



OPERATING PRINCIPLES

CENTRAL KITSAP SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD - ADMINISTRATION

DECEMBER 2021

School Board

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District Mission, Vision, and Goals

Mission: Central Kitsap School District's mission is to equip our students with the knowledge and skills to succeed and prosper in an ever-changing global society.

Vision: Central Kitsap School District will be an academically strong, fiscally sound, and safe, positive learning community.

Goal 1 – ALL STUDENTS ENGAGED AND LEARNING

Ensure that all students have the knowledge and skills to prepare for new challenges, both in school and beyond graduation.

Objectives

- *Promote academic success for all students by increasing learning options that develop their unique talents, interests, and abilities*
- *Integrate technology to transform learning, enhance curriculum, encourage collaboration and promote critical thinking so that all students are prepared to thrive in a global community*
- *Assist students in creating achievable academic goals and in monitoring their own progress toward these goals*
- *Challenge all students to learn and grow by providing relevant curriculum and assessments*
- *Provide college and career opportunities to help students and their families make appropriate educational choices*

Goal 2 – SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE SCHOOLS

Promote positive learning environments that are secure, welcoming, and culturally respectful.

Objectives

- *Design and maintain educational facilities that are safe for students, staff, and the community*
- *Promote a culture of respect that is free from harassment, bullying, and aggression*
- *Foster a supportive school environment that values the well-being, integrity and character development of each student*
- *Ensure that front office staff welcomes visitors, supports volunteers, and monitors building access*

Goal 3 – A WELL-DEVELOPED, HIGHLY SKILLED AND EFFECTIVE STAFF

Build a foundation for quality instruction and personalized learning.

Objectives

- *Successfully recruit, support, and retain an exceptional staff that is passionate about learning*
- *Provide relevant, timely, and effective professional development opportunities for all staff*
- *Encourage staff leadership, professional collaboration, and skill development throughout our District*
- *Empower staff to adjust instructional strategies so that students experience multiple opportunities to learn fundamental concepts*

Goal 4 – FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Cultivate community support for our schools, and school support for our community.

Objectives

- *Build collaborative community partnerships to offer real-world learning opportunities, mobilize resources, and encourage students to give back to our community*
- *Promote effective communication between home and school to strengthen family support for student learning*
- *Develop communication tools to present data, provide transparency, share stories, and encourage community involvement in our schools*
- *Provide ongoing opportunities for community input and feedback to help inform major decisions*

Goal 5 – FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Align resources with strategic goals to realize our mission and vision.

Objectives

- *Provide the resources, equipment, and technology infrastructure to support innovative teaching and personalized learning*
- *Ensure that long-range facilities planning supports educational goals and safe learning environments*
- *Identify and implement efficiencies to maximize resources for students*

When Operating Principles are not followed, it is the responsibility of individual Board members to raise the issue and clarify the application of guidelines.

Introduction

Operating Principles define our beliefs, values, and methods of working together. Successful organizations are the result of effective and dynamic leadership. To assure quality operations, leaders must agree on basic ways of working together.

Recognizing that individuals are unique and important will enhance our Operating Principles and develop a high level of organizational confidence. The manner in which the Board and Administration (i.e., Superintendent) conduct their business becomes a model throughout the District for students, teachers, parents, and staff on how problems are solved.

The following principles outline a philosophy of cooperative behavior that is agreed upon by Board members and Administration. As members of the management team, we are committed to upholding these principles. When Operating Principles are not followed, it is the responsibility of individual Board members to raise the issue and clarify the application of these guidelines.

1. COMMUNICATIONS, COOPERATION, AND SUPPORT

In order to facilitate clear and consistent communications, provide equal access to information and ensure free flow of information in a timely manner, responses and answers to questions posed by Board members to the Superintendent and Cabinet members will be shared with all members of the School Board and the Superintendent.

Board and Administration: Recognize that open communication requires trust, respect, and a fundamental belief in goodwill among Board members and staff. We agree to:

- ✓ Support each other constructively and courteously.
- ✓ Address disagreements privately.
- ✓ Work to maximize mutual understanding and promote collaboration and consensus.
- ✓ Maintain confidentiality.
- ✓ Allow ourselves and others the freedom to admit mistakes.
- ✓ Encourage constructive disagreement.
- ✓ Focus our discussions on issues, not personalities—free of defensiveness.
- ✓ Balance our honesty with sensitivity toward others.
- ✓ Operate with integrity.
- ✓ Develop a thorough understanding of issues and concerns.
- ✓ Involve those parties who will be affected by the decision and solution.
- ✓ Only provide direction to the Superintendent or Administration as a Board.
- ✓ Commit to getting to know one another and the ideas and issues that are important to that individual.

