

# THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

No. 009

SECTION: Board Bylaws

TITLE: Principles of Governance  
and Leadership

ADOPTED: October 19, 2023

REVISED:

## 009 PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

### Purpose

This policy sets forth the norms and principles of governance and leadership for members of the Board of Education (“Board”) of The School District of Philadelphia (“District”).

### Authority

The Public School Code and Philadelphia Home Rule Charter permit the Board to adopt and enforce such reasonable rules and regulations as it may deem necessary and proper for its governance as well as the management of the affairs of the District and its operations. [1][2][3][4]

### Core Requirements

Board Members shall adhere to the below principles:

#### *Lead Responsibly*

- Fully prepare for, attend, and actively participate in Board meetings
- Work together with civility and cooperation, respecting that individuals hold differing opinions and ideas
- Participate in professional development, training, and Board retreats
- Collaborate with the Superintendent, acknowledging their role as the 10th member of the Board
- Always treat District staff respectfully both in public and private settings

#### *Act Ethically* [5]

- Never use the position for improper benefit to self or others
- Avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest
- Recognize Board Members do not possess any authority outside of the collective Board
- Accept that when the Board has made a decision, it is time to move forward collectively and constructively

#### *Plan Thoughtfully* [6]

- Implement a collaborative strategic planning process
- Set annual goals that are aligned with comprehensive plans, recognizing the need to adapt as situations change
- Review and authorize a comprehensive financial plan and master facilities plan that

- anticipates short and long-term needs
- Allocate resources to effectively impact student success

*Evaluate Continuously* [6]

- Make data-informed decisions
- Evaluate the Superintendent annually
- Conduct a Board self-assessment on an at least annual basis
- Focus on student growth and achievement
- Review effectiveness of all comprehensive and strategic plans

*Communicate Clearly* [6] [7]

- Promote open, honest, and respectful dialogue among the Board, staff, and community
- Acknowledge and listen to varied input from all stakeholders
- Promote transparency while protecting necessary confidential matters
- Set expectations and guidelines for individual Board Member communication
- Individual Board Members communicate back to full Board a summary of any outside/one-off meetings conducted in their official capacity as a Board Member

*Advocate Earnestly* [7]

- Promote public education as a keystone of our Commonwealth
- Engage the community by seeking input, building support networks, and generating action
- Champion public education by engaging local, state, and federal officials

*Govern Effectively* [8]

- Establish and adhere to rules and procedures for Board operations
- Develop, adopt, revise, and review policy routinely
- Align Board decisions to policy ensuring compliance with the PA School Code, Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, and other local, state, and federal laws
- Remain focused on the role of governance, effectively delegating management tasks to the administration

**Legal References:**

1. [Home Rule Charter](#) §12-200
2. [Home Rule Charter](#) §12-300
3. [24 P.S.](#) §4-407
4. [24 P.S.](#) §5-510
5. [Policy](#) 008 - Ethics Policy
6. [Policy](#) 003.1 - Goals and Guardrails
7. [Policy](#) 007 - Public Engagement
8. [Policy](#) 003 - Functions