

# School Board Governance Handbook

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## **Vision**

*We Inspire, Innovate, and Create  
Limitless Opportunities to Thrive*

## **Mission Statement**

### *Quality Education for Life*

Through rigorous academic standards, high expectations, and a coordinated curriculum, the Coronado Unified School District, in partnership with our community, will graduate students with the knowledge and skills necessary to excel in higher education, careers, society, and life with the confidence not only to dream, but to determine their futures.

## **Board Goals 2015 — 2020**

- Integrate personalized learning with assessment methods that will prepare all students for academic and vocational success.
- Communicate openly, freely, and accurately to engage and involve all shareholders.
- Maintain safe and supportive schools where students and staff thrive.

## Objectives

- Our graduates will have the necessary preparation to choose their post-graduate paths.
- Our community will be aware of our mission and be involved with the education and well being of our students.
- Our facilities will provide the environment that ensures the success of our District's Mission and reflects the high expectations of our community.

## Values and Beliefs

- All individuals have worth.
- All individuals are responsible and accountable for their actions.
- Accepting responsibility for one's actions and beliefs is fundamental for the personal integrity that contributes to societal success.
- Families, schools, and communities are mutually dependent; strengthening any one strengthens the whole.
- Learning is a life-long process.
- People learn in different ways.
- Communication is an essential basic skill.
- Contributing to one's community is the responsibility of everyone.
- We are part of a global community.
- Teamwork makes organizations more effective. Focusing on our commonalities while respecting differences strengthens society.
- The family is primarily responsible for the development of values.
- The coming together of cultures, histories and personalities is only possible in an organization that respects diverse perspectives and encourages participation by anyone interested in being a part of it.

## Parameters

- Decisions will be based upon the best interests of the students.
- We will be aware of and responsive to the changing needs of the community.
- Open communication will continue among the board, staff, students, parents, administration, and the community.
- We will recruit and retain the highest quality staff to meet the needs of the students.
- Through teamwork we will accomplish our Strategic Plan.
- We will have strong evaluation and accountability of all staff and programs.
- We will support and require staff development at all levels.

# **Governance Team Norms and Protocols**

## **Norms**

We understand that the work of the Board is to establish the vision, create policies, and assure accountability. This Board will emphasize planning, policy-making, and communication rather than becoming involved in the management of the schools. The Board will set clear goals for themselves and the Superintendent. The Board and Superintendent will facilitate goal setting for the school district.

The Superintendent, as the chief executive officer, manages the schools and makes recommendations, proposals, or suggestions on most matters that come before the Board.

We understand that Board meetings are meetings of the Board held in public, not open forum town hall meetings. We will keep this in mind as we conduct our meetings, allowing the public to provide input at the time allotted to ensure the multiple voices from the community inform Board deliberations.

We will consistently abide by our formal processes so that all persons are treated fairly and equally. We will do our homework and improve leadership skills by attending board training and networking opportunities.

The Board will lead by example. We agree to avoid words and actions that create a negative impression on an individual, the Board, or the District. While we encourage debate and differing points of view, we will do it with care and respect.

## **Board Protocols**

Board protocols describe how the Board Members serve and perform during and outside of meetings.

Boards operate in meetings. Individual Board Members do not have authority. The only authority to direct action rests with the body as a whole and it takes a consensus or majority of the Board Members to set direction. Outside of meetings, individual Members operate as advocates and community leaders.

The following protocols outline how individual Members of this Board agree to conduct both the public's business and themselves.

1. Agenda Questions Before a Meeting
2. Bringing New Agenda Items
3. Consent Calendar
4. Timing of Board Meetings
5. Hearing Agenda Items: (Staff Reports, Action Items, Voting, Use of Abstentions, and Conflicts of Interest)
6. Community and Public Input
7. Requests for Information
8. Requests for Action
9. Board Members' Role in Public
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We have read and agreed to the aforementioned governance team norms and protocols in order to support a positive and productive working relationship among the Coronado Unified Unified School District Board of Education, staff, students, parents and the greater community.

