

Board Member Handbook

INTRODUCTION

This is a particularly exciting time to serve on a school board. For more than a decade, the State of Delaware has been reshaping its public school system so that all students acquire the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the 21st Century. Goals have been determined, standards set, and new learning assessments developed. Common Core is on the horizon.

Meanwhile, the federal government has taken on a new role in public education requiring schools, school districts, and states to meet scores of mandates for student achievement. At the same time, funding has not kept pace with the new demands placed on our schools.

The leadership in dealing with these issues falls to the locally elected citizens who have accepted the responsibility of school board service. Delivering quality public education is complex. With the increasing demand for educational excellence and fiscal accountability, the responsibilities of school boards are far more numerous and of greater impact than at any time in history.

Serving as an effective school board member today requires time, a sincere interest in public education, and a commitment to improving student learning for all.

Equipped with these attributes, school board members consistently discover the rewards of school board service. They include:

- "Giving back" to the community by contributing their time and talents to creating a positive future for our children
- Serving as a leader selected by the District community and working to be certain that the voice of the community is heard in decisions affecting public schools
- Working as a team member in a state school system that is striving to become one of the best in the nation and the world, and thinking more globally
- Strengthening our democracy and our nation, by expecting a quality public education for all students

You will not know everything about school board service or the delivery of education in our district, the state, or the nation as you serve your community. It will be in your best interest, however, to learn the role and responsibilities of a school board as quickly as possible. This overview will help you get started by covering the fundamentals.

Board Member Handbook

CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH PERFORMING SCHOOLS (Nine)

Research has shown that there is no silver bullet, no single thing that schools can do to ensure high student performance. Rather, high performing schools tend to have the following nine characteristics:

1. **Clear and Shared Focus** – Everybody knows where they are going and why. The focus is on achieving a shared vision, and all understand their role in achieving the vision. The focus and vision are developed from common beliefs and values, creating a consistent direction for all involved.
2. **High Standards and Expectations for All Students** – Teachers and staff believe that all students can learn and meet high standards. While recognizing that some students must overcome significant barriers, these obstacles are not seen as insurmountable. Students are offered an ambitious and rigorous course of study.
3. **Effective School Leadership** – Effective instructional and administrative leadership is required to implement change processes. Effective leaders are proactive and seek help that is needed. They also nurture an instructional program and school culture conducive to learning and professional growth. Effective leaders can have different styles and roles – teachers and other staff, including those in the district office, often have a leadership role.
4. **High Levels of Collaboration and Communication** – There is strong teamwork among teachers across all grades and with other staff. Everybody is involved and connected to each other, including parents and members of the community, to identify problems and work on solutions.
5. **Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Aligned with Standards** – The planned and actual curriculum are aligned with the Common Core. Research-based teaching strategies and materials are used. Staff understand the role of classroom and state assessments, what the assessments measure, and how student work is evaluated.
6. **Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching** – A steady cycle of different assessments, identify students who need help. More support and instruction time is provided, either during the school day or outside normal school hours to students who need more help. Teaching is adjusted based on frequent monitoring of student progress and needs. Assessment results are used to focus and improve instructional programs.
7. **Focused Professional Development** – A strong emphasis is placed on training staff in areas of most need. Feedback from learning and teaching focuses extensive and ongoing professional development. The support is also aligned with the school or district vision and objectives.
8. **Supportive Learning Environment**– The school has a safe, civil, healthy and intellectually stimulating learning environment. Students feel respected and connected



Board Member Handbook

with the staff and are engaged in learning. Instruction is personalized and small learning environments increase student contact with teachers.

9. **High Level of Family and Community Involvement** – There is a sense that all have a responsibility to educate students, not just the teachers and staff in schools. Parents, businesses, social service agencies, and community colleges/universities, all play a vital role in this effort.

(Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, January 2003, State of Washington)

PURPOSE

This handbook is a practical resource for new and existing Board Members. It is a framework for carrying out our duties and responsibilities. It also is an informational guide. It includes key information and contact numbers that will help you to fulfill your role as an informed Red Clay School Board member. It is expected that the Board will keep this handbook current. Any changes will be made with the support of a majority of the Board.

HISTORY – RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Red Clay Consolidated School District was created on July 1, 1981, from the New Castle County District.

The *county* school district had been formed by order of the U.S. District Court in 1978 to integrate the predominantly black schools of Wilmington and the predominantly white suburban New Castle County schools. In a 1978 review of the District Court's order, the U.S. Circuit Court urged the State to submit its own plan to organize the desegregation of New Castle County schools, which resulted in legislation being passed in 1980 permitting the State Board of Education to divide the New Castle County School District into smaller districts.

The county district was divided into four racially balanced districts: Brandywine, Christina, Colonial, and Red Clay; because it was felt that smaller districts would be easier to manage and be more responsive to the local community.

Although the District Court approved the plan, the new districts were required to report on racial composition of students, suspensions, arrests, expulsions, staff, special education, dropouts, bilingual education, demographic changes, enrollment projection, and students who attended schools other than normally assigned. The four districts eventually formed a consortium for collecting data and preparing a report.

The four districts that were created in 1981 are each administered by elected boards of education which consists of seven members. The boards are elected at large in each school district and not just by voters in the nominating districts. School taxes are collected on a county-wide basis, as they were under the New Castle County School District, and then allocated to each district according to their number of students.

Red Clay Consolidated School District was administered by the following officials: Superintendent, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services, and Assistant Supervisor of Administrative Services. The district included part of Wilmington and the area west of the city. In 1989 the following schools *made* up the original Red Clay School District:

High Schools: John Dickinson, Alexis I. DuPont, McKean, and Wilmington High Schools

Middle Schools: Alexis I. DuPont, Henry B. DuPont, Conrad, Skyline, Stanton Middle Schools

Elementary Schools: Austin D. Baltz, Forest Oak, Heritage, Highlands, William C. Lewis,



Board Member Handbook

Marbrook, Richardson Park, Evan G. Shortlidge, Warner, and Anna P. Mote Elementary Schools

Special School: Meadowood.

Over the past two decades, Red Clay has been in the forefront of innovation and positive change. We currently hold the charters for three schools: Wilmington Charter, Delaware Military Academy, and Delaware College Preparatory Academy. In addition, we have created three Red Clay Magnet Schools: Cab Calloway School of the Arts, Conrad Schools of Science, and Lewis Dual Language School. Dickinson High School was named an International Baccalaureate site in 2012, and McKean High School now houses a Communication pathway, Culinary pathway, and a Preschool pathway.

We continue to grow and create learning opportunities for all of our students in this exciting global society.

BOARD MISSION

The mission of the Red Clay Consolidated School District Board of Education is to create a high quality, academically challenging and, dynamic educational experience for our diverse student population, through meaningful community engagement, careful resource allocation, and thoughtful policy development.

BOARD NORMS

1. Base all decisions on what is in the best interest of all students in our schools and the good of the entire system
Treat each other with respect by,
2. Listening attentively
3. Arriving on time and being prepared—let chair know if you are unable to participate
4. Consider all points of view
5. Value the opinions of others
6. Abide by and support publicly the decisions of the Board
7. Remain open to all voices in the community rather than just factions in order to foster a solid educational experience for all students
8. Maintain professional confidentiality

BOARD TIPS

1. Prevent problems before they arise—
 - Protect your Board
 - Present a positive, supportive image to public
 - Treat all Board members with respect
 - Support the will of the Board, not the will of individuals
 - Anticipate your response to a negative reaction
 - Develop your leadership skills
2. Act like a Team
 - Never assume understanding of roles
 - Share concerns that you see developing as soon as you can
 - Identify differences and plan solutions together
 - Look for win/win rather than win/lose solutions
 - Resist taking a position without full information
 - Avoid relying on hearsay evidence
 - Be sure that comments relate to discussion

