Treynor Community School District
Board Member Handbook

Mission Statement

Treynor Board of Education Mission Statement: The goal of Treynor School Board of Education is that every child succeeds. Therefore, the Treynor School Board of Education promises to provide necessary policies, programs, procedures, and resources needed to provide a culture that respects the individual needs of every child. We promise to provide a safe, caring, creative, and engaging learning environment for every child. We promise to promote the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development of every child. We promise to provide an ethical, respectful, competent, and compassionate staff that values students' rights and helps students become ethical, respectful, competent, and productive members of the community.


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1. Introduction

Welcome to the Treynor Community School District (CSD) Board of Education. As a Board member, you are a key leader who will help steer the district toward achieving its goals and fulfilling its mission. This handbook is designed to provide you with essential information, policies, and procedures to effectively serve on the Board.

2. Organizational Chart
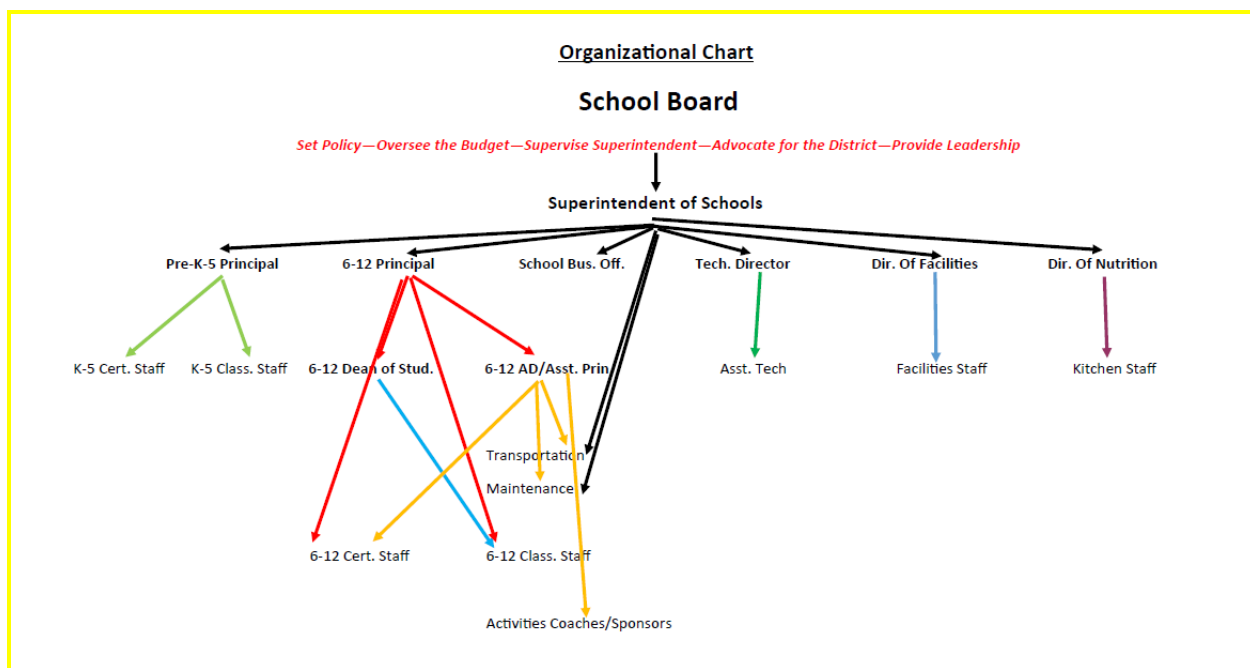
Leading from the Balcony versus the Dance Floor

3. Role of a School Board Member

Start by checking School Board Policies in the 200's

As a member of the Treynor CSD Board of Education, your primary responsibilities are to:

- **Set Policies:** Create and adopt policies that guide the operations of the district.

- **Oversee the Budget:** Approve and monitor the district's budget to ensure fiscal responsibility.
- **Supervise the Superintendent:** Hire, evaluate, and support the superintendent in the management of the district.
- **Advocate for the District:** Act as an ambassador for the district and advocate for its students, teachers, and staff.
- **Provide Leadership:** Make decisions that support the academic success and well-being of students.

The Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) outlines the following essential roles for Board members:

- **Policy Maker:** Develop policies that guide district operations.
- **Advocate:** Advocate for public education and the district in the community and beyond.
- **Fiscal Overseer:** Monitor and approve the district's budget to ensure resources are used effectively.
- **Public Voice:** Represent the interests of the community and all stakeholders in the district's decisions.
- **Continuous Learner:** Engage in professional development opportunities to stay informed on educational issues and governance best practices.

*IASB Annual Conference is in November. It is a goal to attend at least one of these conferences early in your tenure on the school board.

**The role of the board is to govern, not manage. You will work collaboratively with the superintendent and other district leaders to ensure the success of the school district while holding them accountable for their work.

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4. Role of the School Board President

Start by checking School Board Policy 206.1

"It is the responsibility of the board president to lead a well-organized board in an efficient and effective manner. The board president will set the tone of the board meetings and, as the representative of the consensus of the board, speak on behalf of the board to the public." Policy 206.1

Iowa Association of School Boards has some very good resources in the "Board Presidents' Corner" section of the "toolbox" resources. In this section you will find events to support the president; "What makes an effective board president?" guide; "Your Governance Team"; "Effective Meetings"; "Student Learning: A Priority"; "School Finance"; "Essential Resources"; and "Pertinent President Policies" https://www.ia-sb.org/toolbox/board-presidents-corner

IASB "What Makes an Effective Board President" guide: meeting management, focus, team building, superintendent relationship, purpose and roles of the Board, spokesperson, communication, policy, lead learner, and additional responsibilities.
https://www.ia-sb.org/docs/default-source/toolbox/board-development/bd-roles-resp/what-makes-an-effective-board-president5e191ece-bdf3-430a-ab39-af937342455b.pdf?sfvrsn=84656ac0_6

