



Milpitas Unified School District
(Draft)
Governance Handbook

Board of Trustees

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EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Unity of Purpose, Roles, Responsibilities, Norms and Protocols

*This document reflects the governance team's work on the creation of a framework for effective governance. This process involves **ongoing** discussions and agreements about unity of purpose, roles, responsibilities, norms and protocols that enable the governance team to continue to perform its responsibilities in a way that best benefits all children.*

On May 7, 2016, four of the Milpitas Unified School District Board of Trustees participated in a workshop on Effective Governance with the California School Boards Association. This document reflects the governance team's discussions about developing and sustaining a framework for effective governance. This Governance Handbook reflects highlights of their ongoing conversations about unity of purpose, roles, responsibilities, norms and protocols that enable the governance team to continue to perform its responsibilities in a way that best serves all students.

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UNITY OF PURPOSE

Unity of purpose is the common focus, overarching goals, and the core values, beliefs and principles governing body members share in common about children, the district, and public education.

Our Mission

We have high expectations for every student, and provide multiple opportunities and pathways for success. We provide learning opportunities for all, and create nurturing environments where students are inspired and empowered.

Our Vision

Milpitas Unified School District is an exceptional district in which students and staff are critical thinkers and trailblazers known for creativity and innovation. We prepare students to go out into the world and make a difference as responsible citizens who are passionate about life and learning.

District Priorities

1. **Common Core State Standards**
2. **Literacy and English Learners and Students with Special Needs**
3. Improving our use of **data** to inform our work
4. Continue to Personalize Learning
5. **Alignment** - create tighter alignment about our mission, core values, and priorities

Priority Area	Strategic Focus "If we do this..."	Desired Results "Then we will see this....."
Common Core	If we focus on providing high quality support to understand, teach and assess the Common Core standards...	Then we will see student mastery of the CCSS and the development of 21st C. skills in our students
ELs, Special Education students and Historically Underserved	If we target resources, strategies and professional learning (both academic and social-emotional) to support our most "in need" students	Then we will see, both in discourse and in action, schools driving toward equitable outcomes for all students
Personalization of Learning	If we commit to a culture of innovation and collaboration including new ways of creating blended and personalized learning	Then we will see teachers as facilitators and students as owners of learning
Data	If we commit to a culture of data analysis and feedback among our staff and students	Then we will see schools and teachers keenly aware of the unique needs of each student
Alignment and Culture	If we commit to developing individualized Theories of Action & collaborative district strategies while honoring our community agreements	Then we will see our schools, teachers and support staff focused and unified around a clear and concise number of targeted strategies

Milpitas Unified School District Board Goals 2016

As articulated at our workshop 5/7/2016

As part of the conversation around unity of purpose, the Board engaged in a lengthy discussion about their goals and made the following determinations:

- The Board wants to further develop their Unity of Purpose and focus on Board Goals.
- The Board believes in Success for Every Student and wants more focus on individual learning plans.
- The Board has a goal to be the “THE STATES BEST OPERATING DISTRICT” – with a strong Board and Superintendent team.
- The Board wants a greater focus on Leadership – both Board Leadership and the Superintendent acting as a leader.
- The Board wishes to adopt a goal regarding stability that includes fiscal solvency and stability as it pertains to board goals and district direction.
- The Board would like the leadership team to develop a plan for early student intervention that includes individual student learning plans that define a timely path to success.
- The Board is interested in “Balanced Governance” and working with the Superintendent to develop goals and monitor those goals without micro-managing.

In the immediate future the board wants to accomplish the following:

- 1- Develop a Governance Calendar.**
- 2- Adopt a protocol for Board – Superintendent Communication.**
- 3- Develop a goals info-graphic to enhance the community understanding of board and LCAP goals and expenditures.**
- 4- Adopt a protocol for Agenda Development.**
- 5- Review and either modify or affirm the districts Mission and Vision.**
- 6- Review the current staff survey and revise it to focus on district goals and not on Superintendent or other personnel.**
- 7- Keep a focus on student test scores and achievement.**
- 8- Celebrate the districts strength in diversity**
- 9- Maintain a good environment for student success by increasing resources for families and children’s health and well-being.**

GAINING CLARITY ON ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A lot of discussion ensued regarding board roles and behaviors. The following are suggested guidelines on Board Roles and behaviors.

The Role of the Board and Superintendent – CSBA:

School board “trustees” are the representatives of the people, elected to ensure the district schools educate the students in consideration of the interests of the local community. The role of the School Board is to govern the school district.

The superintendent is hired by the school board to provide the professional expertise in the day-to-day operations of the district. The role of the Superintendent is:

1. To work with the school board to develop an effective governance leadership team.
2. To serve as the chief administrative officer for the school district.

Performing Board Responsibilities - CSBA:

We Set the Direction for the Community’s Schools by:

- Focusing on student learning
- Assessing needs/obtaining baseline data
- Generating, reviewing or revising setting direction documents (beliefs, vision, priorities, strategic goals, success indicators)
- Ensuring an appropriate inclusive process is used to develop these documents
- Ensuring that these documents are the driving force for all district efforts

We Establish an Effective and Efficient Structure for the school district by:

- Employing the superintendent.
- Setting policies for hiring of other personnel.
- Overseeing the development of and adopting policies
- Setting direction for and adopting the curriculum.
- Establishing budget priorities and adopting the budget.
- Overseeing facilities issues.
- Providing direction for and voting to accept collective bargaining agreements.

We Provide Support through our behavior and actions by:

- Acting with a professional demeanor that models the district's beliefs and vision.
- Making decision and providing resources that support mutually agreed upon priorities and goals.
- Upholding board approved district policies.
- Ensuring a positive personnel climate exists.
- Being knowledgeable about district efforts and able to explain them to the public.

