



# **BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER HANDBOOK**

Adopted  
January 27, 2015

*“The expectation is that to be a professional Board, it acts respectfully and responsibly to each other as well as to the staff. Hopefully it will be institutionalized.”*

*-Robert J. Rader, Executive Director of the  
Connecticut Association of Board of Education*

## **Preamble**

The Tiffin Board of Education understands that access to a quality public education is not just a constitutional requirement, but is also a moral imperative to ensure that all individuals have an opportunity to fully develop their talents, moral imagination and essential humanity. Accordingly, all students of the Tiffin City Schools are entitled to a quality educational experience that prepares them to be lifelong learners.

In order to provide the necessary and appropriate leadership for the Tiffin City Schools, the Tiffin Board of Education, both collectively and individually, is committed to governing as a professional board of directors. This means a commitment to the principles and practice of professional governance, the sharing of a common understanding of Board policies, practices, procedures and principles, a focus on continuous learning and improvement, and a willingness to serve as a model of effective moral leadership to students, staff and the community. This handbook is an attempt to set down in writing the Board's procedures and principles for the benefit of current and future members of the Tiffin Board of Education.

## **Our Vision**

*Tiffin City Schools.....Great Schools! Great Students! Great Future!*

## **Our Mission**

*The mission of the Tiffin City Schools is to **guarantee** that all students achieve success at their full learning potential.*

## **District Charting the Course Goals**

### **CAREER-BASED EDUCATION**

1. To create career exploration/preparation activities at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.
2. To partner with our business community for the purpose of career exploration.
3. To provide one-on-one guidance regarding future career aspirations.

### **CHARACTER EDUCATION**

4. To implement a character education program based on the Search Institutes 40 Developmental Assets to develop strong relationships within school, community and family.
5. To promote community service through volunteerism and organized projects.
6. To encourage and promote pride and ownership within the school community.

### **STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND LEARNING**

7. To guarantee that all students are College and/or Career Ready when they graduate from the Tiffin City Schools.
8. To maximize resources (personnel, programs, materials, funding, etc...) to guarantee that students are receiving the intervention and/or enrichment necessary to reach their full learning potential.
9. To meet and exceed all state indicators of educational progress as defined by the local report card.
10. To create a PreK-12 learning environment that meets the diverse needs of all learners.

## STUDENT SAFETY

11. To provide a secure environment.
12. To ensure bully-free schools.

## USING TECHNOLOGY IN INSTRUCTION

13. To establish a technologically rich learning environment that allows for the implementation of Ohio's PreK-12 Common Core State Standards and the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills.
14. To develop an ongoing systematic method for securing and maintaining up-to-date technology.
15. To provide targeted technological training to complement the instructional skills of staff, the cognitive abilities of students, and the functional capabilities of parents and the community.

## **District Belief Statements**

1. High expectations are directly related to student achievement.
2. Our schools should provide the technological and social skills to compete in a global society.
3. It is essential for our school system to embrace diversity, including ethnicity, ability level, and socioeconomic status.
4. Our schools must be safe, promote a positive learning atmosphere and be organized around the needs and interests of our students.
5. Our families, students, staff and community share responsibility in the education of our children.
6. Each person has intrinsic value and worth and is a unique individual.
7. Every student should/will contribute to community/society.
8. Increased accountability (parents/students/staff) will foster an environment of respect and acceptance.
9. Every child needs basic skills – conflict resolution, problem solving, and innovative thought process.
10. Our district should be a source of PRIDE for our community.

## **Board Governance**

The Tiffin Board of Education will institutionalize a focus on continuous improvement leading to student achievement and student success through its development of policy, ongoing evaluation, and commitment to individual and Board professional growth.

## **Key Work of the Tiffin City School Board**

In addition to its Mission Statement and Board Goals, as well as responsibilities defined by law, the Board subscribes to the *Key Work of School Boards*. This framework for planning and action, developed by the National School Board Association, is based on the system's concept that no action or progress is accomplished in isolation. The eight essential areas for Board focus and action are as follows:

**Vision** – establishing a clear vision of student achievement as a top priority of the Board, staff and community.

**Standards** – setting clear standards for student performance.

**Assessment** – establishing regular and valid assessments to measure district and student progress.

**Accountability** – establishing a process that holds the school system accountable for student success.

**Alignment** – aligning of all district resources to focus on student performance.

**Climate** – creating a positive climate throughout the school district to promote student success.

**Collaborative Relationships** – building collaborative relationships with the community to promote and develop a consensus and understanding of the priority of student achievement.