5. Description of Board Committees

Start by checking School Board Policy 209 and 209.2

Standing committees consist of the following:
- **Facilities, including Transportation/Building and Grounds**
  - This Board member(s) should take the lead on ensuring that an annual review of facilities, grounds, and transportation is completed. From this review recommendations should be made in all three areas with a ranked priority to assist with budgeting purposes.
- **Labor management, including Negotiations**
  - This Board member(s) should take the lead on ensuring that the Labor Management Team (consisting of Board members, Superintendent, and members of the Treynor Education Association [TEA]) follow the guidelines set forth for the LMT to review and discuss items related to, but not limited to, certified master contract, certified handbook, adhere to the requirements of Iowa Code Chapter 20 as they relate to negotiations, review employee benefits and renewals, and take the lead on preparing the District's position in negotiations.
- **Curriculum, including SIAC (School Improvement Advisory Council)**
  - This Board member(s) should take the lead on ensuring that our District Curriculum review process is implemented and followed. This work can be done in conjunction with the superintendent and the K-12 Content/Curriculum Lead (TLC position). In addition, serve on and be an active member of the School Improvement Advisory Council (SIAC)
- **Finances, including Auditing/Monthly Review of Bills**
  - This Board member(s) should take the lead on ensuring that bills are reviewed monthly in conjunction with the district's School Business Official (SBO). Additionally, pay close attention to and review the monthly financial reports. Lastly, review the annual District financial audit and ensure recommended corrective actions are taken in conjunction with the superintendent.
- **Board Policy Review and Legislative Action Network, including Delegate Assembly**
  - This Board member(s) should take the lead on ensuring that all school board policies are reviewed in a timely fashion and use model policies from IASB and recommendations from legal counsel as needed to support the recommended revisions and changes to said policies in conjunction with the superintendent. Staying abreast of possible legislative actions and networking with local, state, and federal representatives are also duties associated with this committee

position. Lastly, serving on the IASB as the District's Delegate Assembly representative.

6. Role of the Superintendent

Start by checking School Board Policy 302's and 302.4 for Supt. Duties

The superintendent is the chief executive officer of the district and is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school system. Key responsibilities of the superintendent include:

- **Implementing Board Policies:** Ensuring that Board policies are executed and that decisions are made in alignment with Board objectives.
- **Providing Leadership:** Leading the district's administration and staff in implementing the district's goals and programs.
- **Communicating with the Board:** Keeping the Board informed on district activities, student performance, and operational issues.
- **Supervising Staff:** Directing and evaluating the performance of district employees.
- **Managing Resources:** Ensuring that resources (financial, human, physical) are used efficiently to achieve district goals.

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7. Superintendent Contract Negotiations

Start by checking School Board Policy 302.2 - Superintendent Contract and Contract Nonrenewal and associated policies in the 302's

- **Timeline**
  - Target the month of February to have things completed no later than April 1
- **Board Unity**
  - The School Board President should work to ensure the entire Board is aligned on priorities and goals for the contract. Determine the lead negotiator or team, as appropriate and hold a closed session to discuss negotiations.
- **Superintendent Evaluation**
  - Conduct a thorough and objective evaluation of the superintendent's performance.
  - Use the evaluation to identify areas of strength and improvement.
- **Market Analysis**
  - Research superintendent salaries and benefits in comparable districts.
  - Consider the district's financial situation and ability to offer competitive compensation
  - Utilize IASB resources to help with this process.
- **Legal Counsel**
  - Ensure the contract complies with Iowa law and protects the District's interest
- **Contract Components:**
  - Term of Employment

- ■ Define the length and renewal options
  - ○ Duties and Responsibilities
    - ■ Define the superintendent's duties and responsibilities, including performance expectations
    - ■ Ensure the duties are aligned with the district's strategic plan
  - ○ Compensation and Benefits
    - ■ Specify the superintendent's salary, benefits, and expense reimbursement
    - ■ Consider performance-based compensation
  - ○ Evaluation Process
    - ■ Outline evaluation process, including frequency, criteria, and procedures
  - ○ Termination Clauses
    - ■ Include clear and specific termination clauses, including "for cause" and "without cause" provisions
    - ■ Address buyout provisions and severance packages
  - ○ Professional Development
    - ■ Address the superintendent's professional development, including funding and time off.
- ● **Negotiation Process**
  - ○ Open Communication
    - ■ Maintain open and respectful communication with the superintendent throughout the negotiation process
    - ■ Foster a collaborative environment
  - ○ Flexibility
    - ■ Be prepared to compromise and negotiate in good faith
    - ■ Consider the superintendent's needs and concerns
  - ○ Documentation
    - ■ Document all agreements and discussions during the negotiation process
- ● **Post-negotiations**
  - ○ Contract Implementation
    - ■ Ensure the contract is implemented effectively
    - ■ Monitor the superintendent's performance and provide regular feedback
  - ○ Ongoing Communication
    - ■ Maintain ongoing communication with the superintendent throughout the contract term

8. Superintendent Hiring

The board is directly responsible for hiring, supporting and evaluating the superintendent. The selection of the superintendent is a critical board responsibility and a decision that the board must make on its own. Board leadership in the process can positively impact the educational and financial health of the district for many years to come, and selecting the right individual is key to improving student achievement.

Where do you even begin with this time-consuming task? There are many considerations when undergoing the search and hiring process—vacancy announcements, recruiting, screening and interviewing candidates, community visits, contract negotiations, and more. IASB has multiple resources to help guide your board to make this decision. From IASB "Superintendent Search Storehouse"
https://www.ia-sb.org/toolbox/hr-central/the-boards-primary-role-in-hr/superintendent-search

9. Student Representatives on the Board

Start by checking School Board Policy 202.5

"The Board of Education of the Treynor Community School District believes it is important to seek out and consider student ideas, viewpoints, and opinions regarding the district's educational program. To provide student input, the Board shall include at least one non-voting representative from the student body." Policy 202.5

Consider the following:

- Actively involve the student(s) in the meeting:
  - Call upon them during relevant discussion for a student perspective on the topic
  - Have them give presentations on a topic from the perspective of a student's view
  - Give them role(s) or duty(s) to perform during the meeting:
    - Read the mission statement, operate the public presentation, greet guests, etc.
- Superintendent should meet with students
  - Prior to the first meeting to go over expectations
  - Prior to any requested presentation
  - Periodically to make sure things are going well from their perspective
- Invite them to serve on other committees, such as SIAC, etc.

