Member may communicate freely concerning School issues with one other Board Member. There are no restrictions on communication between two Board Members.
- B. Communication concerning School issues between three or more Board Members is restricted. A Member may forward information to more than one Board Member, however, that CANNOT be replied to.

\*\*Communication becomes an official meeting when three or more Members are discussing School issues back and forth. The law on this states that a meeting consists of a “majority of a quorum.” A quorum is the number of members required to conduct business (in our case, 4) and a majority of that number is 3.

6. **Communicating with Staff:**

- A. To speak with a staff member on a specific topic, contact that person to set up a mutually agreeable time / date / location to meet. Superintendent shall be notified of all contacts made with staff by Board members.
- B. All directives need to come from the Board as a whole, not individual members.

## **7. Visiting Campuses:**

- A. To visit a classroom, Board members should make an appointment with the Building Principal ahead of time. Then the Principal can set up the visit with the Teacher.
- B. To visit a building, Board members should call the Principal ahead of time. If advanced notice is not possible, then check in at the office with Principal before going through.
- C. No more than two (2) Board members can visit a building at the same time.

## **8. Responding to Complaints:**

- A. When approached by community or staff with a complaint, Board members should listen to the person's explanation, then urge them to follow the chain of command. Board members then forward the complaint to the Superintendent.
- B. Board members should refrain from making any promises to the person making the complaint.
- C. If a community member ends up wishing to speak to the Board, after following the chain of command, they should follow these procedures:
  - 1. Any requests to speak before the Board in closed session must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent at least 7 days prior to the monthly School Board meeting. In the request, community members must give a detailed explanation of the issue they want addressed and who will be in attendance with them.
  - 2. The Board has the right to reject community requests to speak in closed session.

9. **Communicating with the Media:**

- A. If at all possible, the Superintendent shall act as the primary spokesperson for the District.
- B. In efforts to promote the District's accomplishments and goals, individual Board members may directly communicate with the local media.
- C. For standard Board communication with the media, the following chain of command will be followed:
  - i. Superintendent
  - ii. Board President
  - iii. Board Vice-President
  - iv. Board Secretary
- D. If a Board member is contacted by the media, they are to direct the inquiry back to the Superintendent.

10. **Communicating with the Public:**

- A. When topics arise with a strong public interest, we recommend the Board host up to two (2) town hall style meetings, one at each end of the district.
- B. Procedures for conducting these types of meetings will be determined by the Board as a whole, prior to the public meeting, and posted at the entrance. Copies of such procedures will be made available to those in attendance.
- C. Questions for the Board concerning the town hall meeting topic will be accepted prior to, during, or after the meeting. Any questions received after the town hall meeting will be answered in open session during the next regular meeting.

11. **Orienting New Board Members:**

- A. The Superintendent shall meet with the new Board members to acquaint the member with the District and answer questions.
- B. At the Board reorganization meeting immediately following an election, the Board will review the board protocols and financial documents found in Board packets with new members in open session.
- C. Each new Board member will select a current member to act as their mentor.
- D. The Board encourages all new members to attend the IASB Annual Conference in Chicago in their first or second year as a Board member.

12. **Public Comment Time and Board Response:**

- A. During public comment, the Board members should refrain from engaging in discussion or debate with the members of the public.
- B. The Board should listen to the concerns from the citizen(s) and thank them. The Board should tell them that research will be conducted on their concern.
- C. The Board will direct the Superintendent to investigate the issues pertaining to the concerns and develop a response for the citizen.

13. **No Surprises Clause:**

Any concerns about an agenda item, especially specific bills or hiring staff, should be turned in to the Superintendent by Monday prior to the monthly Board meeting.

14. **Remote Participation in Board Meetings:**

If a member cannot attend a meeting in person, they may call in or Zoom in to participate. They should notify the Superintendent and Board President by the Monday prior to the monthly Board meeting.

**15. Board Packets:**

The monthly Board meeting agenda and supporting documents should be made available to members by the close of business on Friday before the monthly Board meeting.

**16. Committee and Administrative Reports for Board Meetings:**

Committees and Administrators should type up a written report from each of their meetings and submit it to the District Secretary the Thursday prior to the Board packet being sent out. If a report is in the Friday Board packet, no verbal report will be given, but a call for questions will be made.

**17. Conflicts of Interest:**

Board members need to be cognizant of business items that present a conflict of interest. In those instances, board members should abstain from voting on those issues.