**Continuous Improvement** – committing all individuals within the school district to the idea of continuous improvement in the pursuit of student achievement and success.

### **Board Member Authority and Duties**

Because all powers of the Board lie in its action as a group, individual members exercise their authority over District affairs only as they vote to take action at a legal meeting of the Board.

An individual Board member acts on behalf of the Board only when, by vote, the Board has delegated authority to him/her.

It is the duty of the individual members of the Board to attend all legally called meetings of the Board, except for compelling reasons to the contrary, to participate in normal Board business operations and represent all citizens' interests in matters affecting education.

Reference: BOE Policy BBAA

### **School Board Powers and Duties**

Under the laws of the state of Ohio, the Board acts as the governing body of the public schools. Within the extent of its legal powers, the Board has responsibilities for operating the District in accordance with the desires of local citizens who elect its members.

The Board's major responsibilities are to:

- select and employ a Superintendent;
- select and employ a Treasurer;
- determine and approve the annual budget and appropriations;
- provide needed facilities;
- provide for the funds necessary to finance the operation of the District;

- consider and approve or reject the recommendations of the Superintendent in all matters of policy, appointment or dismissal of employees, salary schedules, courses of studies selection of textbooks, and other matters pertaining to the operation of the District;
- require reports of the Superintendent concerning the conditions, efficiency, and needs of the District;
- evaluate the effectiveness with which the District is achieving the educational purposes of the Board;
- inform the public about the progress and needs of the District and to solicit and weigh public opinion as it affects the District and adopt policies for its governance and the governance of its employees and the students of the District.

Reference: BOE Policy BBA

### **Board Member Code of Ethics**

While serving as a member of my board of education, I will accept the responsibility to improve public education. To that end I will:

- Remember that my first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of all students attending the public schools;
- Obey the laws of Ohio and the United States;
- Respect the confidentiality of privileged information;
- Recognize that as an individual board member I have no authority to speak or act for the Board;
- Work with other members to establish effective board policies;
- Delegate authority for the administration of the schools to the superintendent and staff;
- Encourage ongoing communications among board members, the board, students, staff, and the community;
- Render all decisions based on the available facts and my independent judgment rather than succumbing to the influence of individuals or special interest groups;
- Make every effort to attend all board meetings;
- Become informed concerning the issues to be considered at each meeting;
- Improve my knowledge as a Board Member by studying educational issues and by participating in in-service programs;
- Support the employment of staff members based on qualifications and not as a result of influence;
- Cooperate with other board members and administrators to establish a system of regular and impartial evaluations of all staff;

- Avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance thereof;
- Refrain from using my board position for benefit of myself, family members or business associates;
- Express my personal opinions but, once the board has acted, accept the will of the majority.

Reference: Board Policy BBF-E

### **Board Committees**

The Board may authorize the establishment of committees from among its membership as it finds such action necessary to study operations in specific areas and to make recommendations for Board action.

The following guidelines may govern the appointment and function of Board committees:

- The committee is established through action of the Board.
- The Chairperson and members are named by the Board President.
- The committee may make recommendations for Board action, but may not act for the Board unless specifically authorized.
- The Board President and Superintendent are ex-officio members of all committees.
- No committee appointments extend beyond the ensuing annual organizational meeting, at which time the newly elected President has the privilege of making new appointments or re-appointments. A committee may be dissolved at any time by a majority vote.
- The Sunshine Law and its exceptions apply to Board meetings and Board-appointed committee and subcommittee meetings.

Reference: BOE Policy: BCE

### **Election of Board of Education Members**

Members of the Board are elected at large by the qualified voters of the District on a nonpartisan ballot on the first Tuesday following the first Monday in November in odd-numbered years. Each Board member is elected to a four-year term of office and assumes office on the first day of January after the election. Terms expire on December 31, except as otherwise provided by law.

In a four-year period, terms are staggered so that two members are elected in half of the four-year period, and three elected in the other half. Candidates for election are nominated by petition. The petition must be signed by 25 qualified electors of the District, or not less than 1% of the number of District electors who voted for governor in the last election, whichever is the greater. Petitions must be filed 75 days before the election.

Reference: BOE Policy BBB

## **Board Member Qualifications**

Under State law, a board member must be an elector residing in a particular district. To qualify as an elector, a person must be a citizen of the United States, 18 years of age or older, a resident of the state for 30 days prior to the election and a resident of the county and precinct in which he/she offers to vote for at least 30 days prior to the election.