We agree to:

- Review and renew these protocols and norms annually
- Create and support effective and efficient governance leadership
- Communicate openly, freely and accurately

*Affirmed on this 4<sup>th</sup> day of June 2015*

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Dawn Ovrom, Board President

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Maria Simon, Board Vice-President

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Ledge Hakes, Board Clerk

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Lee Pontes, Trustee

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Lou Smith, Trustee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeffrey Felix, Superintendent

# Protocols

## 1) Agenda Questions Asked Before a Meeting

### Protocols:

- Board Members have an opportunity to meet with the Superintendent one on one before the Board meeting to discuss comments/questions on the agenda. Within Brown Act guidelines and to the extent possible, Board Members should attempt to have the Superintendent answer questions and resolve concerns with items in the proposed agenda at this meeting in order to save time at the subsequent public meeting.
- Board Members will, insofar as possible, let the Superintendent and staff know ahead of time when a request for information will be made in public so that staff can be prepared to provide a thorough answer.

## 2) Bringing New Agenda Items

### Protocols:

- If there are at least two Board Members who wish to place an item on the agenda, it shall be placed on a future agenda in a timely manner by the Superintendent.
- The best time to recommend items is during the period at the end of each meeting that is set aside for general Board comments. If the President determines two Members agree on the item, he/she will refer it immediately to the Superintendent for inclusion. The Superintendent will then recommend a future meeting date for bringing the item before the Board based upon the anticipated length of time his/her staff will need to prepare for discussion of the item.
- The Board recognizes that from time to time issues may come up during the periods between scheduled meetings that require immediate presentation to the Board. In these cases the President may give the Superintendent latitude to include these items on an upcoming agenda without the concurrence of a second Board member.
- The Public may submit written requests, anytime, for agenda items to any Board member, who will then forward the request to the Superintendent and Board President. The Public may also make a verbal request for an agenda item at the meeting during public comments on non-agendized items. However, such requests must be supported by at least two Board Members per above guidelines.

## 3) Consent Calendar

Housed within the agenda, the purpose of the Consent Calendar is to expedite routine operational business with minimal discussion.

### Protocols:

- The Board will move and approve the Consent Calendar as a whole unless items are pulled. Items on the Consent calendar may be pulled when approving the agenda at the beginning of the meeting. Discussion and vote on particular items occurs only when an item is pulled. There are two specific times that call for an item to be pulled:
  1. When a trustee plans to vote “no”,
  2. When a trustee needs further information or discussion before deciding how to vote.

- A member of the public may request that an item be pulled from the Consent Calendar, and discussed/voted upon separately, during the initial time for public input.
- Pulled items trail to the end of the entire agenda.
- Prior to the vote seeking approval for the consent calendar, Board Members may comment on an item without pulling it from the Consent Calendar.

#### 4) **Timing of Board Meetings**

**Protocols:**

- The target time for regular meetings is 2.5 hours.
- The target time for workshops is 1.5 hours. Workshops are intended to shorten the time for regular meetings and to create interest and understanding in a single topic of discussion. Workshops should not add substantively to the workload of the administrative staff.
- Items on the agenda include approximate time for the discussion and the amount of time reserved for that item. If it appears that an item may take more than 5 minutes over the allotted time, the President will ask Board Members whether they want to continue discussion of the item and, if so, for how long.

#### 5) **Hearing Agenda Items**

**Protocols:**

The following order of events and timeline guidance shall apply:

**Staff Reports**

1. Superintendent information and staff presentation
  2. Board member questions (3 min)
  3. Public comment (3 min)
  4. Board member comments (2 min)
  5. Board discussion of Superintendent recommendation
  6. Board acceptance of report
- The above time limits are general guidelines and may be waived or adjusted at the discretion of the Board President (and/or through a motion approved by a majority of the Board).
  - The Board may request further information from or provide additional guidance to the Superintendent at this time. When appropriate, the Board may request a future action item related to the report.
  - Philosophy regarding questions after the report:
    1. Questions and consequent answers should intend to amplify a report and add missing detail from previous comments.
    2. The question should highlight an important value or emphasis for future District direction, being aware that wise judgment is required.
    3. Will the question/answer influence your vote or change the vote of another Member?
    4. Members should be careful to not masquerade personal attacks or competing philosophies as questions
    5. If a Board Member wants to make a substantive point, they will state it clearly and concisely during Board member comment or Board discussion.