Board Member Handbook

3. Begin with Prevention

- Avoid secret meetings, private polls, prearranged agreements
- Discuss issues with all Board members
- Maintain and use a current, complete policy manual
- Attach related Board Policies to recommendations
- Develop a Board Handbook that provides structure for the Board's work

BOARD DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Our Legal Status

The Board is the governing body of the school district consistent with Education Law. Our authority and responsibilities are outlined in Delaware Code Title 14. Each board member understands that the board exists only as a corporate entity; that the corporate entity exists only during its public meetings; and therefore, its authority to act exists only during these public meetings.

In the RCCSD

The school board consists of seven members. Each member is from a different geographic nominating area. Each member represents all students of Red Clay. Each member is elected by all district residents for a term of five years.

Legal Advice/Representation

Our legal counsel, Young, Conway, Stargatt and Taylor, has the primary responsibility for advising the Superintendent and District personnel on legal, employee contracts, and personnel matters.

The same firm advises and represents the Board on legal matters affecting the Board and District. The Board President serves as the contact person with the Board attorney.

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

As the governing body, the school board has several main areas of responsibility:

1. Standards of Governance

A. Policy Development

The board's role is to develop and adopt board policies, which define how the board and its members are to act and conduct the business of the school district. Policies are made pursuant to and within the scope of Delaware statute. Administrative memos support Board policy, and often outline procedures attached to a policy.

The Board also conducts an ongoing policy review throughout the year. The Superintendent (or Designee) is given the continuing responsibility of calling to the Board's attention, all outdated policies or policies that need revisions, and the need for new policies. Board members also can request a topic for a new policy. All said changes are the responsibility of the Board.

B. Board Leadership

The Board President and Vice President serve as the officers of the Board. They are elected yearly at the annual *Organizational Meeting* in July for a one (1) year term. The Superintendent sits as the Executive Secretary to the Board.

1. President of the Board Duties:



Board Member Handbook

- To preside at all Board meetings
 - To execute all documents on behalf of the Board
 - To approve meeting agendas prepared with the Superintendent and the Vice President
 - To be a facilitator and promote discussion of all views while maintaining the right to express his/her own view
 - To ensure that the opinions of all members are obtained and heard
 - To present issues in a timely fashion so that members have sufficient time to consider the issues
 - To summarize discussions when appropriate
 - To ensure items tabled for future discussion are discussed
2. Vice President of Board Duties
- To act for the President in the case of the President's absence or inability to preside within statutory limits
 - To attend agenda setting meetings and approve meeting agendas prepared with the Superintendent
 - Duties outlined in the agenda setting principles given below are—
 - To keep a log of possible agenda topics as they arise through normal Board activities and discussion
 - To periodically share logged items with all Board members
3. Executive Secretary (Superintendent) to the Board Duties
- Prepare agenda for Board meeting
 - Keep complete and accurate records of proceedings of Board and provide a system to codify all Board actions
 - Send notices of meetings and post agendas
 - Maintain Board member manuals and policies, state school laws, and administrative regulations in current status
 - Advise the Board of previously adopted policies that affect items on the agenda
 - In the absence of President and Vice President, call the meeting to order and conduct the election of a chairperson pro tempore
 - Provide in writing, all public Board meeting procedures concerning public recognition
 - Provide a schedule of Board meetings at each meeting
4. Election of Board Officers
- Below is the process by which the Board elects officers. The model is based on the following two tenets:
- With training, all members are capable of effectively executing the responsibilities of the Board leadership position
 - Effective leadership of and by the Board requires a level of continuity of leadership and training

At the first regularly scheduled board meeting in June, the Board President will remind the Board that nominations for a vote for the offices of President and Vice President will be held at the *Board Organizational Meeting* in July.

Board Member Handbook

At the organizational meeting in July, the Superintendent of the RCCSD will preside as Board President until the President and Vice President have been elected.

