

Surry County School Board

File: BBBC-R

Governance Norms and Protocols

Established 2016

Re-affirmed October 9, 2018

Reviewed 01/15/2025

Adopted 02/18/2025

We agree to employ the following norms in all our interactions:

- **We will hear each opinion, but ultimately act as one.** We will speak candidly and courteously to each other and listen to dissenting or different viewpoints with an open mind. We will help each other to depersonalize disagreements. Once we reach a final decision or compromise as a board, we will each support the will of the board in word and deed.
- **The chair (or designee) will speak as the official voice of the board.** A single board member will not represent the board without the consent of the board, and board members making personal statements (in any format, including speeches, articles, social media posts, etc.) should clearly state that these statements are their opinion and not the position of the board.
- **We will be mindful of the different roles and responsibilities throughout the school system and maintain a focus on policy and governance.**
- **We will be aware of the different roles that we play as individuals (board member, citizen, parent, etc.).**
- **We will be focused on our work as a board and not interfere with the day-to-day operations of the school system, which is the responsibility of the superintendent.**
- **We will maintain open communication with each other, the administration, and the community, at-large.** Information shared with one board member will be shared with all members. If considerable work or time is required to generate data, the full board must endorse the request.

We agree to the following protocols:

Developing the board agenda	The superintendent and the chair develop the board agenda. The chair and/or vice chair will meet with the superintendent once the agenda has been developed to review the content.
Placing items on the board agenda	Board members should contact the chair or the superintendent to have items placed on the agenda at least two weeks prior to the board meeting; with the exception of time sensitive or emergency situations e.g. inclement weather. Depending on the content of the current agenda, the items may be moved to a future meeting date. The chair and/or superintendent will follow up with board members on the status of the request.
Receiving Board Meeting Packets	Board members will receive their board packet the Wednesday prior to the board meeting.
Obtaining information about board meeting agenda items before the meeting	Board members should reach out to the superintendent with any questions prior to the meeting.
Responding to staff or community complaints at board meetings	Board members do not respond in a board meeting. If necessary, the superintendent or staff will follow up on staff or community concerns. The superintendent will provide an update on any conversations in the Friday update.
Responding to staff or community complaints outside of board meetings	Encourage the community or staff member to go through the channel of communication e.g. teacher, principal, central office. Refer all complaints to the superintendent.
Communications between and among board members	Speaking one on one is preferred keeping in mind of FOIA laws.
Communications between board members and the superintendent	The board members will communicate regularly with superintendent.
Communications between board members and staff (including requests for information)	Board members will contact the superintendent with any requests for information. Responses will be sent to all board members. Board members should contact the Clerk of the Board for administrative support.
Assignment of committee members	On a volunteer basis.
Committee reporting expectations	Board members serving on a committee will give a verbal report to the entire board after a committee meeting. This will be presented during the board meeting.

Responding to media inquiries	The chair or designee of the Board will speak officially for the board on board-approved actions. The superintendent represents and will speak for the school system on the daily operations.
Use of social media	Board members that utilize social media should be aware of the FOIA laws for appropriate use and be aware that anything shared can be viewed as an opinion of the board.
How, when and whom to notify about visiting school sites	Board members should notify the superintendent first and report to the office when they arrive to the school.
How, when and whom to notify about volunteering in schools or a school events	For volunteer activities it will be previously determined and established and the board member will participate without having to notify the superintendent each time.
How, when and whom to notify about attending school events (concerts, sporting events, etc.)	Regular community engagements are encouraged. Be visible.
Expectations for participation in professional development	Full board participation is expected in professional development activities.
Expectations for participation in meetings and conferences	Participation is expected and required in meetings and conferences.
When and how the board evaluates the superintendent	The board will complete an annual evaluation of the superintendent in June with a mid-year check-in taking place in December.
When and how the board conducts a self-evaluation	The board evaluates itself each June.
When and how the board monitors and updates the school board's strategic plan	The board will update the division's strategic plan annually. All division and board actions should be aligned with the strategic plan. The board will review the strategic plan on an annual basis as a part of the superintendent's summative evaluation.

Violation of these norms and protocols will result in the following actions:

VIOLATION 1

The chairman or designee will discuss the infraction with the violating board member one-on-one.

VIOLATION 2

The issue will be discussed with the entire board.

Presented for Adoption by the Surry County School Board on February 18, 2025.