10. Back of Name Tents and Norms

Norms are an agreed upon set of behaviors, expectations, and guidelines for individual board members and the board collectively. They serve as a shared understanding of how members will interact with each other, staff, community, and the overall disposition and actions as a board member. The goal of norms is to create more efficient and collaborative environments.

On the back of your "Name Tent" ~ **Is this decision I am about to make…**

- Addressing our goal that every child succeeds?
- Providing the policy, program, procedure, or resources to provide a culture that respects the individual needs of every child?
- Increasing the opportunities for a safe, caring, creative, and engaging learning environment of every child?
- Promoting the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development of every child?

- Providing ethical, respectful, competent, and compassionate staff members that value students' rights and help them become ethical, respectful, competent, and productive members of the community?

Norms:

In Michael Fullan's "Governance Core: School Boards, Superintendents, and Schools Working Together," school board norms are presented as crucial for fostering effective collaboration and driving school improvement. Here's a summary of key norms emphasized in his work:

Key School Board Norms from Fullan's Perspective:

1. *Focus on Student Achievement*
2. *Collaborative Leadership*
3. *Strategic Thinking and Long-Term Vision*
4. *Data-Driven Decision-Making*
5. *Mutual Respect and Trust*
6. *Transparency and Accountability*
7. *Continuous Improvement and Learning*
8. *Clear Roles and Responsibilities*
9. *Proactive Engagement with the Community*
10. *System Thinking*

Fullan's Emphasis:

- *Fullan emphasizes that these norms are not just abstract ideals, but rather practical guidelines for effective governance.*
- *He highlights the importance of building a "governance core" that is focused on continuous improvement and collaboration.*
- *He pushes for a move away from governance that is only compliance based, and towards governance that is improvement based.*

By adhering to these norms, school boards can create a positive and productive environment that supports student success.

11. Board Member Expectations
Start by checking School Board Policy 204

Board members' actions, verbal and nonverbal, reflect the attitude and the beliefs of the school district. Therefore, board members must conduct themselves professionally and in a manner fitting to their position.

Each board member shall follow the code of ethics stated in this policy 204. This policy covers the following areas:

- Overall School Board Member Expectations
- Code of Ethics
    - In meeting my responsibility to my school district community
    - In my relationship with superintendent and employees
    - To cooperate with other school boards

12. Traits of an Effective School Board Member (IASB)

Effective school board members demonstrate the following traits:

- **Commitment to Student Success:** Focus on policies and decisions that promote student learning and well-being.
- **Team Player:** Collaborates effectively with other Board members, the superintendent, and staff.
- **Transparent and Ethical:** Acts with integrity, transparency, and ethical behavior in all actions.
- **Advocate for Equity:** Strives to ensure all students, regardless of background, have equal access to educational opportunities.
- **Informed and Prepared:** Takes the time to understand the issues, review materials, and come prepared for meetings.

13. IASB School Board Member Self-Evaluation

- **Communication and Collaboration:** How well does the Board communicate and collaborate with the superintendent, staff, and the community?
- **Decision-Making:** Are decisions made with the best interests of students, staff, and the district in mind?
- **Leadership and Governance:** How effectively does the Board provide oversight and leadership?
- **Engagement:** Are Board members engaged in the district's activities and development?

See Appendix A for self-evaluation

14. New Board Member Information (Fullan & Campbell)

Fullan and Campbell's work on school governance emphasizes the following as critical for new board members:

- **Understanding the Big Picture:** Focus on long-term goals, not just day-to-day operational issues.
- **Building Trust:** Establish a collaborative relationship with the superintendent, staff, and community.
- **Engagement in Learning:** Commit to ongoing learning about governance, educational policies, and the needs of the community.
- **Clear Communication:** Encourage open, honest communication within the Board and with the public.

It is recommended that new members read <u>The Governance Core</u> by Davis Campbell and Michael Fullan

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15. Summary of Robert's Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order is a manual of parliamentary procedure widely used in the United States to govern meetings and decision-making processes, especially in organizations like nonprofit boards and committees. It provides a framework for conducting meetings in an orderly and fair manner, ensuring that all members have an opportunity to participate and that decisions are made efficiently.

- **Motion Process:** Board members must make a formal motion to bring issues before the Board. A motion must be seconded before discussion.
- **Debate:** Once a motion has been made and seconded, discussion can take place. Board members should speak to the motion at hand, and the Chair must ensure respectful dialogue.
- **Voting:** After discussion, the Board votes on the motion. A majority vote is required to pass most motions.
- **Order:** The Chair maintains order during meetings, ensuring that all Board members are heard and that proceedings are fair and efficient.

Appendix B - Robert's Rules Simplified - School Board Policy 210.7

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16. Handling Concerns at the Lowest Level

Per school board policy 307, concerns should be addressed at the lowest possible level:

1. **Students and Parents:** Concerns should be addressed first by speaking directly with the teacher or staff member involved.
2. **If Unresolved:** If the issue is not resolved, it can be taken to the building principal, then to the superintendent if necessary.

3. **Involving the Board:** Only after all levels of resolution have been exhausted should concerns be brought to the Board.

This approach ensures that issues are dealt with efficiently and appropriately, promoting a positive school climate.