It is ONLY at the organizational meeting that nominations and election of Board leadership may take place. During this meeting, nominations for Board President and Vice President will be given for a subsequent vote.

Based on the vote, the candidate for each office receiving the majority of votes, becomes an officer. The candidates-elect are then sworn into office and assume the leadership for the remainder of the school year.

It is imperative that the Board President and Vice President work as a team with knowledge and ability to effectively execute the duties of either office.

2. Meetings

A. Board Meetings

The Regular Board meetings occur on the third Wednesday of each month. The meetings are held at **Cab Calloway School of the Arts from July, 2019 through October, 2019, at Warner Elementary School from November, 2019 through April, 2020, and then again at Cab Calloway School of the Arts for the remainder of the school year (May and June, 2020)**. The public meeting begins at 7:00 p.m. following Executive Session, which usually starts at 6:00 p.m. Additional special meetings/workshops may be scheduled as needed.

The meeting agenda will be placed on both BoardDocs and the RCCSD websites no later than the Friday before each regularly scheduled Wednesday meeting. The meeting minutes will be placed on the District website and in BoardDocs after their approval.

The Superintendent will provide the Board, through BoardDocs, all reports and documents that are to be discussed at an upcoming meeting. All information will be available by the Wednesday before the scheduled meeting. Relevant information should be loaded in BoardDocs as soon as it is available. All information should be loaded and available in BoardDocs by the designated date and time. A few items, such as personnel matters, budget items, reports of committees that meet right before the Board meeting, and disciplinary matters, may legitimately be late. If any other matter is loaded late, it will be at the discretion of the Board to decide whether to hear and deal with the subject material at the current meeting or to delay hearing until the next month. A notice shall be sent to all Board members to notify them of any material added after the designated date and time.

Regular meeting attendance and participation are the primary responsibilities of a board member. Official board business can only take place at a board meeting. The Board exists only when 4 members are present. A quorum is required in order to conduct business. In the event that a board member must be absent from a meeting, it is recommended that the board member:

- Contact the Board President, and the Board District Secretary before the meeting, to inform the district of the anticipated absence

Board Member Handbook

- The Board President will also contact absent Board members to review important issues discussed in the Regular and Executive Sessions.

Board meetings are conducted using the general guidelines for conducting a business meeting as defined by Robert's Rules of Order Revised, except when in conflict with adopted Board policy. Four members of the Board constitute a quorum. Motions or resolutions need a majority vote.

In general, items other than routine business on which the Board is expected to vote on, will be on the agenda for at least two meetings. At the first meeting, items are presented and discussed; at the second, items are discussed again, followed by Board action in the form of a vote.

Board action can occur only as the result of a vote taken in a public, open meeting, at which at least four board members are present. While the Board seeks to reach consensus, Board action can occur when a motion is carried by a majority vote.

B. Agenda Setting Principles

At the beginning of each year, a full-year working draft of meeting topics and action items shall be prepared by the Superintendent, with input from the Board for planning purposes, and will contain a listing of when a matter is up for discussion vs. action item. Board members receive the list when it is created, as well as periodic updates. A designated board member will keep a log of possible agenda item topics as they arise through normal board activities and discussion. The log will be periodically shared with all board members.

In general, a Board planning meeting is held monthly to create the agendas for the next month's Board meetings. The Board, in cooperation with the Superintendent, determines the specific dates for the agenda setting meetings. The Board President should attend all such meetings, unless he/she is out of town or otherwise unavailable.

Any two additional Board members may attend and participate in an agenda setting meeting. If a Board member wishes to attend an agenda-setting meeting, he/she is asked to contact the Superintendent so that a notice of the meeting will be provided in the event that four or more members attend.

It is recommended that new Board members attend at least one agenda-setting meeting within their first few months on the board.