A variety of other public positions, elected and appointed, have been determined by the General Assembly or the courts to be incompatible with board membership. Generally, offices are considered incompatible when one is subordinate to or in any way provides a check upon the other, or when it is physically impossible for one person to discharge the duties of both positions.

Before taking office, each person elected or appointed to a board is required by law to take an oath of office.

Reference: BOE Policy BBBA

## **Unexpired Term Fulfillment**

A vacancy in the Board may be caused by:

- death;
- non-residence;
- resignation;
- failure of a person elected or appointed to qualify within 10 days after the organization of the Board or of his/her appointment or election;
- relocation beyond District boundaries and
- absence from Board meetings for a period of 90 days, if the reasons for the absence are declared insufficient by a two-thirds vote of the remaining Board members. The vote must be taken not less than 30 days after the 90-day period of absence.

Any such vacancy will be filled by the Board at its next regular or special meeting not earlier than 10 days nor later than 30 days after the vacancy occurs. A majority vote of all the remaining members of the Board may fill the vacancy. Each person selected to fill a vacancy will hold office for the shorter of the following periods:

- until the completion of the unexpired term or
- until the first day of January immediately following the next regular Board of Education election taking place more than 90 days after a person is selected to fill the vacancy. At that election, a special election to fill the vacancy will be held; however, no such special election will be held if the unexpired term ends on or before the first day of January immediately following that regular Board election.

The shorter of the above options determines the length of office.

The term of a person elected in this manner begins on the first day of January following the election and will be for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Reference: BOE Policy BBE

## **Board Member Conflict of Interest**

The Board and individual members follow the letter and spirit of the law regarding conflicts of interest.

A Board member will not have any direct or indirect pecuniary interest in a contract with the District; will not furnish for remuneration any labor, equipment, or supplies to the District; nor be employed by the Board in any capacity for compensation.

A Board member may have a private interest in a contract with the Board if all of the following apply:

- the subject of the public contract is necessary supplies or services for the District;
- the supplies or services are unobtainable elsewhere for the same or lower cost, or are being furnished to the District as part of a continuing course of dealing established prior to the Board member's becoming associated with the school district;
- the treatment accorded the District is either preferential to or the same as that accorded other customers or clients in similar transactions and
- the entire transaction is conducted at arm's length, with full knowledge by the Board of the interest of the Board member, member of his/her family, or his/her business associate, and the Board member takes no part in the deliberations or decision with respect to the public contract.

The law specifically forbids:

- the prosecuting attorney or a city attorney from serving on a Board;
- a member from serving as the school dentist, physician or nurse;
- a member from being employed for compensation by a board;
- a member from having, directly or indirectly, any pecuniary interest in any contract with a Board;
- a member from voting on a contract to employ a person as a teacher or instructor if he/she is related to that person as father, mother, brother or sister;
- a member from authorizing, or employing the authority or influence of his/her office to secure authorization of, any public contract in which he/she, a member of his/her family or any of his/her business associates have an interest;
- a member from having an interest in the profits or benefits of a public contract entered into by, or for the use of, the District and
- a member from occupying any position of profit during his/her term of office or within one year thereafter in the prosecution of a public contract authorized by him/her or a Board of which he/she was a member at the time of authorization of that contract.

Reference: BOE Policy BBFA



## **Board Member Removal from Office**

A Board member, like all other elected officials in Ohio, is subject to removal from office for misconduct through a court proceeding pursuant to Revised Code 3.07 to 3.10. Grounds for removal include willfully and flagrantly exercising authority or power not authorized by law, refusing or neglecting to perform any official duty, gross neglect of duty, gross immorality, drunkenness, misfeasance, malfeasance, or nonfeasance.

Proceedings for removal are commenced by filing a complaint in the form of a recall petition signed by at least 15 percent of the electors who cast a ballot for governor within the District at the last gubernatorial election stating the charges alleged against the member. If that threshold is met, the court conducts a trial on the charges and, if the charges properly allege misconduct and are proven, the Board member is removed from office.

Reference: ORC: 3.07 to 3.10

## **Board Member Orientation**

The Board provides an orientation program for its members-elect. The primary purpose of this program is to acquaint the members-elect with the procedures of the Board and the scope of its responsibilities and to assist them to become informed and active Board members.

The Board, Treasurer and the administrative staff assist each member-elect in understanding the Board's functions, policies and procedures before the member-elect takes office.

The following techniques may be employed to orient new Board members.