Appendix C - Policy 307

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17. Treynor CSD District Goals

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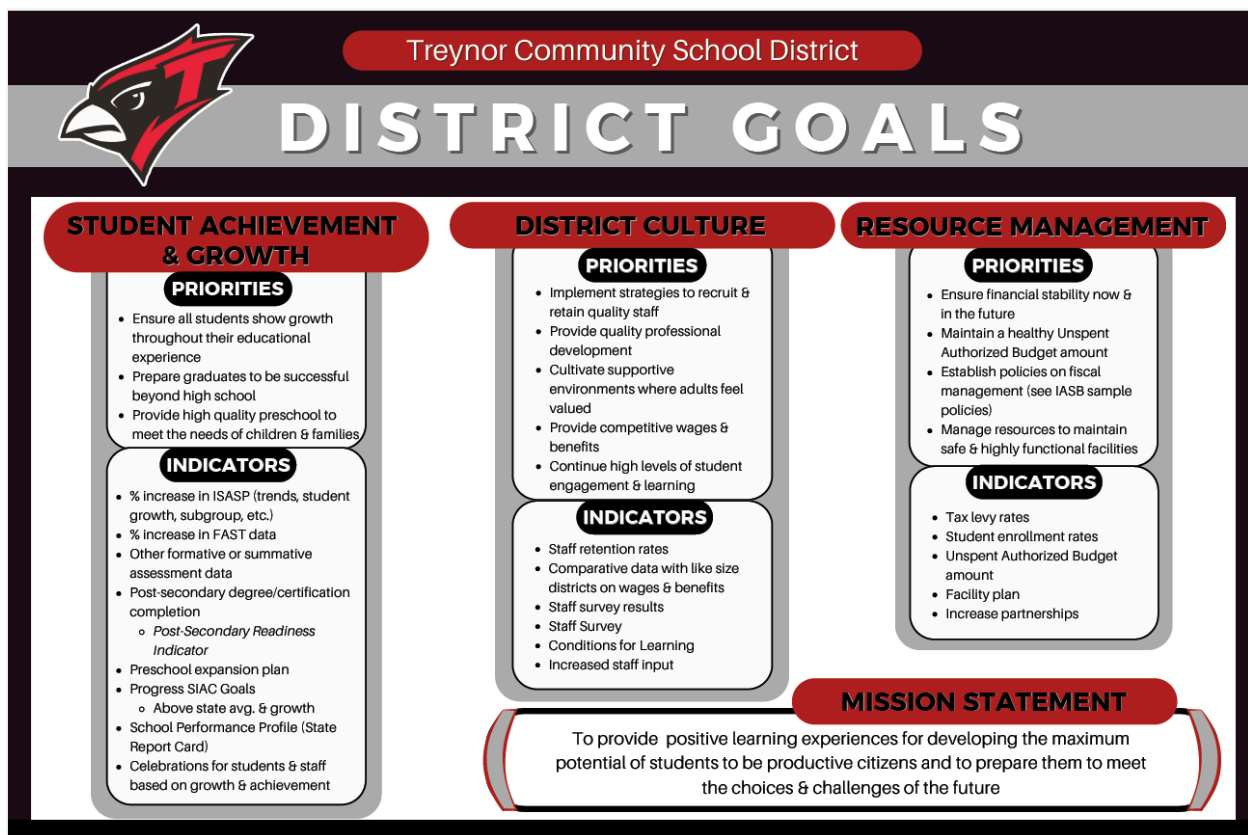
18. District Website

Website: https://www.treynorschools.org/

Each board member is issued a district chromebook, login, and email address. This will allow you to have one device for all school matters.

The following are some key items that a School Board member might need to know:
- "District" = you will find the mission, policies, and weekly bulletin
- "School Board" = you will find the board members, public agendas, minutes, achieved minutes and agendas, and mission statement
- Under the school specific header you can find the student handbooks
- "Academics" = you will find the curriculum review process
- "Library" = you will find our list of books in our libraries
- "Athletics" = parent information, including the "Treynor Athletic Parent Guidebook", activity calendar, etc.
- There are several items you need to login to the website to see. The login information in by the search icon with a front bracket and arrow. Once logged in you will see the "Board" and "Internal" drop downs
  - "Board" = current and achieved board packets
  - "Internal" = documents and links available to all staff

19. Board Calendar of Things to Do

General Notes:

- **Regular Board Meetings:** Schedule regular board meetings (typically monthly) and any necessary special meetings.
- **IASB Events:** Include dates for Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) workshops, conferences, and training sessions.
- **Budget Cycle:** Iowa school districts follow a specific budget cycle, so budget-related dates are crucial.
- **Election Dates:** Remember school board election dates.
- **District Calendar:** Integrate the district's academic calendar (start/end dates, holidays, etc.).
- **Open Meetings Law:** All meetings must adhere to Iowa's Open Meetings Law, with proper notice and minutes.

*The following represents some of the items to keep in mind during various times during the school year. This list is not a complete list of things that the school board needs to be aware of at a particular time of the year, just a few reminders.

January
- Begin preliminary budget discussions for the next fiscal year. - Budget Workshop
- Review board goals for the year.
- Evaluate the superintendent's progress on their goals.

February
- Legislative session monitoring; stay informed about education-related bills.
- Continue budget development; review revenue projections.

- Review and update district policies as needed. - [Policy Review Schedule](#)
- Begin contract negotiations with employees.

March
- Hold public hearings on the proposed school budget.
- Open enrollment deadline (March 1st) for the following school year.
- Review and approve the district's calendar for the next school year.
- Finalize staff contracts for the next school year.
- Review and approve the district's audit report.
- Superintendent contract negotiation

April
- Kindergarten Roundup events
- Approve the school district budget.
- Review and approve any necessary budget amendments.
- Begin planning for graduation ceremonies.

May
- Conduct annual superintendent evaluation.
- Graduation ceremonies.
- Review and update the district's strategic plan.
- Review and approve any student handbooks.

June
- Fiscal year-end review. - School Business Official
- School Board Self-Evaluation - Appendix A

July
- New fiscal year begins (July 1st).
- Fiscal year-end review
  - Review and monitor budget expenditures.
- Begin planning for the upcoming school year.
- Review and approve any policy updates from the state.

August
- Staff in-service and professional development.
  - District BBQ
- Back-to-school events.

October
- Review and approve the district's annual report.
- Review and analyze early student achievement data.
- Review and approve the district's certified enrollment numbers.

November
- School board elections (if applicable).
- New school board member orientation (if applicable).
- Attend the IASB annual convention.

December
- Holiday break planning and communication.
- End of semester reviews. (January)

20. Meetings: Regular, Closed, Exempt, Work Session

Regular School Board Meetings:
The Board sets the times and dates for the regular meetings at its annual and organizational meeting. This is the same meeting in which new Board members are sworn in, officers are elected, legal counsel is named, etc. Policy 210.1 and 211.1 support the Annual Meeting. The regular meeting is described in policy 210.2 and again in 211.2. In policy 211.9 you will see the framework for the board agenda. The Board President and the superintendent collaborate on the agendas.