Prior to the Board planning meeting, the Board President, or if he/she is unavailable, another designated Board member, will send out an email requesting items for discussion from all board members. The Superintendent shall prepare a draft agenda containing all items listed in the working draft of meeting topics for discussion at the Board planning meeting, as well as, those otherwise identified by the Board. After the meeting, the Board President, or his/her designee, will send the Board minutes from the Board planning meetings.

C. Agenda Topics

Board Member Handbook

Board initiated topics are placed on the agenda through one of two methods: Upon a specific request of a Board member or as the result of Board activities and discussions. Items reflect the priorities set by the Board.

It is recommended that Board members request that a topic be placed on the agenda in advance through the President, Vice President, or Superintendent. This can be done via email or at the monthly Board planning session.

At any appropriate time during the meeting, a Board member may make a motion to add an agenda item to the agenda.

In determining whether and when to propose a topic for a meeting agenda, it is recommended that a Board member consider the following:

- Does the topic address policy, or in other words, affect the whole organization?
- How does the topic relate to the district vision (Strategic Plan, mission statement)?
- How much time does the district need to prepare information to allow a meaningful discussion?
- Can the topic allow for discussion at one meeting with time for reflection and decision at a subsequent meeting?
- Is the topic most appropriately (and legally) handled at a public meeting?

D. Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda consists of those items which are anticipated to require discussion during regular meetings. If a Board member wants further discussion or a separate vote on an item, they may pull that item from the Consent Agenda during the meeting.

E. Public Comment

At the beginning of each regular Board meeting, public comment will be heard. For up to thirty minutes, community members may address the Board on educational issues. Personal attacks or discussion of confidential issues are not permitted. There is a three (3) minute time allotment and green sign-up sheets must be completed prior to the start of the meeting.

F. Executive Session (Closed Session)

The Board reserves the right, within the constraints of state law, to meet in Executive Session at which only the board members or its invitees shall be present. Any member of the Board or the Superintendent can request such session. Upon a majority vote of its total membership taken in an open meeting pursuant to a motion identifying the general area(s) of the subject(s), the Board may conduct an Executive Session for the purposes specified in the DOE manual. Further, in the Executive Session, no formal action will be taken except as provided by law. Subjects which may be discussed in an executive session are:

- Collective negotiations
- The medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion,

Board Member Handbook

demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation

- The proposed acquisition, sale or lease of real property, or the proposed acquisition of securities, or sale or exchange of securities held by such public body, but only when publicity would substantially affect the value.
- Matters which will imperil the public safety, if disclosed
- Any matter which may disclose the identity of a law enforcement agent or informer
- Information relating to current or future investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense which would imperil effective law enforcement, if disclosed
- Any discussion regarding proposed, pending or current litigation

The Board President (or delegate) will contact absent board members to review sensitive issues discussed in Regular and Executive sessions.

G. Special Meetings

The Board may hold special meetings including, workshops at the request of the President. These meetings are usually called to consider additional topics or information beyond the time constraints of a regular meeting. The public meetings should be publicized through regular channels. These meetings may be a work session, policy development session, public hearing or forum, or informational in nature.

H. Confidentiality

It shall be official misconduct for any member of the Board to reveal to any person or persons (including spouse or immediate family) any confidential information learned as a board member pertaining to staff members, students, and board members. Examples include confidential information about negotiations or information discussed in executive sessions.

I. Policies – PLACEHOLDER 2000 SERIES

J. Board Communication

The Board maintains open and honest communication among and between Board members and the Superintendent. Silence should not be the manner by which the Board expresses agreement. It is recommended that each Board member clarify what he or she is thinking.

The Board President speaks as the Board's collective voice, if empowered by the Board. Board members have a voice as individuals, and may express themselves on that basis.

Members must speak openly at meetings. The Board President (or delegate) will discuss important information with Board members who miss a meeting or Executive Session.

Additionally, it is against FOIA to meet as a group of more than three. This would constitute a meeting, and should take place in a public forum. Emails may be sent for

Board Member Handbook

informational purposes. Votes on ideas or suggestions are not permitted. You may respond to each individual Board member.