- Selected materials, Board policies, regulations and other helpful information are furnished the member-elect by the Superintendent.
- Immediately after the general election, the member-elect is invited by the Board to attend Board meetings.
- The Treasurer provides agendas and other materials pertinent to meetings and explains the use of the materials.
- The incoming member is invited to meet with the Superintendent and other administrative personnel.
- The Board makes an effort to send newly-elected members to workshops and in-service programs developed for new members.

Reference: BOE Policy BHA

## **Board Member Professional Development**

In keeping with the need for continuing in-service training and development for its members, the Board encourages the participation of all members at appropriate school board conferences, workshops and conventions; however, in order to control both the investment of time and funds necessary to implement this policy, the Board establishes these principles and procedures for its guidance:

- A calendar of school board conferences, conventions and workshops is maintained by the Board Treasurer. The Board periodically decides which meetings appear to be most promising in terms of producing direct and indirect benefits to the District.
- Funds for participation at such meetings are appropriated on an annual basis in the Board service fund. When funds are limited, the Board designates which of its members participate in a given meeting.
- Reimbursement to Board members for their travel expenses is in accordance with the Board's travel-expense policy.
- When a conference, convention or workshop is not attended by the full Board, those who do participate are requested to share information, recommendations and materials acquired at the meeting.

Reference: BOE Policy BHBA

- When a conference, convention or workshop is not attended by the full Board, those who do participate are requested to share information, recommendations and materials acquired at the meeting.

Reference: BOE Policy BHBA

## **Board Officers**

### *President*

The President presides at all meetings of the Board and performs other duties as directed by law, State regulations and by this Board. In carrying out these responsibilities, the President will:

- be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Board meetings;
- call special meetings of the Board as necessary;
- appoint Board committees; be an ex-officio member of all Board committees with the power to vote; be knowledgeable as to the business of the various committees and will generally oversee their work;
- sign all proceedings of the Board after they have been approved by the Board and signed by the Treasurer;
- sign all other instruments, acts and orders necessary to carry out State requirements and the will of the Board and
- perform such other duties as may be necessary to carry out the responsibilities of the office. The president has the right, as do other Board members, to offer resolutions, to make and second motions, to discuss questions and to vote.

### Vice President

In the absence of the President, the Vice President will perform the duties and have the responsibilities and commensurate authority of the president. The Vice President will perform such other duties as may be delegated or assigned to him/her.

### President Pro Tempore

A President Pro Tempore may be elected by a majority of the Board to serve in such capacity when the President and Vice President are absent and unable to perform their duties. The President Pro Tempore will not have power to sign any legal documents and will vacate the chair when the President or Vice President arrives at the meeting.

Reference: BOE Policy BCB

### **Board-Superintendent Relationship**

The enactment of policies, consistent with long-term goals is the most important function of the Board, and the execution of the policies is the function of the Superintendent and staff.

Delegation by the Board of its executive powers to the Superintendent provides freedom for the Superintendent to manage the District within the Board's policies and frees the Board to devote its time to policy-making and appraisal functions.

The Board holds the Superintendent responsible for the administration of its policies, the execution of Board decisions, the operation of the internal machinery designed to serve the District program and to keep the Board informed about District operations and problems.

The Board strives to procure the best professional leader available as its Superintendent. The Board, as a whole and as individual members:

- give the Superintendent full administrative authority for properly discharging his/her professional duties, holding him/her responsible for acceptable results;'
- act in matters of employment or dismissal of school personnel only after receiving the recommendations of the Superintendent;
- hold all meetings of the Board in the presence of the Superintendent, except when his/her contract and salary are under consideration;
- refer all complaints to the Superintendent for appropriate investigation and action;
- strive to provide adequate safeguards around the Superintendent and other staff members so that they can discharge their duties on a thoroughly professional basis and present personal criticisms of any employee directly to the Superintendent.

Reference: BOE Policy BCD

## **BOARD-TREASURER RELATIONSHIP**

The development of financial policies, consistent with long-term goals, is one of the most important functions of a board. The implementation of financial policies is the function of the Treasurer and his/her staff.

Delegation by the Board of its financial powers to the Treasurer provides freedom for the Treasurer to manage the District's finances and frees the Board to devote its time to policy-making and appraisal functions.

The Board holds the Treasurer responsible for the administration of its financial policies, the execution of Board decisions, and keeping the Board informed about District financial issues and concerns.

The Board strives to procure the best financial leadership available. The Board, as a whole and as individual members:

- gives the Treasurer full authority for properly discharging his/her professional duties, holding him/her responsible for acceptable results;
- refers all complaints of the Treasurer's staff to the Treasurer for appropriate investigation and action and
- strives to provide adequate safeguards for the Treasurer and other staff members so that they can discharge their duties on a thoroughly professional basis.