Preparation for a typical regular board meeting. Will last approximately 2 hours and you should plan for a minimum of 2 hours in preparation for the meeting to review materials. If you come across questions in your review of the board packet (found on the website under "Board") if time permits address those to the superintendent. This helps possible discussion in the meeting in the event additional materials or information is needed for the agenda item and/or decision.

Meetings adhere to the approved agenda and thus the meeting would start with a Board President calling the meeting to order and a Board member reading the Board Mission Statement. This is followed by the Board Secretary (SBO) taking a roll call vote. The meeting is officially running and being recorded and will later be placed on the district website. The agenda is approved and this is followed by any public comments. See board policy 214 for procedures related to public comments. We also have a handout at the signup sheet that defines public participation and comments. This would typically be followed by good news and then the consent agenda. Typically a few comments will be made by the superintendent regarding the consent agenda for the public, such as thanking a retiring or resigning staff member. After which the President will ask if there is a motion to approve the consent agenda, followed by a second and this would be the time for any discussion. Motions can also be made to separate something out of the consent agenda for separate action.

Reports come after the consent agenda and there are three standing monthly reports: elementary school report, secondary school report, and directors report. Additional reports are common with at least one targeting student learning. This report can at times have students present for part of the report. The next section on the agenda is the "discussion" section. As

described no action is intended for these agenda items, only discussion by the Board. Oftentimes an item can be in discussion one month and the next be a possible action item.

Action items are next on the agenda and like the discussion items there will be information in the board packet giving further details on the agenda item. Common action items can be agreements, such as entering a contract or MOU with another organization or large purchases. In such cases the agreement is included with either a written, but more often a verbal explanation for the rationale to enter the agreement. For the purchase there is the bid and often other sample bids with the recommendation for a possible motion in support of the preferred bid.

Next is the superintendent report section. This section can be similar to the discussion section in which the superintendent is providing updates on various items, but the assumption is that there would likely be little or no discussion on these items, more of an update. This does not prevent discussion or questions however.

Last is the adjournment of the meeting. Exceptions can happen when the Board must go into a closed session. This will typically be placed on the agenda after the superintendent report and before the adjourned meeting. This allows visitors the opportunity to be present for most all of the public portions of the meeting and provides them the opportunity to leave before the Board goes into closed session.

Closed and Exempt Sessions:

Closed Session vs. Exempt Meeting

Closed Session

Closed sessions take place as part of an open meeting. The *Iowa Code* section and language from that code section must be listed as part of the tentative agenda a minimum of twenty-four hours in advance of the meeting. The motion for a closed session, stating the purpose for the closed session, will be made and seconded during open session. A minimum of two-thirds of the board, or all of the board members present, must vote in favor of the motion on a roll call vote. Closed sessions must be tape recorded and have detailed minutes kept by the board secretary. Final action on matters discussed in the closed session will be taken in an open meeting.

Exempt Meeting

An exempt meeting is not subject to the open meetings requirements and can be held without public notice, be held without taping or minutes, and can be held without a vote or motion. Exempt meetings should be held separate from open meetings. While the notice, minutes, and other requirements of the open meetings law are not required for exempt meetings, there are practical reasons why a board may choose to provide notice or adhere to other open meetings requirements. For example, might the board be well advised to let the public know that they are meeting outside the public view and it is allowed under the law? What issues might arise if the board gathers and no one knows why?

Reasons for Entering a Closed Session		Exemptions to the Open Meetings Law	
I.	To review or discuss records which are required or authorized by state or federal law to be kept confidential or to be kept confidential as a condition for the board's possession or receipt of federal funds. *Iowa Code* 21.5(1)(a).	I.	Negotiating sessions, strategy meetings of public employers or employee organizations, mediation and the deliberative process of arbitration. *Iowa Code* 20.17(3).
II.	To discuss strategy with legal counsel in matters presently in litigation, or where litigation is imminent, if disclosure would be likely to prejudice or disadvantage the board. *Iowa Code* 21.5(1)(c).	II.	To discuss strategy in matters relating to employment conditions of employees not covered by the collective bargaining law. *Iowa Code* 21.9. "*Employment conditions*" for this section means areas included in the scope of negotiations in *Iowa Code* 20.9
III.	To discuss whether to conduct a hearing, or conduct a hearing for suspension or expulsion of a student, unless an open meeting is requested by the student or the parent of the student. *Iowa Code* 21.5(1)(e).	III.	To conduct a private hearing relating to the recommended termination of a teacher's contract. The private hearing however, in the teacher's contract termination will be recorded verbatim by a court reporter. *Iowa Code* 279.15.
IV.	To evaluate the professional competency of an individual whose appointment, hiring, performance, or discharge is being considered when a closed session is necessary to prevent needless and irreparable injury to that individual's reputation and that individual requests a closed session. *Iowa Code* 21.5(1)(i).	IV.	To conduct a private hearing relating to the termination of a probationary administrator's contract or to review the proposed decision of the administrative law judge regarding the termination of an administrator's contract. *Iowa Code* 279.24.
V.	To discuss the purchase or sale of particular real estate, but only when premature disclosure could be reasonably expected to increase the price the board would have to pay for the property, or in case of a sale reduce the price the board could receive for the property. *Iowa Code* 21.5(1)(j).			

Closed sessions need a roll call vote to enter, are recorded, but are not shared with the public. No action can be taken in a closed session and the only reasons to enter a closed session are stated above, no exceptions. If an action is needed this must be done in an open session. See policy 212 on closed sessions.

Exempt sessions are not recorded and are not part of the open meeting. Again the only way a board can be in an exempt session is if it meets one of the criteria above. This is important for both closed and exempt sessions to not violate the open meeting laws.

A special meeting is one in which it falls outside of a normally scheduled meeting. Policy 211.3

A work session, such as a budget work session, are just that, time for the Board to work on needed items in a quorum. No action will be taken and these are often recorded for transparency reasons and to help ensure that no open meetings rules were violated. See Iowa Chapter 3 on Meetings: https://educate.iowa.gov/media/3263/download?inline

Lastly, as you can see in Chapter 3, you can have a meeting virtually or by phone. This typically happens in the event of a Special Meeting in which action is needed in a short timeframe.