K. BoardDocs

In 2011, the Board made a transition from paper agenda packets to paperless meetings. All meeting information is available online. There is both public and private access available. BoardDocs also has a search function. All agendas, presentations, minutes, and backup information are available from 2011 to the present.

3. Fiscal

The financial responsibilities of a Board in the State of Delaware are spread over the following areas:

A. Budget

One of the primary roles of the school board is to approve the District budget during a public vote. The school budget presentation becomes the legal basis for the establishment of the tax levy. The tax levy is the amount of money approved by the voters that will be raised from school property taxes to fund the school budget. The school tax rate is the product of the tax levy and the value of homes in the district as determined by the New Castle County assessment board.

The budget presentation must include the following items:

- A budget that is presented in three components (program, capital, and administrative)
- A budget that categorizes revenues and expenditures that shows the changes in the data as compared with the previous years
- The budget presentation must make available the following documents:
 - 1) A salary disclosure for superintendents, assistant superintendents, administrators, and supervisors over a state-defined amount
 - 2) A school district report card with academic and fiscal performance
 - 3) A plain language budget
 - 4) A school property tax report card

B. Budget Development in RCCSD

The budget is developed by the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), in conjunction with the Superintendent. The CFO—

- Creates a budget statement of how resources will be allocated to specific programs and operational units
- Allocates the resources among the various school programs (or activities) based on—
 - 1) The quality of (or benefits delivered by) the programs, and the cost of delivering the quality
 - 2) The budget will be data driven and align with the Strategic Plan

Board Member Handbook

- The following is a brief outline of the steps to develop a budget based on the benefits and costs of each program:
 - 1) Identify all the school's distinct budgeted programs
 - 2) Ask those who work most closely with the activities to draft a budget proposal for each program. Specifically, each distinct program unit is to:
 - Describe the program activities, including how the program contributes to district and state standards, and to the educational development of the students
 - Detail the number of students the program services;
 - State what is going well or not well with the activities, and how these results are determined
 - Provide goals for improving the activities over the next three years
 - Detail the cost to provide the program activities
- Compile the program budget proposals by related sites (such as all high school programs) and reallocate resources, if needed, based on site priorities and benefits and costs of programs
- Central Office reviews program budget proposals by sites
- Revise budget proposal based on Central Office review
- Community Financial Review Committee reviews program budget proposals
- Board review of each budget area proposal
- Review and revision of budget proposal based on Board review.
- Recommendation of a total budget to the Board

New Board members are required to have the Financial Training Workshop given by the Delaware State Board Association.

C. Employee Contracts

The role of the Board is to approve all contracts of employment unless this power is delegated to the Superintendent. In RCCSD most employees are covered by collective bargaining agreements. A collective bargaining agreement is a contract between the Superintendent, as Chief Executive Officer of the District, and an employee organization, which represents a certain group of employees. All staff hired

Board Member Handbook

and collective bargaining agreements are approved by the RCCSD Board of Education. Employees of the district are organized and represented by a bargaining group and includes Teachers (RCEA), Paraprofessionals (RCEA), Nutrition Workers (RCEA), Custodians (AFSCME) and Secretaries (RCEA). Non-union employees include Bus Drivers, Specialists, Technology staff and Administrators.

In RCCSD a few employees have individual employment contracts, specifying their terms and conditions of employment. These groups are precluded from being members of a bargaining unit. This includes our Principals, Assistant Principals, Directors, Supervisors, and Managers.

In RCCSD, the Superintendent with the Board establishes objectives and priorities to guide contract negotiations through a defined process and timeline.

The Board must fulfill all terms of an employment contract for the duration of the contract or agreement. The Board may only change the terms of an agreement with the consent of the bargaining unit, that is, by renegotiating the terms of the contract. The Board must include the money to fund negotiated contracts in the school budget.

