

Board Norms for the Washington State Board of Education

Adopted by the Board, _____ 2013

- Board meetings will focus on the State Board of Education (SBE) goals as articulated in the Strategic Plan, while recognizing that other matters may also be part of a meeting agenda.
- At board meetings and in all communications with the public and staff, SBE members will maintain the dignity and integrity appropriate to an effective public body.
- Every board member should play a meaningful role in the Board's overall deliberations. Each member expects of others a commitment to the work of the SBE and will endeavor to understand the views of other members and to engage in civil discussion. The Board embraces a healthy debate on policy issues.
- The principal purpose of Board meetings is to discuss policies that help all students to succeed, and to graduate from high school college and/or career-ready. Agendas, presentations, and discussions for each board meeting should reflect this overarching purpose.
- Board meetings should include the following procedures:
 - Board meetings should start on time and end on time.
 - Meeting materials should be made available one week in advance (see Bylaw Article V section 2) and should be of high quality.
 - Board members are expected to consistently attend and prepare for Board meetings and to review the materials in advance of the meeting (see Bylaw Article III, section 2).
 - Each staff presentation should begin by clarifying the purpose of the presentation and the decision to be made or issue to be considered.

- Board members should hold their questions (except for brief clarifying questions) until the end of each presentation, or until the presenter offers a designated “pause” for questions.
- Each Board member expects of others a commitment to speak 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.
- Board meetings should be a forum for Board discussion. Staff and guest presentations should be structured to facilitate this discussion, not supplant it.
- When considering policy proposals, each Board member expects of others an opportunity for advance review. The Board agrees to a “no surprises” mode of operation – all significant proposals should be sent in advance of the meeting (preferably before Board packets are sent) to the Chair and Executive Director for their consideration in constructing the agenda and materials for the meeting.
- 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, in a timely fashion.
- Although the SBE is composed of appointed and elected members, Board members strive for commonality and unity of purpose through their deliberations.
- Board members will maintain the confidentiality of executive sessions.
- Members of the SBE should support board decisions and policies when providing information to the public. This does not preclude board members from expressing their personal views. The executive director or a board designee will be the spokesperson for the board to the media (same as Bylaw Article III, section 3).