- Briefing materials (charts, statistics, PowerPoint, etc.) shall be provided to Board Members preferably 72 hours but not less than 24 hours in advance in order to give Board Members the opportunity to send questions to the Superintendent so that his/her responses can be incorporated into the respective Report(s). Failure to do so erodes Board Member discipline with respect meeting preparation and encourages extemporaneous questions.

### **Action Items**

When the item is up for action, the Board will hear the item in the same way as above and then:

1. Move for action and seek a second on the motion
  - a. If motion dies for lack of a second, no discussion or vote occurs on the motion,
  - b. If there is no second, the chair may ask for a new, possibly related motion and seek a second on that motion.
2. Deliberation by Board Members
3. Call for the Vote

### **Voting**

As a courtesy to the Board, Members should attempt to clarify their intended vote during deliberation.

### **Use of Abstentions**

If a member feels that there is insufficient information to vote on a motion, that member should move that the motion be tabled for lack of information and request the item be placed on a subsequent agenda. If there is no second on his/her motion to table or if the motion does not pass, the member may abstain from a vote. However, agendaized action items are known in advance which provides Board Members ample time and opportunity to receive all information needed to vote intelligently and confidently on the motion in question.

Also, in accordance with Board Bylaw 9323, Members are reminded that “When a member abstains, his/her abstention shall be considered to concur with (any) action taken by the majority.”

### **Conflicts of Interest**

Board Members with personal conflicts with any motion are again reminded of their obligation as Board Members to provide direction and governance within the school district. Abstentions for personal conflicts should be extremely rare, and only taken after due consideration of the possible outcomes.

If a Board member has a financial conflict of interest as defined by Government Code 1090, he/she shall make this known to the Board before discussion of the issue and shall recuse themselves from discussion and/or action taken on the item.

“Conflict of Interest” is explicitly defined in Board Bylaw 9270. Before abstaining on any issue, a Board Member should be thoroughly familiar this Bylaw in its entirety.



## 6) Community and Public Input

### Protocols:

- There are two opportunities for public input at board meetings:
  1. Introducing non-agendized items during the time for public comment
  2. When an agenda item occurs
- In both cases, yellow cards are provided to facilitate public input. Individuals must limit their remarks to 3 minutes.
- When 3 or more cards on the same subject are submitted to address or introduce items not on the agenda, the Board President may hold these comments until after the meeting agenda has been heard.
- The Board hears leadership committee and stakeholder reports from students (ASBs), parents (Parent/Teacher Organizations), teachers (CTA), staff (CSEA), SAFE and CoSA during the time for public comment on non-agendized items.
- Board Members listen to public input and take it into account during discussion and deliberation. However, except for specific questions on committee reports and general comments, Board Members have no direct interaction with the public during a regular Board meeting. It is incumbent on the Board President to acknowledge and thank Members of the public for their input as appropriate. Once Board Members make their comments and move to discussion on an item, the audience and staff no longer participate – the Board conducts the business of the public in public, audience and staff become observers.\*

**\*Exception:** If the Board feels additional public/staff input would be helpful in determining a course of action, the Board President may make such a request of the Superintendent. If desired the Superintendent may request public/staff to come forward to clarify the agenda item in question.

## 7) Requests for Information

### Protocols:

- If it appears that a request for information will take considerable staff time, the Board President will restate the request and ask the Superintendent for input regarding time and resources involved. The Board President will then seek consensus from the entire Board to see if a majority supports the request.
- Board Members will not direct questions to the staff/teachers. Board Members submit all questions directly to the Superintendent. Appointments outside of the public meetings are strongly advised for lengthy inquiries.
- Members will self-monitor to ensure requests for information do not place unnecessary or inordinate demands on the time and resources of District Staff, especially when it may impact their ability to complete their normally assigned duties.
- When an individual Member requests information, it will be provided to all Members.

## 8) Requests for Action

### Protocols:

- The only authority to direct action rests with the full majority of the Board sitting at the Board table.
- Board Members may request action during Board meetings, explaining their interest in a particular course of action and asking that it come back as an action item. The Board President will then restate the request, seek consensus from the entire board to see if a majority supports having the item brought to an upcoming Board meeting for discussion/action.