Reference: BOE Policy BCCD

## **Board Policies**

The adoption of new policies or the changing or repealing of existing policies is solely the responsibility of the Board. Policies, including the Board's bylaws, are adopted, amended or repealed only by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the entire Board. Such action is scheduled on the agenda of a regular or special meeting.

Proposals for a new policy or for the amendment or repeal of an existing policy is submitted in writing to the Superintendent for submission to the Board. Unless otherwise specified, a new policy or policy amendment is effective upon the date of adoption by the Board and supersedes all previous policies on that subject. Unless otherwise specified, the repeal of a policy is effective on the date the Board takes such action

Reference: BOE Policy BF

## **Board Meetings**

The Board transacts all business at official meetings of the Board. These may be either regular or special meeting. At the organizational meeting, the Board shall fix the time for holding its regular meetings which shall be held at least once every two months. Special meetings are called between the regularly scheduled meetings to consider specific topics.

All regular and special Board meetings and Board-appointed committee meetings are open to the public. All Board meetings are publicized and conducted in compliance with the Sunshine Law. No action may be taken in executive session.

Reference: BOE Policy BD

## **Search, Selection, Appointment, Evaluation of Superintendent/Treasurer**

The Board is required to employ a Superintendent of Schools and a Treasurer who report directly to the Board. The Superintendent and Treasurer must possess the statutory qualifications in order to hold their positions and be possessed of the proper license issued by the State Board of Education. The Board has the option of having the Business Manager report directly to the Board, or to the Superintendent.

By law (R.C. 3319.01 for the Superintendent and 3313.22 for the Treasurer), the Board is to adopt procedures for the regular evaluation of the Superintendent and Treasurer, however, the law does not mandate what those procedures shall be. Further, the law states that the use of an evaluation tool shall not grant these officials an expectation of continued employment so that the Board has the discretion to non-renew the contract of the Superintendent or Treasurer despite favorable evaluations. In Tiffin City Schools Policy BCCB provides for the evaluation of the Treasurer and Policy AFB addresses the evaluation of the Superintendent. Typically, the Board will conduct the evaluations twice each year and perform those evaluations in an executive session of the Board.

Reference: R.C. 3319.01 for the Superintendent and 3313.22 for the Treasurer

## **Board Role in Hiring Process**

While the Board directly hires, through an interview process, the Superintendent and the Treasurer, the Board hires all other personnel through the recommendation of the Superintendent. No teacher or administrator may be hired unless nominated by the Superintendent, but a teacher or administrator may be re-employed contrary to the Superintendent's recommendation with a three-fourth's vote of the Board. Once the Board has acted to grant an employee a contract, the law provides that the fact that the parties may not formally sign the contract is irrelevant and the person is still regarded as having a contract.

## **Budget Process**

The purpose of the annual tax budget is to identify adequate financial resources for the education program and to provide a basis for accountability in fiscal management. The District budget is also the legal basis for the establishment of tax rates.

Public school budgeting is regulated and controlled by statute and state regulations and requirements of the Board of Education. A budget is required for every fund a District uses in its yearly operation.

The Superintendent, the Treasurer and their staffs are responsible for the preparation of the annual school budget and presentation of the budget to the Board of Education for adoption.

As permitted by law, no later than July 1, the Board may pass a temporary appropriation measure to provide for meeting the ordinary expenses of the District until such time as the Board receives from the County Auditor and approves the annual appropriation resolution for the year.

The Treasurer files both the temporary and final appropriations measures at the proper times with the office of the County Auditor. The Superintendent/designee notifies each school administrator and/or department head of the allocations approved for expenditure.

Reference: BOE Policy DB

## **Board Self-Evaluation**

Boards of education expect a high level of performance from those who are employed to run the schools. Stakeholders also expect a high level of performance from those who are elected to govern the schools.

Ultimately, the performance of an individual Board Member is measured at election time. However, that is not enough. Each Board should set aside some time on a regular basis to compare the individual assessments of how well the governing body is functioning. The assessment instrument or scoring system is not important. What is important is for the Board to establish a plan to regularly analyze its method of operation. The results of evaluation should be used in setting goals for improved operations in the future.

Reference: BOE Policy BK-E

## **Board-Staff Communications**

The Board wishes to maintain open channels of communication with the staff. The basic line of communication is through the Superintendent.

