

Addison Northeast Supervisory Union and Member School Districts
(Bristol, Lincoln, Monkton, Mt. Abraham Union High, New Haven, Starksboro)

Boards of Directors' Policy

Policy Type: Board Procedures: C4

Policy Subject: Governance Process

Policy Title: 4.0. Global Governance Commitment

▪ The purpose of the Board, on behalf of the citizens of Bristol, Lincoln, Monkton, New Haven, and Starksboro is to see to it that Mt. Abraham Union Middle/High School (a) achieves appropriate results for members of the school community at an appropriate cost (as specified in Board Ends policies) and (b) avoids unacceptable actions and situations (as prohibited in Board Executive Limitations policies).

Policy Title: 4.1. Governing Style

- The Board will govern lawfully, observing the principles of the Policy Governance model, with an emphasis on (a) an outward vision rather than an internal preoccupation, (b) encouragement of diversity in viewpoints, (c) strategic leadership more than administrative detail, (d) clear distinction of board and superintendent roles, (e) collective rather than individual decisions, (f) future rather than past or present, and g) proactive rather than reactivity.

- Accordingly:
 1. The Board will cultivate a sense of group responsibility. The Board, not the staff, will be responsible for excellence in governing. The Board will be the initiator of policy, not merely a reactor to staff initiatives. The Board will not use the expertise of individual members to substitute for the judgment of the Board, although the expertise of individual members may be used to enhance the understanding of the Board as a body.

 2. The Board will direct, control, and inspire the organization through the careful establishment of broad written policies reflecting the Board's values and perspectives. The Board's major policy focus will be on the intended long-term impacts outside the staff organization, not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those effects.

 3. The Board will enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence. Discipline will apply to matters such as attendance, preparation for meetings, policymaking principles, respect of roles, and ensuring the continuance of governance capability. Although the Board can change its Governance Process policies at any time, it will scrupulously observe those currently in force.

4. Continual Board development will include orientation of new Board members in the Board's Governance Process and periodic Board discussion of process improvement.
5. The Board will allow no officer, individual, or committee of the Board to hinder or serve as an excuse for not fulfilling group obligations.
6. The Board will monitor and discuss the Board's process and performance at each meeting. Self-monitoring will include comparison of Board activity and discipline to policies in the Governance Process and Board-Management Delegation categories.

Policy Title: 4.2. Board Job Description

- Specific job outputs of the Board, as an informed agent of the ownership, are those that ensure appropriate organizational performance.
- Accordingly, the Board has direct responsibility to create:
 1. The linkage between the ownership and the operational organization.
 2. Written governing policies that realistically address the broadest levels of all organizational decisions and situations.
 - a. Ends: organizational products, impacts, benefits, outcomes, recipients, and their relative worth (what good for which recipients at what cost)
 - b. Executive limitations: Constraints on executive authority that established the prudence and ethics boundaries within which all executive activity and decisions must take place.
 - c. Governance process: specification of how the Board conceives, carries out, and monitors its own work.
 - d. Board-Management delegation: how power is delegated and its proper use; the Superintendent's role, authority, and accountability.

3. Assurance of successful organizational performance on Ends and Executive Limitations.

In addition, the Board has retained the non-governing role of negotiating union contracts.

Policy Title: 4.3. Agenda Planning

- To accomplish its job description with a governance style consistent with Board policies, the Board will follow an annual agenda that (a) completes a re-exploration of Ends policies annually and (b) continually improves Board performance through Board education and enriched input and deliberation.
 1. The cycle will conclude each year on the last day of September so that administrative planning and budgeting can be based on accomplishing a one-year segment of the Board's most recent statement of long-term ends.
 2. The cycle will start with the Board's development of its agenda for the next year.
 - a. Consultations with selected groups in the ownership, or other methods of gaining ownership input, will be determined and arranged in the first quarter, to be held during the balance of the year.
 - b. Governance education and education related to ends determination (presentations by futurists, demographers, advocacy groups, staff, and so on) will be arranged in the first quarter, to be held during the balance of the year.
 - c. A Board member may recommend or request an item for Board discussion by submitting an item to the School Board Chair no later than seven days before the Board meeting.
 3. Throughout the year, the Board will attend to consent agenda items as expeditiously as possible. An approved motion can remove an item from the consent agenda for discussion.
 4. Superintendent monitoring will be included on the agenda if monitoring reports show policy violations, if policy criteria are to be debated, or if the Board, for any reason, chooses to debate amending its monitoring schedule.
 5. The Board will participate in decision making about the Superintendent's remuneration based on a review of monitoring reports received in the last year during the month of November.