21. Resources & References

- Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) Website: www.iasb.org
- Robert's Rules of Order (latest edition)
- Fullan, M., & Campbell, C. (2012). *The Governance of School Systems*.
- Treynor CSD Policy
- Treynor CSD Strategic Plan (available upon request)

This handbook serves as a guide to the role and responsibilities of the Board of Education at Treynor CSD. Board members are encouraged to continually refer to this document, engage in ongoing professional development, and work collaboratively to fulfill the district's mission and goals.

Self-Assessment on Standards for Effective School Boards

An IASB School Board Self-Assessment

Purpose

This board self-assessment is based on IASB's Standards for Effective School Boards. The standards are designed as a common framework to encourage excellence in school board governance with a focus on student learning as the board's primary responsibility. The framework is based on research and best practice; it includes a set of six standards, along with related competencies and indicators of best practice, to guide the work of high-performing school boards.

The self-assessment results and subsequent whole board discussion can help the board determine where it is effective in providing governance level leadership and where your board may wish to improve.

Thoughts to Keep in Mind

Board members' perceptions about key roles and the effectiveness of the board, as a whole, may differ. Taking time to discuss the results and come to consensus about where the board is now can help your team define a clearer description of where the board wants to be in the future and where to focus improvement efforts. This self-assessment asks you to provide ratings and thoughts for how you see the board functioning in relation to the six board standards and the related competencies. Your honesty and openness will help make this process more meaningful and useful to you and the whole board team.

Instructions

·   Each board member will complete the assessment individually.
·   Prior to starting, skim the *IASB Standards for Effective School Boards*.
> o Note that each board standard includes a related set of competencies and example indicators of best practice.
> o Use the example indicators of best practice as a guide to help complete the assessment as needed.
> o Note that every indicator does not have to be in place in order to give a high rating for that area.
·   To begin, under each board standard:

o Choose the rating for each competency that best describes the current performance of the board.

o Where helpful, list evidence or cite specific examples to clarify your rationale for the rating you gave each competency.

o Respond to the open-ended question at the end of each section before moving on to the next board standard.

· Finish the assessment by completing the *Prioritizing the Board's Work on the Standards* activity and responding to the last set of open-ended questions.

· Once completed, send your assessment results to the point person for compilation.

Important Considerations

· This completed self-assessment will be beneficial to the board once it has been shared with and discussed by the whole board.

· Any information submitted as part of the self-assessment process may constitute a public record and therefore may be subject to disclosure in compliance with Iowa Code Chapter 22. Please note that the final self-assessment report constitutes a public record and is subject to disclosure in compliance with Iowa Code Chapter 22.

· When completing the assessment, it is vital to use discretion in making narrative comments. It is productive to identify positive behaviors to help enhance the effectiveness of the board. It is also helpful to clarify behaviors that need to change, but is not beneficial to name specific individuals or to blame fellow board members.

Productive sample comment:
The board needs to display respectful behaviors to each other, especially on complex topics.

Unproductive Sample Statement
Jim (or "the board president") needs to stop yelling at others during board meetings.

Standard #1: Operate as a visionary governance team in partnership with the superintendent.

Rating Scale: 1 = Have Not Started, **2** = Just Getting Going,
　　　　　　　3 = Making Progress, **4** = Well On Our Way!

Choose the rating for each competency that best describes the current performance of the board.
Where helpful, provide examples to describe why you selected that rating.

Competencies

1.1 Vision and Planning: Develops a shared vision and plans for student achievement that reflects common values and core beliefs of the school community.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

1.2 Operating Practices: Uses productive practices for its own operations and development.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

1.3 Decision-Making: Ensures board decisions are based on data and deliberation.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

1.4 Board/Superintendent Relations: Cultivates a strong relationship and partnership with the superintendent, based on clear expectations and accountability.	1	2	3	4

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

Summary thoughts:

If this standard were to be a focus for board improvement work, what are **one or two key actions** the board might take?

Standard #2: Provide effective leadership for quality instruction and high, equitable student learning.

Rating Scale: 1 = Have Not Started, **2** = Just Getting Going,
           3 = Making Progress, **4** = Well On Our Way!

Choose the rating for each competency that best describes the current performance of the board.
Where helpful, provide examples to describe why you selected that rating.

Competencies

	1	2	3	4
2.1 Clear Expectations: Sets and communicates high expectations for student learning with clear goals and a focus on strengthening instruction.	1	2	3	4

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

	1	2	3	4
2.2 Conditions for Success: Supports conditions for success through board actions and decisions.	1	2	3	4

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

	1	2	3	4
2.3 Accountability: Holds the system accountable to reach student learning goals.	1	2	3	4

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

2.4 Collective Commitment: Builds the collective commitment of community and staff to achieve the student learning goals.	1	2	3	4

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

2.5 Team Learning: Learns together as a whole team to inform decision-making around the student learning goals.	1	2	3	4

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

Summary thoughts:

If this standard were to be a focus for board improvement work, what are **one or two key actions** the board might take?

Standard #3 Foster a culture that enables excellence and innovation.

Rating Scale: 1 = Have Not Started, **2** = Just Getting Going,
3 = Making Progress, **4** = Well On Our Way!

Choose the rating for each competency that best describes the current performance of the board.
Where helpful, provide examples to describe why you selected that rating.

Competencies

3.1 High Quality Staff: Empowers the superintendent in hiring and developing the best employees available to meet the district's goals.	1	2	3	4

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

3.2 Shared Leadership: Supports structures that develop instructional leadership and collaboration.	1	2	3	4

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

3.3 Staff Learning: Supports research-based staff professional development aligned with district goals.	1	2	3	4

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

3.4 Environment: Fosters a safe and secure environment for all students, staff, and visitors.	1	2	3	4

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

Summary thoughts:

If this standard were to be a focus for board improvement work, what are **one or two key actions** the board might take?

Standard #4 Lead through sound policy, ensuring transparent, ethical, legal operations.

Rating Scale: 1 = Have Not Started, **2** = Just Getting Going,
           3 = Making Progress, **4** = Well On Our Way!