In RCCSD the following employees are represented by an employee organization for the purpose of collective negotiations:

- Teachers
- Building and Grounds Staff
- Transportation Staff
- Nurses and Paraprofessionals
- Administrative Staff
- School Lunch Staff
- Secretaries

The Board must fulfill all terms of an employment contract for the duration of the contract or agreement. The Board may only change the terms of an agreement with the consent of the bargaining unit, that is, by renegotiating the terms of the contract.

The Board must include the money to fund negotiated contracts in the school budget.

D. Authorization of Budgetary Transfers

E. Acceptance of Monthly CFO Report

The CFO will provide the Board with a report that shows:

- The cash on hand at the beginning of the month
- Receipts for the month
- Total disbursements for the month
- The cash balance on hand at the end of each month
- The report will include all revenues and expenditures

F. Authorization to Pay Bills

Board Member Handbook

The CFO acts as claims auditor. The CFO is directly responsible to the Board and is responsible for authorizing (or rejecting) the payments of charges, claims, or demands against the school district. The Board may meet with the CFO directly at its discretion.

G. Authorization to Borrow Funds

The Board authorizes the District to borrow funds using long term and short term financial instruments.

1) Long Term Obligations

- The two types of long term obligations which can be issued by school districts are:
 - Serial bonds
 - Statutory installment bonds
 - These bonds are generally used to fund an approved capital project

2) Short Term Borrowing

- The types of obligations for short term borrowing include:
 - Bond anticipation notes
 - Revenue anticipation notes
 - Tax anticipation notes
- Short term borrowing is generally done as a prelude to long term borrowing, and to address the cash flow of the district

H. Designation of Banks or Trust Companies to Deposit Funds

The Board is required to annually designate a bank(s) or trust company to be the official depository for district funds, including a maximum amount that can be held in each bank.

I. Authorization of District Signatures

The Board is required to annually designate the official signatures for district checks.

J. Acceptance of Annual Audits of the District's Finances

The Board is required to annually designate the official signatures for district checks. Per education law and commissioner's regulations, the school district is required to obtain an independent audit by an outside certified public accountant.

The purpose of the audit is to verify the accuracy of the expenditures and revenues.

Throughout the school year, the Board will be asked to accept the following audit reports:

Board Member Handbook

- General Purpose Financial Statements—this audit verifies the accuracy of the major accounting funds of the school district. The Board may meet with the auditors directly at its discretion.
- Management Letter—this letter lists corrective actions needed by the district based on audits.

K. Authorization of District's Petty Cash Funds

The Board is required to annually authorize the petty cash funds of the district.

L. Annual Review of Investment Policy

Each year the Board is required to review the investment policy of the school district.

4. Education Programs

A. Role of Board

The Board has a responsibility to—

- 1) Establish with community input, a shared mission and vision for the purpose of education with related standards and outcomes
- 2) Adopt a Strategic Plan to implement the vision that has goals, program evaluations, and benchmark data points
- 3) Monitor the Strategic Plan for progress and discussion
- 4) Develop and approve the desired outcomes, and plans for shared decision making in support of the Strategic Plan (This should be a collaborative effort)

B. Participation on District Committees

Board Members participate on various District Committees including, but not limited to:

- 1) The Community Financial Review (CFRC) Committee
- 2) Board Policy Review Committee
- 3) Facilities Committee
- 4) Dropout Prevention Committee
- 5) Student Code of Conduct Committees
- 6) Diversity Committee
- 7) Wellness Committee
- 8) Red Clay Education Foundation

Two positions set by policy include a representative to the Delaware State School Board Association and a Delaware Legislative representative.

5. Administration and Personnel

A. Superintendent

A major responsibility of the Board is the selection and appointment of the District's Superintendent. The Superintendent is retained under an 18 month rolling contract.

Board Member Handbook

No person will be considered for this appointment unless this person is eligible for or holds a certificate for this position issued by Department of Education (DOE). Compensation, job description, and duties are determined by the Board.