Administration: Meet with association leaders to ensure a thorough understanding of issues and concerns.

Pertinent Reference

- Board Policy 1620

2. EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

All Board meetings will be conducted in an orderly and businesslike manner, using Roberts Rules of Order as a guide except when such rules are superseded by Board policies.

▪ **No Surprises**

Board: Share ideas about new programs and new directions, with the Superintendent and other members of the Board when appropriate, before publicly presenting major proposals.

Administration: Bring matters to the Board in a timely fashion. Present programs or projects well enough in advance, so that suggestions for change proposed by the Board can be addressed without upsetting activities already “in motion.”

▪ **Input/Option Items**

Board: Let the Administration know about issues of concern and interest to the Board so that it is easier for the Administration to distinguish between items the Board wishes to discuss, and items Administration should handle independently. Try to come to agreement on “option” items as a Board.

Administration: Bring to the Board in a timely fashion all issues, plans, or programs that meet the following criteria:

- Likely to be sensitive in the community.
- Major change in program.
- Major cost item.
- Major deployment of staff.

The time frame for presenting such items to the Board should allow for Board deliberation and input. Administration should provide options and alternatives to the Board, which include the strengths and weaknesses of the options.

▪ **Be Prepared**

Board: Read all materials in advance. Whenever possible, forward questions to the Superintendent and/or appropriate administrator seeking clarification and information, and explain major concerns about proposals, topics or issues prior to discussion at a meeting.

Administration: Develop recommendations that combine the best interests of students and the needs of the District with the focus and direction the Board generally wishes to take. Board input during the goal-setting process can provide direction here.

▪ **Present Differing Perspectives Without Becoming Disagreeable**

Board: Try to resolve major differences with one another or the Administration in private. Use executive sessions to address complaints related to staff or public officers. State your position but accept the will of the majority of the Board and make every effort – in action and in spirit – to follow through.

Administration: In alignment with the Board, state your position but accept the will of the majority of the Board, and make every effort—in action and in spirit—to follow through.

Board and Administration: Differ with each other in a positive and constructive fashion. Watch “tone of voice,” “choice of words,” and other actions that keep a debate as a discussion, not an argument. Handle personal concerns in private. Give as much attention to the manner in which you disagree as you do to the particular issue.

▪ **Handling Controversy at Meetings**

Board: Develop an agreed-upon procedure for dealing with controversy and sensitive issues at meetings. For example, agree that the President may call a short recess if it appears that people need to “regroup” or regain composure. Talk with agitated people privately; or, agree to call a special meeting to deal with a topic that appears likely to take the entire night and/or may involve issues that require consideration in executive session, such as complaints about personnel. It may mean another meeting, but it could provide a cooling off period, an opportunity to discuss the issue with staff to be better prepared, and a time for concentrated attention to the issue.

The Board rarely takes final action on a concern during the meeting at which it is presented. While the Board will respond in a timely fashion, it needs time to give the issue review and study.

Per Policy 1430, the Board does not receive or consider specific complaints related to individual staff members or public officers in open session. To protect the rights of individuals, concerns about staff members will first be considered by the Superintendent and, if requested, scheduled for consideration by the Board in executive session.

Request that large groups identify a spokesperson, and clearly establish time limits for speakers when large numbers of people wish to speak.

Administration: Resolve concerns at administrative levels outside the Board arena (example: the textbook complaint process), but prepare and forewarn the Board if a concern is likely to come its way. Assist the Board in upholding Board guidelines for dealing with controversial situations at meetings. For example, if the Board President calls a short recess in order to defuse a situation, use the break to make a personal effort to calm people (i.e., don’t just sit back and let the Board handle everything alone).

Pertinent References

- Board Policies 1220, 1430, 1620 and 1711

3. DECISION MAKING

The identification and evaluation of alternatives, an awareness of short- and long-term consequences, an appreciation for the needs of the group as well as individuals, and sensitivity toward collective action are essential to the decision-making process.