We Ensure Accountability to the Public by:

- Evaluating the superintendent
- Monitoring, reviewing and revising policies
- Serving as a judicial and appeals body
- Monitoring student achievement and program effectiveness and requiring program changes as indicated
- Monitoring and adjusting district finances
- Monitoring the collective bargaining process

We Act as Community Leaders by:

- Speaking with a common voice about district priorities, goals and issues.
- Engaging and involving the community in district schools and activities.
- Communicating clear information about policies, programs and fiscal conditions of the district.
- Educating the community and the media about issues facing the district and public education.
- Advocating for students, district programs and public education to the general public, community, local, state and national leaders.

**GAINING CLARITY ON ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND
ENHANCING TEAM COMMUNICATION:**

What the Board needs from the Superintendent:

The Superintendent will support trustees in fulfilling their responsibilities by:

- The same communication level with all board members
- Transparency
- Clear Communication
- Honest Straight Talk
- Competent in knowledge of laws that govern schools
- Confidentiality

What the Superintendent needs from the Board:

The trustees can support the superintendent in fulfilling his responsibilities by:

- Trust
- Clear Communication
- Honest Straight Talk
- Mutual Respect

What Board Members Need from each other:

The trustees can support each other by:

- Maintaining Trust
- Clear Communication
- Honest Straight Talk
- Mutual Respect

Milpitas Unified School District

AGREEMENTS AND ACTIONS TO ENHANCE GOOD GOVERNANCE

The Governing Board believes that its primary responsibility is to act in the best interests of every student in the district. The Board also has major commitments to parents/guardians, all members of the community, employees, the state of California, laws pertaining to public education, and established policies of the district. To maximize Board effectiveness and public confidence in district governance, Board members are expected to govern responsibly and hold themselves to the highest standards of ethical conduct.

The Board expects its members to work with each other and the Superintendent to ensure that a high-quality education is provided to each student. Each individual Board member shall follow these agreed upon (NORMS).

1. Keep learning and achievement for all students as the primary focus.
2. Value, support and advocate for public education.
3. Recognize and respect differences of perspective and style on the Board and among staff, students, parents and the community.
4. Act with dignity, and understand the implications of demeanor and behavior.
5. Keep confidential matters confidential. No Comments from Board on personnel issues.
6. Participate in professional development and commit the time and energy necessary to be an informed and effective leader.
7. Understand the distinctions between Board and staff roles, and refrain from performing management functions that are the responsibility of the Superintendent and staff.

8. Understand that authority rests with the Board as a whole and not with individuals

Board members also shall assume collective responsibility for building unity and creating a positive organizational culture. To operate effectively, the Board shall have a unity of purpose and:

1. Keep the district focused on learning and achievement for all students.
2. Communicate a common vision.
3. Operate openly, with trust and integrity.
4. Govern in a dignified and professional manner, treating everyone with civility and respect.
5. Govern within Board-adopted policies and procedures.
6. Take collective responsibility for the Board's performance.
7. Periodically evaluate it's own effectiveness.
8. Ensure opportunities for the diverse range of views in the community to inform Board deliberations.
9. Strive to have more social events

The Board wants to in the near future develop PROTOCOLS on the following topics

1, Staff Reports – Develop a protocol and format for Staff reports that may include the following.

- a. Keep reports to 15 minutes and focus on the following
- b. What is the question we are trying to answer?
- c. What data do we need to support the answer of our deliberation?
- d. Have all necessary information available to answer board questions don't leave anything out.
- e. Be Culturally aware.

- f. The presenters should always control their own presentation – no third party power point.
 - g. Keep the information simple and easy for anyone to understand
3. **Board Superintendent Communication.** The board would like to adopt a protocol that states that the Superintendent does not share information with one board member that all other board members are not aware of. A sample protocol might be “If a single board member requests information or is given information by the superintendent or staff – the superintendent or staff member must inform all board members of the first board members question and provide all board members with the same information.”
 4. **Protocol for Closed session.** The board would like to adopt a protocol for attendance of staff in closed session. A sample protocol might be “Only the board members and superintendent shall be present in closed session deliberations - Legal council or other staff may be present at the request of the board and may – at the request of the board be asked to report and then leave closed session in order for the board to deliberate and vote in a condition of full confidentiality, with the knowledge that all action from closed session must then be reported out in open session.
 5. **The Board would like a protocol for Agenda development.** A sample protocol for this might be “The board president along with one other board member on a rotating basis will meet with the superintendent to develop the meeting agenda. This development will be lead by the items listed for that month in the Governance Calendar.
 6. **The Board would like to develop a protocol around Board Deliberation and Public Input.** A sample protocol might be “The Board welcomes public input on all agenda items prior to board deliberation. Board members recognize and agree that public input is just one element of the board decision making process and that public input should INFORM the board but not necessarily influence the boards decision making process as it pertains to making a balanced and informed decision based on best practices, staff recommendations and budget responsibilities.
 7. **The Board would like to utilize study sessions for agenda items that require more time to examine and deliberate than allowable at a regular board meeting.**

GOVERNANCE AGREEMENTS SIGNATURE PAGE

We have reviewed and agree to follow the aforementioned governance team norms and protocols in order to support a positive and productive working relationship among the Milpitas Unified School District Board of Trustees, Superintendent, staff, students and the community. We shall renew this agreement annually.

Affirmed on this _____ day of _____ 2016

Gunawan Alisantosa, President

Bob Nunez, Vice President

Daniel Bobay, Clerk

Danny Lau, Trustee

Chris Norwood, Trustee