Choose the rating for each competency that best describes the current performance of the board.
Where helpful, provide examples to describe why you selected that rating.

Competencies

4.1 Policy Leadership: Develops sound, written policy to clarify the board's intent for district direction.	1	2	3	4

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

4.2 Legal: Ensures that board and district actions are in compliance with state and federal laws, appropriately addressing legal issues when they arise.	1	2	3	4

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

4.3 **Ethics:** Models ethical and legal behaviors which enable the board to stay focused on district goals.	1	2	3	4

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

4.4 **Transparency:** Establishes policies and ensures processes that are open and accountable.	1	2	3	4

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

Summary thoughts:

If this standard were to be a focus for board improvement work, what are **one or two key actions** the board might take?

Standard #5 Sustain and enhance district resources through planning and fiduciary oversight.

Rating Scale: 1 = Have Not Started, **2** = Just Getting Going,
              3 = Making Progress, **4** = Well On Our Way!

Choose the rating for each competency that best describes the current performance of the board.
Where helpful, provide examples to describe why you selected that rating.

Competencies

5.1 Financial Health: Monitors and evaluates the financial health of the district, ensuring accountability and transparency in board decision making.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

5.2 Financial Forecasting: Ensures strong financial planning for the district.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

5.3 Budgeting: Ensures the district budget aligns with district goals and multi-year plans.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

5.4 Risk Oversight: Ensures sufficient risk management is in place to protect district resources.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

5.5 Facilities: Ensures school facilities enhance and enrich student and staff learning.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

Summary thoughts:

If this standard were to be a focus for board improvement work, what are **one or two key actions** the board might take?

Standard #6 Advocate for public education and the needs of Iowa students.

Rating Scale: 1 = Have Not Started, **2** = Just Getting Going,
3 = Making Progress, **4** = Well On Our Way!

Choose the rating for each competency that best describes the current performance of the board.
Where helpful, provide examples to describe why you selected that rating.

Competencies

	1	2	3	4
6.1 Championing Local Governance & Public Education: Clearly articulates and advocates for the value of public education and the important role of local school governance.	1	2	3	4

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

	1	2	3	4
6.2 Legislative Advocacy: Develops and strengthens on-going relationships with policymakers around improving student achievement and the needs of public education.	1	2	3	4

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

	1	2	3	4
6.3 Community Engagement: Fosters engagement and collaboration with all stakeholders to ensure high and equitable student learning.	1	2	3	4

Provide an example or rationale (optional):

Summary thoughts:

If this standard were to be a focus for board improvement work, what are **one or two key actions** the board might take?

Prioritizing the Board's Work on the Standards

You've assessed your board's performance on the board standards and competencies. Next, consider where your board can best leverage your time at the board table to focus on priority areas of work to ultimately advance student learning.

Step One: Review your summary thoughts for potential actions for each standard. Consider: Which areas are most critical and in need of the board's time and attention?

 Step Two: Select the top **three** priority standards where your board team should devote considerable time and energy at the board table. Assign a point value to each of those three standards:

·   **5** points to the highest priority standard – the area of work you feel has the greatest potential for positively impacting the board's work in improving student learning. It would reflect a significant amount of time on board meeting and workshop agendas throughout the year.

·   **3** points to second priority standard which you also feel is also very important; but at this time would require less time and attention from the board than the higher priority standard area.

·   **1** point to the third priority standard that you believe would allow the board to make a difference in its performance with a minimum of effort or at this time is sufficient to allocate less time toward.

Standard	Priority Points
Visionary Team	

Student Learning	
District Culture	
Policy & Legal	
Fiscal Responsibility	
Advocacy	

Please explain your reasoning for the three standards you prioritized.

Reflection: Please respond to the following questions.

1. What do you believe are the greatest strengths of the board team?

2. What do you believe are the greatest challenges facing the board team?

3. What should the board be doing to maximize its strengths and address these challenges?

Next Steps:
Guidance for Whole Board Discussion

Once board members have completed the self-assessment, the whole board should devote time to discuss the compiled results and plan future actions for growth and focus. Here are two questions the board may consider during the discussion phase of the effort:

1. After whole board sharing and discussion, what are the big picture themes? Which one, two or three standards would be most beneficial for the board to concentrate on during the next one to two years?

2. What key board actions would have the most powerful impact on the effectiveness of the board?

Other resources available to assist are IASB's *School Board Self-Assessment Facilitator's Guide* and *Suggested Guiding Questions for Board Team Discussions.* These resources and others can be found at www.ia-sb.org.

Appendix B
Robert's Rules of Order – Simplified

Guiding Principles:

- Everyone has the right to participate in discussion if they wish, before anyone may speak a second time.

- Everyone has the right to know what is going on at all times. Only urgent matters may interrupt a speaker.

- Only one thing (motion) can be discussed at a time.

A **motion** is the topic under discussion (e.g., "I move that we add a coffee break to this meeting"). After being recognized by the president of the board, any member can introduce a motion when no other motion is on the table. A motion requires a second to be considered. If there is no second, the matter is not considered. Each motion must be disposed of (passed, defeated, tabled, referred to committee, or postponed indefinitely).

How to do things:

You want to bring up a new idea before the group.
After recognition by the president of the board, present your motion. A second is required for the motion to go to the floor for discussion, or consideration.

You want to change some of the wording in a motion under discussion.
After recognition by the president of the board, move to amend by

• adding words,

• striking words or

• striking and inserting words.

You like the idea of a motion being discussed, but you need to reword it beyond simple word changes.
Move to substitute your motion for the original motion. If it is seconded, discussion will continue on both motions and eventually the body will vote on which motion they prefer.

You want more study and/or investigation given to the idea being discussed.
Move to refer to a committee. Try to be specific as to the charge to the committee.

You want more time personally to study the proposal being discussed.
Move to postpone to a definite time or date.

You are tired of the current discussion.
Move to limit debate to a set period of time or to a set number of speakers. Requires a 2/3^{rds} vote.

You have heard enough discussion.
Move to close the debate. Also referred to as calling the question. This cuts off discussion and brings the assembly to a vote on the pending question only. Requires a 2/3^{rds} vote.

