

Effective: October 19, 2023

Revised: April 17, 2024

Board Operating Guidelines for Board of Education Membership (Attachment for Policy 004)

Purpose

The purpose of the Board Operating Guidelines is to effectuate Policy 004: Membership, which provides information on the composition of the Board of Education (“Board”).

Procedures

Board Member Expectations

Below is an overview of the procedures related to each of the Board Member expectations outlined in Policy 004: Membership.

Statement of Financial Interests Form

The Board’s [Policy 008: Ethics Policy](#) outlines in greater detail the processes, timelines, and stipulations of the Statement of Financial Interests Form.

Oath of Office

The oath of office is administered to new Board Members by a Judge of the Superior Court of Pennsylvania after they receive their letter of appointment from the Mayor and before on-boarding begins.

Board staff will make every attempt to coordinate schedules so that all new Board Members can convene at one time for the oath of office. However, competing schedules might require more than one session to be convened.

The oath of office is administered in private in the Board’s Committee Room and then signed and notarized. Board staff should coordinate with District notaries to attend the scheduled session in-person.

The Board Chief of Staff should reach out to the Judge directly to coordinate their schedule.

The Mayor should also be invited and attend; which involves the Board Chief of Staff coordinating with the Mayor’s Chief of Staff’s office.

Adherence to Applicable Board Policies

Board Members are expected to adhere to all Board policies found in the 000 series of the Board’s [Policy Manual](#).

Upon taking the oath of office, Board staff will coordinate each Board Member signing an acknowledgement of the [Board's Policy 008: Ethics Policy](#).

Upon receiving adequate background and orientation to the Goals and Guardrails governance framework, Board Members also will sign a commitment letter stating their acknowledgement of the activities required for it to be successful. More information on this commitment letter can be found in [Policy 003.1: Goals and Guardrails](#).

Mandatory Clearances

Upon taking the oath of office, Board staff will work with Board Members to coordinate their completion of the necessary background clearances. Board staff will also process reimbursements for costs incurred by Board Members while obtaining these background clearances.

Meeting Preparation and Attendance

Board Members are expected to prepare for and attend all business meetings of the Board. These expectations are further outlined in [Policy 009: Principles of Governance and Leadership](#). Guidance on requesting to attend a meeting/s virtually can be found in [Policy 006.1: Attendance at Public Meetings via Electronic Communications](#).

Additional information related to the Board's meetings can be found in [Policy 006: Meetings](#).

Board Member Resignations

If a Board Member chooses to resign from their term, they shall submit a letter of resignation in writing stating the effective date of the resignation to the Board President and to the Mayor with a copy to the City Council President and Board's Chief of Staff.

If the Board President is resigning, they should send their letter of resignation in writing stating the effective date of the resignation to the Mayor with a copy to the City Council President and Board's Chief of Staff.

Orientation

The Office of the Board of Education ("Board staff") shall arrange for each Board Member to receive a robust orientation. The orientation shall include both legally-mandated training and supplemental information to best serve them in their new role.

Board staff will take the steps necessary to establish an online [myPSBA account](#) for each Board Member to allow the Board Member to complete the below state-mandated training:

- Newly appointed Board Members, during the first year of service:
 - Instruction and academic programs, one (1) hour of which must be on best practices related to trauma-informed approaches;
 - Personnel;
 - Fiscal Management;
 - Board Goals and priorities;
 - Operations;
 - Governance; and
 - Ethics and Open Meetings.

- Reappointed Board Members, within one (1) year after re-appointment:
 - Relevant changes to federal and state public school law and regulations;
 - Fiscal Management;
 - Trauma-informed approaches; and
 - Other information deemed necessary by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Board staff will schedule all new Board Members for supplemental orientation briefing sessions such as:

- Board Goals and Guardrails
- Board Norms and Organization
- Board Policy Work
- Office of General Counsel
- Finance
- Organizational Structure of The School District of Philadelphia (“District”)
- Charter Schools
- Office of the Inspector General
- Office of Auditing Services
- District Performance
- Office of Talent
- Government Relations
- The Fund for the School District of Philadelphia

Finally, there are self-guided orientation resources always available to Board Members through their myPSBA account. Some sample offerings include:

- Academic Requirements and Testing
- Board's Role in Finance and Budgeting
- Conflicts of Interest and Ethics Act
- Effective State and Local Advocacy
- Evaluating Your Superintendent
- Facilities Planning
- Introduction to Governance Plans and Documents
- Legal Landscape of Public Education
- Overview of Public School Labor Relations
- Policy and Administrative Regulations
- Special Education
- Sunshine Act & Executive Session
- Transportation
- Intersections - Racism, Protests and Schools: Building the Equity Foundation Through Policy
- Intersections - Understanding the Board's Role
- Culturally Responsive Leadership in the New Normal
- Cybersecurity in Digital Meetings and Online Learning
- Emergency Connectivity Funding for Off-Campus Internet and Laptops/Tablets
- Supporting the Mental Health of Professional Staff
- Webinar - Innovative Online Learning at School Districts

- Webinar - Keeping Board Meetings Effective
- Webinar: Superintendent Evaluation

Expenses

There are different types of expenses Board Members can either have prepaid in advance or be reimbursed for when attending official Board business. Prior to processing, all expenses shall first be pre-approved by the Board President. Expenditures not deemed necessary or reasonable will not be reimbursed.

Following pre-approval by the Board President, expenses that may be prepaid on behalf of the Board Member include but are not limited to: 1) conference registration/professional association fees; or 2) air/train travel.

Following pre-approval by the Board President, Board Member expenses that may be reimbursed include but are not limited to: 1) rideshare services such as Uber and Lyft; or 2) out-of-town cab service/reasonable hotel accommodations. Requests for reimbursement that are not pre-approved may be subject to denial.

All requests are documented by Board staff for record keeping/auditing purposes and shared with the Board President for pre-approval. Pre-approval shall be requested and processed as follows:

1. Requesting Board Member submits pre-approval request to Board President using designated form at least 3 weeks in advance
2. Board President or their designee reviews and approves request
3. Upon receipt of pre-approval, Board staff will work with the requesting Board Member to process all requests for prepayment or expense reimbursement in accordance with Board Policy 331 and its Administrative Procedures

The Board Vice-President will review and preauthorize expenses and reimbursements for the Board President.

In-Town Cab Service

Requests for in-town cab service for the purposes of official Board business will be submitted directly to Board staff by the requesting Board Member through the designated form at least 3 business days in advance, reviewed by Board staff, and processed.