### *Staff Communications to the Board*

All communications or reports to the Board or any of its subcommittees from principals, supervisors, teachers or any other staff members are submitted through the Superintendent. Staff members are also reminded that Board meetings are public meetings that provide an excellent opportunity to observe, firsthand, the Board's deliberations.

### *Board Communications to Staff*

All official communications, policies and directives of staff interest and concern are communicated to staff members through the Superintendent. The Superintendent develops appropriate methods to keep staff fully informed of the Board's problems, concerns and actions.

### *Visit to Schools*

Board members must recognize that their presence in the schools could be subject to a variety of interpretations by school employees; therefore, if a visit to a school or classroom is being made for other than general interest, Board members will inform the Superintendent of such and make arrangements for visitations through the principals of the various schools. Board members will indicate to the principal the reason(s) for the visit. Official visits by Board members are carried on only under Board authorization.

Reference: BOE Policy BG

## **Board Member Request for Information**

It is important for Board members to be informed about the school district and the performance of our students. The superintendent of schools and school administrators regularly provide Board members with data and information via the weekly Board packet and presentations at Board meetings. Board members who seek additional information are encouraged to work through the standing Board committees to obtain this information. If the information sought by individual Board members is not readily available through the work of the committees, Board members are to coordinate their information requests with the Board president to ensure that the information requests submitted to the superintendent of schools and schools do not overwhelm them so as to distract them from their primary responsibilities.

## **Student Information**

Except for statutorily mandated exceptions, such as expulsion and residency hearings, Board members do not get involved with individual student matters. Individual student information is confidential and Board members only have access to this information when that information is necessary for Board members to perform a function in their official capacity.

## **Indemnification of Board Members**

In Ohio for many decades before the 1980s, a similar immunity doctrine, known as sovereign immunity, applied to school districts and other political subdivisions to protect them from liability for personal injuries and property damage. The justification for barring suits against the government even when an innocent party suffered a loss at the hands of negligent government officials was sometimes described as growing out of the English rule that “you cannot sue the King”. In the 1980s, however, the Ohio Supreme Court abrogated that doctrine and the General Assembly responded by enacting Revised Code Chapter 2744 which permits some suits against the government for personal injuries and property damage but with limitations, including a cap on damages and a requirement that the injured party look to his or her own insurance to cover the loss before the government is required to make any payment. The immunity provided under this statute generally does not apply to suits concerning employment matters and civil rights.

## **Board Meeting Notification**

Due notice of all official meetings of the Board is given to the press, the public and all Board members.

Organizational Meeting: Notice of organizational meetings, including any special or regular meeting following the organizational meeting, is given in the same manner as notice for regular and special meetings of the Board (see below).

Regular Meetings: A notice of the time and place of regularly scheduled meetings, or of any change in time or place thereof, is given to the media and those requesting advance personal notice at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

Special Meetings: A special meeting may be called by the President or the Treasurer or by any two members of the Board by serving written notice of the time and place of the meeting upon each Board member at least 48 hours before the date of the meeting. The notice must be signed by the officer or members calling the meeting. Notice by mail is authorized. Notice of the time, place and purpose must also be given at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting to all news media and individuals who have requested such notice.

Emergency Meetings: In the event of any emergency, the media is notified immediately of the time, place, and purpose of the meeting.

Personal Notice of Meetings: Any person who wishes to receive advance personal notice of any change in time or place of a regular or special meeting of the Board may receive the advance notice by requesting the Treasurer put his/her name on a mailing list and by providing the Treasurer with a supply of stamped, self-addressed envelopes or by calling the Treasurer’s Office.

Cancellation: Occasionally, regular or special meetings of the Board must be canceled. Meetings can be canceled for any reason. When a meeting is to be canceled, the Treasurer notifies Board members and all media and individuals who have requested notification of such meetings. Notice of cancellation is also prominently posted at the meeting site. This notice includes the new date of a rescheduled meeting, if possible.

Reference: BOE Policy BDDA

### **Robert's Rules of Order**

The Board conducts its meetings utilizing the *Robert's Rules of Order*, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition, for the conduct of its meetings, except when these rules are in conflict with Board policy or Ohio law. The Board president serves as the Board parliamentarian, unless another board member is chosen as parliamentarian by a majority of the Board.

### **Board Quorum**

Three members of the Board shall constitute a quorum. Unless otherwise specified by Board policy, a majority of board members voting on a particular item is sufficient for approval.