You want to postpone a motion until some later time.
Move to table the motion. The motion may be taken from the table after 1 item of business has been conducted. <u>If the motion is not taken from the table by the end of the next meeting, it is dead.</u> To kill a motion at the time it is tabled requires a 2/3^{rds}vote. A majority is required to table a motion without killing it.

You believe the discussion has drifted away from the agenda and want to bring it back. "Call for orders of the day."

You want to take a short break.
Move to recess for a set period of time.

You want to end the meeting.
Move to adjourn.

You are unsure the president of the board announced the results of a vote correctly.
Without being recognized, call for a "division of the house." A roll call vote will then be taken.

You are confused about a procedure being used and want clarification.
Without recognition, call for "Point of Information" or "Point of Parliamentary Inquiry." The president of the board will ask you to state your question and will attempt to clarify the situation.

You have changed your mind about something that was voted on earlier in the meeting for which you were on the winning side.
Move to reconsider. If the majority agrees, the motion comes back on the floor as though the vote had not occurred.

You want to change an action voted on at an earlier meeting.
Move to rescind. If previous written notice is given, a simple majority is required. If no notice is given, a 2/3^{rds} vote is required.

Unanimous Consent:
If a matter is considered relatively minor or opposition is not expected, a call for unanimous consent may be requested. If the request is made by others, the president of the board will repeat the request and then pause for objections. If none are heard, the motion passes.

• **You may INTERRUPT a speaker for these reasons only**:
- o to get information about business –point of information to get information about rules– parliamentary inquiry
- o if you can't hear, safety reasons, comfort, etc. –question of privilege
- o if you see a breach of the rules –point of order
- o if you disagree with the president of the board's ruling –appeal
- o if you disagree with a call for Unanimous Consent –object

Quick Reference					
	Must Be Seconded	Open for Discussion	Can be Amended	Vote Count Required to Pass	May Be Reconsidered or Rescinded
Main Motion	√	√	√	Majority	√
Amend Motion	√	√		Majority	√
Kill a Motion	√			Majority	√
Limit Debate	√		√	2/3^{rds}	√
Close Discussion	√			2/3^{rds}	√
Recess	√		√	Majority	
Adjourn (End meeting)	√			Majority	
Refer to Committee	√	√	√	Majority	√
Postpone to a later time	√	√	√	Majority	√
Table	√			Majority	
Postpone Indefinitely	√	√	√	Majority	√

Appendix C
Educational Acronyms

General educational terms

- AP: Advanced Placement. AP courses are nationally recognized and approved courses oftentimes provided for those students advancing or accelerating in content.
- AYP: Adequate Yearly Progress. A measure of how well students are achieving academic standards.
- BLT: Building Leadership Team. A group of teachers administrators who collaborate on school-level decisions.
- BOE: Board of Education. The governing body of a school district, elected by the community.
- CTE: Career and Technical Education. Programs focusing on job-specific skills and training.
- DLT: District Leadership Team. A group of teachers administrators who collaborate on district-level decisions. Teachers are paid a stipend through TLC monies.
- ELA: English Language Arts. Refers to the curriculum and instruction related to reading, writing, and communication in English.
- ESSA: Every Student Succeeds Act. The most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, focusing on state and local control over education with federal oversight.
- FTE: Full-Time Equivalent. A measure used to represent the workload of an employed person, often used in staffing and budget discussions.
- LEP: Limited English Proficiency. Often replaced by "English Learner (EL)" or "English Language Learner (ELL)" to describe students whose native language is not English and require additional language support.
- MTSS: Multi-Tiered System of Supports. RTI plus attendance and behavior for a system of support that is tiered to address student needs.
- NCLB: No Child Left Behind. A previous version of the federal education law focusing on accountability and testing.
- PD: Professional Development or Professional Learning. Refers to learning for the adult educators.
- RTI: Response to Intervention is a multitiered approach to provide systematic assistance to students who are struggling academically.
- SAT: Student Assistance Team. A school-based team that assists teachers with students who are experiencing academic or behavioral difficulties.

- SEL: Social Emotional Learning. An integral part of education and human development, focusing on skills like self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.
- SIP: School Improvement Plan. A plan developed by a school outlining goals and strategies for improving academic performance and student outcomes.
- SRO: School Resource Officer. Special trained law enforcement assigned to work in schools.
- STEM/STEAM: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (and Arts). An acronym for the related fields of study, often a focus in curriculum and programs.
- Title I: A federal program providing funding to schools with a high percentage of students from low-income families to support their academic needs.
- TIF: Tax Incremental Financing. A public financing method used as a subsidy for redevelopment, infrastructure, and other community improvement projects.
- TLC: Teacher Leadership Committee. TLC has monies from the state dedicated to help encourage teacher leadership. These monies can only be paid to teachers in leadership positions. In our district the DLT serves as the current input group on TLC monies.

Special education terms

- 504 Plan: A plan for a student with a disability outlining accommodations and services needed to access education, falling under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act. A civil rights law prohibiting discrimination against individuals with disabilities and requiring reasonable accommodations.
- BIP: Behavior Intervention Plan. A plan to address challenging behaviors exhibited by students, often developed after a Functional Behavior Assessment.
- ELL: English Language Learners. Students whose native language is not English and who are developing English proficiency.
- FAPE: Free Appropriate Public Education. The right of all children with disabilities to receive special education and related services at public expense.
- FBA: Functional Behavior Assessment. A systematic process used to determine the function or purpose of challenging behaviors and inform the development of intervention plans.
- IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. A federal law ensuring that children with disabilities have access to a free and appropriate public education.
- IEP: Individualized Education Program. A legal document outlining the specialized instruction, support, and services for students with disabilities.
- LRE: Least Restrictive Environment. A principle in special education that students with

disabilities should be educated with their non-disabled peers to the greatest extent appropriate.
- MTSS: Multi-Tiered Systems of Support. A framework for providing tiered levels of support to students based on their individual needs.
- SPED: Special Education. Educational services and support for students with disabilities.

This is not an exhaustive list, as some acronyms are specific to certain districts or states. However, familiarity with these common terms will help you better understand discussions and decisions made during school board meetings.