Board and Administration: In order to formulate and execute sound decisions, we agree to:

- ✓ Resolve problems at the lowest level possible.
- ✓ Clearly communicate decisions.
- ✓ Consider input from key stakeholders.
- ✓ Use a decision-making style appropriate to the situation.
- ✓ Establish a rational basis for each decision.
- ✓ Make decisions consistent with Board policies, the strategic plan, and goals.
- ✓ Whenever possible, communicate the rationale for making a decision that has been superseded by a higher level of authority to those involved before releasing the information.
- ✓ Use of equity lens to help in decision-making.

Pertinent References

- Board Policies 0030, 1005, and 1711

4. DEALING WITH CITIZEN OR STAFF CONCERNS

Board: The Board, individually and collectively, will refer promptly to the Superintendent and/or appropriate administrator for study and recommendation, all criticisms, concerns, complaints, inquiries, and suggestions called to their or its attention. For example:

- ✓ Remind the individual that you will share his/her identity with the Superintendent, Board members, and/or appropriate administrator.
- ✓ Listen to the individual's concern.
- ✓ Inquire if the individual has discussed the issue with the person immediately responsible. If this has not been done, explain how to contact the appropriate person.
- ✓ Explain the District process for resolving concerns and conflicts. Describe the appropriate channels that should be followed if the concern is not resolved.
- ✓ The last stop, not the first, will be the Board. We agree to follow the chain of command and insist that others do so. While the Board is eager to listen to its constituents and staff, all formal inquiries will be referred to the Superintendent and/or appropriate administrator who can properly and expeditiously address the issue.
- ✓ Explain that, as a final resource, a concern can be submitted to the Board, but that Board practice is to carefully investigate concerns before taking any actions. Explain that concerns raised against employees will not be received or addressed in public unless specifically requested by the affected employees.
- ✓ Be cautious of giving the appearance of agreeing with the person; sometimes just listening can give an individual the impression you are on "their side." Remember that anything you say might be understood as the "position of the Board or the Administration." Always ensure that the citizen or staff member understands that a single Board Director cannot ensure any specific result based on a private discussion.

Administration: Keep the Board informed of any staff or citizens' complaints likely to come before the Board.

Pertinent Reference

- Board Policy 1430, 1620P, 4220
- Superintendent's Contract of Employment

5. DEVELOPMENT, ADMINISTRATION, AND REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY

Board: Exercise final approval over all policies. Study administrative reports on the implementation of policies and the effectiveness of policies. Once policies are approved by the majority of the members of the Board, support them even though you may have initially spoken against them.

Administration: Develop and recommend policy and policy changes to the Board. Advise and assist the Board in its review and approval of policies. Share concerns about ideas that may not work. Once in place, support the policies of the Board whether or not you are in full agreement. Inform the Board of the manner in which policies are being administered, and when and if they may need to be revised.

Pertinent References

- Board Policy 1310, 1320 and 1620
- Roles and Responsibilities document

6. EVALUATION AND BOARD STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Board: Establish strong and fair policies related to the evaluation of all District staff. Serve as a role model to staff by evaluating the effectiveness of Board operations.

Administration: Support Board policies regarding evaluation and approach of your own evaluation as well as the evaluations of those you supervise, with the serious intent to work toward improvement. Serve as a role model to those you supervise through your own willingness to be evaluated.

Board and Administration: Commit to being supportive of each other's need to be recognized and rewarded for achievements as well as to be counseled and assisted when concerns arise about performance. Commit to being proactive in your own education, growth, and development and be supportive of the growth and development of others.

Pertinent References

- Board Policies 1820, 1822, 5240, and 5520

7. JUDGMENT AND TRUST

Board and Administration: The complexities of operating a school district cannot be fully addressed in policy, procedures, or Operating Principles. Working with people and handling difficult and controversial issues on a daily basis requires good judgment, common sense, and a strong trust relationship between Board and staff. Every concern cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties involved; every issue or concern will not be foreseen. For these reasons, trust in each other, allowance for error, and team efforts are key parts of an effective school district operation.

Board: Serving on the Central Kitsap School District Board of Directors is a privilege and requires a commitment to earning the trust and respect of our community, parents, students, and staff who believe our behavior and decisions should set an example both publicly and privately. Board members are expected to set a high standard of civility and respect that is reflected throughout their term of service.

As elected officials, individual Board member's private social media accounts can be perceived as statements and beliefs of the Board of Directors and District leadership. Board members are encouraged to post a statement on their private social media accounts annually that their comments, re-postings, photographs, or other messages do not reflect the opinions or beliefs of the Central Kitsap School District Board of Directors or the Central Kitsap School District.

Pertinent References

- Board Policies 1005, 1620, and 1711