### **Agenda Format**

The agenda format is developed by the Superintendent and the Board in order to give direction to the Board meetings. The tentative agenda, along with related materials and minutes of the previous meeting is distributed to each member at least 48 hours prior to the Board meeting. The particular order of agenda items may vary from meeting to meeting in keeping with the business at hand.

The agenda is adopted or modified by a motion of a majority of those members present. Once the agenda is approved, it requires a vote of a majority of the Board members present to make additional modifications.

#### *Consent Agenda*

In order to use time within the Board meetings more efficiently, the Board may use a consent agenda, whenever appropriate. Items placed on the consent agenda are routine in nature and typically appear on the Board's agenda every month. Board minutes and monthly expenses are two examples of what may be considered consent agenda items.

When the consent agenda is presented to the Board for action, the Board President provides the opportunity for any member of the Board or the Superintendent to request a discussion or removal of any items on the agenda. Items removed are placed on the regular agenda or tabled.

Remaining items on the consent agenda are then voted on by a single motion.

Reference: BOE Policy BDDB



## **Voting Method**

All votes taken by the Board are recorded in the official proceedings of the meeting.

To comply fully with State law, roll-call votes are made on resolutions pertaining to the following:

- any action on which a Board member requests a roll-call vote or
- re-employment of a teacher against the Superintendent's recommendation.

The following actions require a roll-call vote and an affirmative vote by a majority of the full membership of the Board for passage:

- purchase or sale of real or personal property;
- employment of any school employee;
- election or appointment of an office;
- payment of any debt or claim and
- adoption of any textbook.

For passage, most other actions will require an affirmative vote by a majority of those present and voting. Board members must be physically present at the meeting in order to vote.

Reference: BOE Policy BDDF

## **Board Member Attendance**

Board members are expected to attend meetings of the Board, including meetings of their assigned committee. While it is almost inevitable that, on occasion, an individual member will have a personal or professional conflict that prevents him/her from attending a meeting, ideally this is a rare and unavoidable circumstance. Service on the Board of Education is a public trust on behalf of the community and children of Tiffin, and it is expected that Board members will make this service a priority. The Board of Education functions best when all five members devote the time, energy, preparation and seriousness of purpose necessary to accomplish exceptional work and that is called for by public service.

## **Executive Session**

Educational matters should be discussed and decisions made at public meetings of the Board. Some matters are more properly discussed by the Board in executive session. As permitted by law, such matters may involve:

1. the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion or compensation of an employee, official or student, or the investigation of charges or complaints against such an individual, unless an employee, official or student requests a public hearing. (the Board will nothold an executive session for the discipline of one of its members for conduct related to the performance of his/her official duties or for his/her removal from office);
2. the purchase of property for public purposes, or for the sale of property at competitive bidding, if premature disclosure or information would give an unfair advantage to a person whose personal, private interest is adverse to the general public interest;

3. specialized details of security arrangements where disclosure of the matters discussed might reveal information that could be used for the purpose of committing, or avoiding prosecution for, a violation of the law;
4. matters required to be kept confidential by Federal law or rules or State statutes;
5. preparing for, conducting or reviewing negotiations with employees concerning their compensation or other terms and conditions of their employment;
6. in-person conferences with an attorney for the Board concerning disputes involving the Board that are the subject of pending or imminent court action or
7. consideration of confidential information related to the marketing plans, specific business strategy, production techniques, trade secrets or personal financial statements of an applicant for economic development assistance, or negotiations with other political subdivisions respecting requests for economic development assistance provided that:
  - A. the information is directly related to a request for economic development assistance that is to be provided or administered under provisions of State law authorized in Ohio Revised Code Section 121.22(G)(8)(1), or involves public infrastructure improvements or the extension of utility services that are directly related to an economic development project and
  - B. a unanimous quorum of the Board has determined by a roll call vote the executive session is necessary to protect the interests of the applicant or possible investment or expenditure of public funds to be made in connection with the economic development project.

Conferences with a member of the office of the State Auditor or an appointed certified public accountant for the purpose of an audit are not considered meetings subject to the Open Meetings Act (Sunshine Law). The Board meets in executive session only to discuss legally authorized matters. Executive sessions are held only as part of a regular or special meeting and only after a majority of the “quorum” determines, by a roll-call vote, to hold such a session.

Where the Board holds an executive session for any of the reasons stated above, the motion and vote to hold the executive session shall state one or more of the purposes listed under such paragraph for which the executive session is to be held, but need not include the name of any person to be considered within the executive session. The minutes shall reflect the information described above. In accordance with law, no official action may be taken in executive session. To take final action on any matter discussed, the Board reconvenes into public session.