B. Superintendent Evaluation Process

Annually, the Board completes a written performance evaluation of the Superintendent.

- 1) Annual goals are set in August; educational goals must align with the Strategic Plan; Board representatives and the Superintendent determine these goals
- 2) A personal goal may also be set
- 3) The whole Board with the Superintendent, will have a *Formative* discussion in Executive Session in January-February
- 4) The Summative Evaluation happens by July 1 between the Board and the Superintendent in Executive Session; The signed document is placed in his/her personnel file

C. Superintendent/Board Responsibility

The Superintendent is responsible to—

- 1) Administer Board Policy
- 2) Keep the Board informed about District operations, accomplishments, and problems in a timely fashion
- 3) Execute Board decisions
- 4) Operate the internal workings designed to serve the educational programs

D. Superintendent/Administrator Responsibility

The Administrator in collaboration with the Superintendent makes suggestions for long term goals. The administrator makes short term plans to meet budget limitations and objectives.

The Superintendent will—

- 1) Organize an internal structure to deliver all services
- 2) Motivate and give direction to staff
- 3) Communicate with and establish shared decision-making procedures
- 4) Determine job descriptions in conjunction with related administrators
- 5) Hire and terminate staff

E. Board/District Office Communication

Communication between the Board and Staff should be channeled through the Superintendent. If a Board member wants information on district/building issues, it is recommended that the Superintendent be aware of your meeting. Board members' clarification of a specific report or agenda item should be made directly to the appropriate staff member. The Superintendent and fellow Board members should be copied on all requests. Any data that is a time consuming request needs to go through the Superintendent and the Board.

- 1) Communication Protocol

Board Member Handbook

- a. The Superintendent and leadership team discuss upcoming issues and major initiatives
- b. Issues stay confidential within the staff, until the Superintendent decides to take it to the board
- c. The Superintendent is responsible for the ultimate recommendation to the Board
- d. Issues are presented to the Board for their consideration; if a staff member informs a Board member about an issue under discussion, the Board member is responsible for reminding the staff member to talk with the Superintendent, remembering that listening does not mean agreement
- e. The Board is not involved with Superintendent/staff differences

2) Leadership Team Roles

<u>School Board</u> Governs (Guides, Directs)	<u>Superintendent</u> Manages (Administers, Operates)
Decides what	Decides how
Requests information	Seeks and provides information
Considers issues	Provides recommendations
Creates, reviews and adopts policy	Recommends and carries out policy
Approves and reviews plans, monitors progress	Implements plans, reports progress
Contracts with personnel	Supervises hiring process
Approves evaluation criteria and procedures	Supervises and evaluates personnel
Approves and reviews budget, represents public interest	Formulates budget acts in public interest

5. Community and Political Responsibility

- A. Attendance and Participation in Commencement Ceremonies
One of the culminating activities of each year, is our high school commencement exercises. It is expected that Board members attend some of the ceremonies. You may also be asked to speak or bring 'greetings' from the Board. You also may hand out diplomas and shake hands with our graduates.
- B. Visit Schools
It is strongly encouraged that members visit our schools to better understand the scope and individuality of all of our schools. It is also a courtesy to the Principal to call first. The school operation, as well as the day to day administration of a building is the responsibility of the building Principal.
- C. Meeting with other Board and Legislative Delegations
The Combined Boards of New Castle County meet quarterly at the Christiana Hilton. *The Home District*, which rotates each year and sets the agenda.

At least once a year, the District has a luncheon in Dover at Legislative Hall with our Representatives and Senators. This is an opportunity for us to discuss



Board Member Handbook

upcoming legislative issues and to inform the delegation of the District's educational needs and priorities.

D. Community Members and Stakeholders

We continue to search for ways to interact with our community. Stakeholders can share their thoughts at Board meetings. Both Board and community members sit on common committees or attend common meetings like the Superintendents Parent Council, PAC, or Community Partners. Also, in the Resource section, is a list of PTA/PTO meeting dates.