



April 27, 2023

Board Member:

RE: BOARD OF EDUCATION PROTOCOLS

The Board of Education operates as a single entity responsible for its governance and processes. In May 2016, the Board of Education, in conjunction with the Superintendent and a representative from the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB), compiled a list of agreements and expectations by which to work together in order to conduct the work of the Township High School District 211 community. The agreements were approved again by the Board of Education in 2017.

In 2019 and 2021, the Board of Education reviewed the agreements in conjunction with the Superintendent and an IASB representative. In June of 2019 and 2021, the Board approved the agreement as protocols with a few revisions.

These protocols are for your review prior to the consideration of their adoption by the newly formed Board of Education at a future meeting.

Lisa Small
Superintendent

Township High School District 211

Board of Education Protocols

Unity of Purpose

We affirm the unique role of public education, whereby each community collectively pools its resources for the common good through the education of its students. Therefore, we seek to uphold and improve public education for our community.

- We want to build trust through CORE (Competence, Openness, Reliability, Equity) and move the District forward.
- We want to become an effective team.
- We want to understand our individual jobs and collective responsibilities.
- We want to be a team with a common, focused direction.
- We want to create a District culture that supports positive change.
- We want to perpetuate a positive District culture that survives in the face of Board member and staff turnover.

Board Governance

1. Board members work together as members of one team comprised of seven voices that make decisions in the best interests of the students and communities we serve. Board members encourage and respect the free expression of opinion by our fellow Board members and participate in Board discussions in an open, honest, and respectful manner, honoring differences of opinion or perspective. Board members abide by majority decisions of the board.
2. The terms within the Oath of Office will guide our decisions, our interactions and our work together.
3. The Board's role is governance and the Superintendent's role is operations and administration. In other words, the Board's role is strategic, giving direction; and the Superintendent's role is operational, executing the Board's direction.
4. Direction is given to the Superintendent at a Board meeting when a majority of the Board agrees to give the direction.
5. The Board President is the spokesperson for the Board to the media. The Superintendent or designee is the spokesperson for the District.
6. As a non-partisan Board and organization, we have a fiduciary responsibility that we will be driven singly by the goals established by the Board and not by special interests.

Meeting Preparation

7. Board members will contact the Superintendent with questions about agenda items or supporting materials before the scheduled Board meeting. Every effort will be made to make this contact at least 24 hours before the Board meeting.

8. Asking questions in advance of a Board meeting allows preparation both for Board members and the Superintendent, and leads to effective and efficient discussion and meetings.
9. An intention to request a potential addition to a future Board meeting agenda item will be shared with the Board President and/or Superintendent, whenever possible as a courtesy, before a Board meeting and will then be raised for consideration by the Board at a Board meeting in open session under the agenda item, "Potential Topics for Future Discussion."
10. A majority of the Board will agree in open session before putting an item on a future Board meeting agenda and before significant staff time is expended.

Board Member Responsibilities

11. Board members respect the confidentiality of privileged information and will not divulge conversations, discussions, or deliberations that take place during a closed session meeting.
12. Board members understand that to divulge closed session information not only damages the relationship of the team, but has the potential for far-reaching consequences which may impact future District operations.
13. When disagreements occur, the Board will disagree respectfully and maturely in a way that does not disrupt the ongoing work.
14. Board members will be respectful toward all staff and will be respectful of staff's time when requesting information. The Superintendent will notify a Board member if a request is overly cumbersome. The Board member may choose to suggest the item as a future agenda topic.
15. Board members will read all Board packets and supporting documentation before the Board meeting.
16. If an individual Board member has an interaction/communication with the press regarding District business, the individual Board member will inform the Superintendent and Board President.
17. Board members will be judicious in their use of email and understand that most emails are subject to the Freedom of Information Act and as such, can be made public.
18. Board members will refrain from any disparagement of fellow board members and school district administration and will not undermine Board decisions while making public statements.
19. When two or more Board members are "tagged" by community members on a matter that is a current or potential District issues, remove yourself or ask to have yourself removed from that conversation to avoid the appearance of any Open Meeting Act violations.

20. Board members will be judicious in their use of social media.

21. In compliance with the Open Meetings Act, Board members will not “reply to all” to any District email. Board members will not email other Board members stating their thoughts or opinions.

Approved by the Board of Education:	May 12, 2016
Revised:	May 23, 2019
Revised:	June 17, 2021
Reaffirmed:	April 7, 2022