



# The Washington State Board of Education

An education system where students are engaged in personalized education pathways that prepare them for civic engagement, careers, postsecondary education, and lifelong learning.

## Board Norms for the Washington State Board of Education

March 11, 2020

1. Board meetings will focus on State Board of Education goals as articulated in the Strategic Plan, while recognizing that other matters may also be part of a meeting agenda.
2. The purpose of Board meetings is to discuss policies that help all students engage in personalized education pathways that prepare them for civic engagement, careers, post-secondary education, and lifelong learning. Agendas, presentations, and discussions for each board meeting should reflect this overarching purpose.
3. As a policy making and advocacy body, the Board will adhere to shared values expressed in the strategic plan as Board members endeavor to fulfill the Board's mission and vision. To this end the Board will apply an equity lens when considering and adopting policies and approving reports. In addition, the Board will annually review and update the equity statement and lens to ensure equity remains an integral part of the policy and decision-making process.
4. At Board meetings, and in all communications with the public and staff, Board members will maintain the dignity and integrity appropriate to an effective public body.
5. Every board member is expected to play a meaningful role in the Board's overall operations. Each member expects of one another a dedication to the work of the Board and will endeavor to understand the views of other members and to engage in civil discussion. The Board embraces healthy debate on policy issues. In addition, the board endeavors to:
  - a. Support new members learning as they become engaged and active members of the Board.
  - b. Ensure student voice is heard and considered as a critical part of policy debate and discussion.
6. Board meetings include the following procedures:
  - a. Board meetings will start on time and end on time.
  - b. Meeting materials will be made available one week in advance (see Bylaw Article V section 2) and should consistently be of high quality.

- c. Board members are expected to consistently attend and prepare for Board and committee meetings and to read the materials in advance of the meeting (see Bylaw Article III, section 2).
  - d. As schedule permits, Board members are encouraged to attend community forums, site visits, and other outreach and engagement events.
  - e. Each presentation will start with a staff introduction providing clarity of the purpose of the presentation and the decision to be made or issue to be considered.
  - f. Board members will hold their questions (except for brief clarifying questions) until the end of each presentation, or until the presenter offers a designated "pause" for questions.
  - g. The rules contained in the current edition of ***Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*** shall govern the State Board of Education in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws, state law and any special rules of order the State Board of Education may adopt.
  - h. Board members will do their best to be succinct to maintain opportunity for all to express themselves. To avoid repetition of the same ideas and points Board members will strive to express agreement with a member rather than repeat a point that has already been made.
  - i. In the interest of orderly and efficient meetings, and to balance Board members' speaking time, the Board Chair will recognize members prior to them speaking. The Vice Chair or Executive Director will assist the chair in tracking who would like to speak on an issue.
  - j. Each Board member expects of others a commitment to speak and listen with purpose during each discussion. The Board Chair – or his/her designee – will provide leadership to ensure that the discussions and deliberations are leading to a focused outcome.
  - k. Board meetings should be a forum for Board discussion. Staff and guest presentations will be structured to facilitate this discussion, not supplant it.
  - l. Board members may engage in different ways and may find it necessary at times to stand or move around during the meeting time.
7. When considering policy proposals or other decisions, each Board member expects of others an opportunity for advance review. The Board agrees to a "no surprises" mode of operation. To this end, Board members may submit proposed agenda items to the Chair or Executive Director (see Bylaw Article V, section 2) for consideration by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will respond to member proposals as appropriate. If, after discussion of an item, the

proposing member changes her or his mind or otherwise deems the proposal unnecessary they may withdraw their proposal.

8. Although the Board is composed of appointed and elected members, Board members strive for commonality and unity of purpose through their deliberations.
9. Board members will maintain the confidentiality of executive sessions.
10. Members of the Board will support Board positions, decisions, and policies when providing information to the public, stakeholder groups, or the legislature. (3)  
This section does not preclude individual Board members from expressing their personal views. When expressing personal views, members should specify that that they are speaking as an individual and not on behalf of the Board.
11. The chair, executive director, or the executive director's designee will be the spokesperson for the Board with the media.
12. The Board is a learning organization. As a body we strive to explore new issues and expand our collective knowledge to better address policy issues facing students and our education system. To this end members and staff engage in professional learning and the board will engage with stakeholders and other experts to inform planning and establishing priorities. Members who attend meetings with exterior stakeholders or participate in professional learning opportunities may report back to the Board during the next regular Board Meeting as appropriate and as agenda time allows