The Board may invite staff members, or others, to attend executive sessions at its discretion. Board members shall not disclose or use, without appropriate authorization, any information acquired in the course of official duties (which is confidential because of statutory provisions) or which has been clearly designated as confidential because of the status of proceedings or the circumstances under which the information was received.

Reference: BOE Policy BDC

## **Board Meeting Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings of the Board constitute the written record of Board action. The Treasurer records in the minutes of each meeting all actions taken by the Board. Minutes of executive sessions need reflect only the general subject matter of discussion.

Minutes specify: the nature of the meeting --regular or special --the time, the place, the members present and the approval of minutes of proceeding meeting or meetings; complete record of official action taken by the Board relative to the Superintendent's recommendations, communications and all business transacted; items of significant information bearing on action and record of adjournment.

The Treasurer records the motion, the name of the member making the motion, the name of the member seconding it and the vote of each member present.

A complete and accurate set of minutes is prepared and becomes a regular part of the monthly agenda. Once prepared, the Treasurer makes copies of proposed minutes available for public inspection; however, all such minutes must be stamped "unofficial." The minutes are signed by the president and attested by the Treasurer following their approval by the Board at a subsequent meeting.

The official minutes are bound and kept in the office of the Treasurer who after they have been approved by the Board, makes copies of the minutes available to interested citizens upon request at cost during normal office hours.

Reference: BOE Policy BDDG

## **Open Meeting Requirements**

Revised Code 121.22 requires all public bodies to conduct their meetings only after providing proper notice to the public that a meeting will occur, and then to conduct that meeting in public. The term "public body" includes committees and sub-committees of the main public body. The term "meeting" is defined as "any prearranged discussion of the public business of the public body by a majority of its members." There are certain exceptions to the open meeting requirement permitting the body to hold a closed-door executive session to discuss certain sensitive subjects. The failure to comply with the Open Meeting Law renders actions taken at the improperly held meetings void. The minutes of a meeting of any public body must be promptly prepared, filed, and maintained and be open to public inspection. The minutes need only reflect the general subject matter of discussions in executive sessions.

Reference: ORC: 121.22

## **Public Participation at Board Meetings**

All meetings of the Board and Board-appointed committees are open to the public.

In order for the Board to fulfill its obligation to complete the planned agenda in an effective and efficient fashion, a maximum of 30 minutes of public participation may be permitted at each meeting.

Each person addressing the Board shall give his/her name and address. If several people wish to speak, each person is allotted three minutes until the total time of 30 minutes is used. During that period, no person may speak twice until all who desire to speak have had the opportunity to do so. Persons desiring more time should follow the procedure of the Board to be placed on the regular agenda. The period of public participation may be extended by a vote of the majority of the Board, present and voting.

Agendas are available to all those who attend Board meetings. The section on the agenda for public participation shall be indicated. Noted at the bottom of each agenda shall be a short paragraph outlining the Board's policy on public participation at Board meetings.

Reference: BOE Policy BDDH

## **Meeting Norms**

It is the expectation that the Board of Education is a professional organization whose meetings model appropriate behavior for the school district. Members will be prepared for meetings and arrive on time, with those individuals who cannot timely attend giving prior notice to the Board president. Board members will be dressed professionally for all public meetings. Board meetings will be conducted via understood and established procedures as set forth in Board policy and bylaws.

In order to ensure that meetings of the Board are as effective and useful as possible, members will avoid surprises by articulating specific concerns in advance. The Board believes that informed, respectful discussion and debate is the best means of arriving at good decisions for the school district. Accordingly, during discussion Board members will listen attentively, consider all points of view, support their positions with facts when possible, be prepared to answer questions from other Board members, focus on the issue at hand, avoid negative and personal comments, and be prepared to compromise, understanding that the goal of debate among Board members is not to prevail but to arrive at the best possible decision for the school district.

Copies of materials and handouts will be made available to the public so that they can better follow the proceedings.

## **Commonly Used Acronyms**

AYP – Adequate Yearly Progress

ELL – English Language Learners

ESL – English as a Second Language

ESOL – English for Speakers of Other Languages

FERPA – Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

GED – General Educational Diploma

IDEA – Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IDT – Interdisciplinary Team

IEP – Individualized Education Program

NCLB – No Child Left Behind Act

NSBA – National School Board Association

OCR – Office of Civil Rights

OSBA – Ohio School Boards Association

RTI – Response to Intervention

SRBI – Scientific Research-Based Intervention

STRS – State Teacher Retirement Board