## 9) Board Members' Role in the Public

### Protocols:

- Board Members are reminded of their obligations as public servants. Board Bylaw 9010 provides great detail with regards to that obligation and should be reviewed periodically by Board Members for compliance.

## 10) Self-monitoring

### Protocols:

- Individual trustees agree to review and adhere to meeting norms, goals and Board Member roles as defined by CSBA and Board Bylaws.
- In order to conduct efficient and effective Board meetings, Board Members will come to the Board meetings prepared and ready to do business. Board Members agree to speak to the issues on the agenda and attend to fellow Board Members respectfully. Facts and information needed from the administration will be referred to the Superintendent. Points are to be made in a few words as possible; speeches at board meetings are discouraged.

### Key Questions for Members to Consider for Effective Meetings

- How much work has already been done at preliminary Board committee sessions?
- Are Members prepared for the meeting?
- Do Members refrain from monopolizing discussion?
- Does everyone really understand the issues?

## 11) Site Visits

### Protocols:

- Board Members are expected to visit at least one school site each month based upon a schedule provided by the Superintendent's office. Board Members shall personally contact the respective site Principal to arrange a convenient calendar date for their visit and forward it to the Superintendent's office. "Drive-bys" or "drop-ins" on staff and schools is discouraged and should be coordinated with Superintendent or his/her assistant.

## 12) Spokesperson

### Protocols:

- The Board President is the spokesperson in response to emails and communications addressed to the entire board. Therefore, he/she will provide an initial response confirming receipt of the communication, explaining the how the Brown Act restrains us from conducting business/discussion in non-public communications, and encouraging the sender to attend a future board meeting where the Board's business is publically conducted. The Board President shall courtesy copy the Superintendent and other Board Members with any such response.
- The Board President is also the initial spokesperson for the Board with respect to controversial or "hot-button" issues that may require explanation beyond confirmation of receipt. This protocol is adopted in recognition that the District's interests may be best served by a timely, informative response to clarify any action taken with regards to the contentious matter. Again, the Board President shall courtesy copy the Superintendent and other Board Members with any such response.
- Nevertheless, this protocol is not intended to stifle comment from other Board Members , particularly if they disagree with remarks offered by the Board President or if they believe that further comments are important to public discussion and understanding of such issues. In providing additional comments, individual Members should:
  - Endeavor to permit the Board President an initial opportunity to comment on the issue,
  - Be mindful that multiple voices may confuse or distract from constructive discussion of the issues,
  - Not circulate their responses to all Board Members as it might risk constituting an inter-active discussion through email in violation of the Brown Act, and
  - Avoid comments that suggest that the individual member's comments represent the viewpoint of the entire board.
- The hope of the Board is that the public will understand that these protocols are intended to achieve a practical and appropriate balance among the following important but at times competing board objectives, namely, a desire to:
  - Be responsive to, and respectful of, communications from the public;
  - Promote efficiency in communications;
  - Be faithful to the sometimes challenging limitations imposed by California's Brown Act.

## 13) Evaluation of the Board

### Protocols:

- Using a workshop setting, the Board will evaluate its effectiveness annually in accordance with Board Bylaw 9400.

## 14) Evaluation of the Superintendent

### Protocols:

- In accordance with his/her contract and prior to the September General Board meeting, the Superintendent will provide the Board with his written goals for the coming school year.
- During closed session following the September Board meeting, the Board and Superintendent will review and discuss his written goals and agree on measurable outcomes.
- During closed session not later than the January Board meeting, the Board and Superintendent will review the goals and progress toward each one. At this time, any other issues should be brought forward by either party to include any contractual issues.
- During closed session not later than the June Board meeting, Board Members will meet without the Superintendent to evaluate his performance based on the aforementioned goals. Assigned Board Members may create a quantitative matrix and/or other helpful subjective tools to help rate and quantify the Superintendent's performance. This detailed evaluation will be discussed in closed session with the Superintendent and a written summary of overall performance will be presented to Human Resources prior to June 30. A more general but no less accurate statement of performance will be read in the Open Session of a General Meeting, also prior to June 30.