Policy Title: 4.4. School Board Chair's Role

- The School Board Chair (Chair), a specially empowered member of the Board, ensures the integrity of the Board's process and, secondarily, occasionally represents the Board to outside parties.

- Accordingly:
 1. The assigned result of the Chair's job is that the Board behaves consistently with its own rules and those legitimately imposed on it from outside the organization.
 - a. Meeting discussion content will consist solely of issues that clearly belong to the Board to decide or to monitor according to Board policy.
 - b. Information that is for neither monitoring performance nor Board decisions will be avoided or minimized and always noted as such.
 - c. Deliberation will be fair, open, and thorough but also timely, orderly, and kept to the point.

 2. The authority of the Chair consists in making decisions that fall within topics covered by Board policies on Governance Process and Board-Management Delegation, with the exception of (a) employment or termination of a Superintendent and (b) areas where the Board specifically delegates portions of this authority to others. The Chair is authorized to use any reasonable interpretation of the provisions in these policies.
 - a. The Chair is empowered to chair Board meetings with all the commonly accepted powers of that position, such as ruling and recognizing.
 - b. The Chair has no authority to make decisions about policies created by the Board within Ends and Executive Limitations policy areas. Therefore, the Chair has no authority to supervise or direct the Superintendent.
 - c. The Chair may represent the Board to outside parties in announcing Board-stated positions and in stating chair decisions and interpretations within the area delegated to her or him.

- d. The Chair may delegate this authority but remains accountable for its use.

Policy Title: 4.5. Board Member's Code of Conduct

- The Board commits itself and its members to ethical, businesslike, and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as Board members.
1. Members must demonstrate loyalty to the ownership, unconflicted by loyalties to staff, other organizations, or any personal interests.
 2. Members must avoid conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility.
 - a. There will be no self-dealing or business by a member with the organization. Members will annually disclose their involvements with other organizations or with vendors and any associations that might be reasonably seen as representing a conflict of interest.
 - b. When the Board is to decide on an issue about which a member has an unavoidable conflict of interest, that member shall absent herself or himself without comment not only from the vote but also from the deliberation.
 - c. Board members will not use their Board position to obtain employment in the organization for themselves, family members, or close associates. A Board member who applies for employment must first resign from the Board.
 3. Board members may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization.
 - a. Member's interaction with the Superintendent or with staff must recognize the lack of authority vested in individuals except when explicitly authorized by the Board.
 - b. Member's interactions with the public, the press, or other entities must recognize the same limitation and the inability of any Board member to speak for the Board except to repeat explicitly stated board decisions.
 - c. Except for participation in Board deliberation about whether the Superintendent has achieved any reasonable interpretation of Board policy, members will not express individual judgments of performance of employees or the Superintendent.
 4. Members will respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature and other matters that may compromise the integrity or legal standing of the board and district, including matters discussed in executive session.
 5. Board members acknowledge that the way in which they choose to exercise a right to express personal views can affect the board's ability to work together effectively. Board members aspire to:
 - a. Honoring the right of individual members of the board to communicate with community members when the information shared reflects recognized public knowledge.
 - b. Making every reasonable effort to protect the integrity and promote the positive image of the District and one another.

6. Members will be properly prepared for Board deliberation.

7. Members will support the legitimacy and authority of the final determination of the Board on any matter, irrespective of the member's personal position on the issue.

Policy Title: 4.6. Board Committee Structure

- A committee is a board committee only if its existence and charge come from the board, regardless of whether board members sit on the committee. Unless otherwise stated, a committee ceases to exist as soon as its task is complete.

Policy Title: 4.7. Governance Investment

- Because poor governance costs more than learning to govern well, the board will invest in its governance capacity. Accordingly:
 1. Board skills, methods, and supports will be sufficient to ensure governing with excellence.

 2. Costs will be prudently established in the budget for the next fiscal year during the month of November for board member education, third-party monitoring, and linking with the community.

	Bristol	Lincoln	Monkton	Mt. Abraham	Beeman	Robinson
Date Warned	11/16/10	11/16/10	11/16/10	10/19/10	11/16/10	11/16/10
Date Adopted	12/13/10	12/20/10	12/9/10	11/9/10	12/14/10	12/8/10