

MODEL POLICY #2

BOARD—SUPERINTENDENT COMMUNICATIONS

Why Adopt This Policy?

School boards should consider adopting a policy to set the expectation that there will be efficient and transparent communication between school board members and the superintendent. Clear expectations ensure timely information exchange, allowing the board and superintendent to address issues promptly and collaboratively, ultimately benefiting students, families, and the school community.

Policy

The Board believes that a strong, effective relationship between the Superintendent and School Board requires frequent communication both in and out of official settings.

Superintendent Communications with the Board

It is expected the Superintendent provide information to the School Board as follows:

1. If an issue surfaces, the Superintendent will make every effort to inform the Board as soon as possible.
2. Conduct bi-annual Superintendent/Board member one-on-one interview to discuss progress towards District mission and goals.
3. Communicate electronically (i.e. e-mail, text message, etc.) in a timely manner when items of importance arise.
4. Phone calls on urgent items.
5. Respond to Board members' questions in a timely manner.
6. Propose meetings and/or agenda items with input and approval of Board President.

Board Communications to the Superintendent

The School Board may communicate with the Superintendent as follows:

1. The Board, as an entity, may communicate with the Superintendent through the Board President. The Superintendent shall respond to such communication on a timely basis.
2. In addition, individual Board members may call, email, or text the Superintendent with questions, which the Superintendent will respond to on a timely basis. If the Superintendent believes that a question from an individual Board member is inappropriate the Superintendent shall inform the Board member and the Board President of that fact and Board may take action as appropriate.

3. A reasonable amount of time will be given to process questions and responses (depending on the question and request, 1 to 3 business days). Every effort will be made to process the request as soon as possible.
4. On Board matters, the Board President, and not the Superintendent, serves as the public spokesperson for the Board.

At any time, the Board may decide to conduct a monthly (informal) check-in between the Superintendent and Board members. If necessary, the Board may establish a standing Board agenda item to review progress and success of communication protocols.

Legal Analysis – National

The position of Superintendent exists in all 50 states; however, the scope of the job of Superintendent, how this person is elected, and his or her relationship to the Board may vary state-by-state. In general, establishing good communication practices is unlikely to be at odds with any state law. However, it is prudent to check your state's roles and responsibilities between the Board and the other school actors.

Legal Analysis – Wisconsin

The Superintendent is an employee of the School District, and the School Board has the duty to oversee the administration of the District. Specifically, in Wisconsin, there are laws pertaining to the roles and responsibilities of the Board and the District administrator. See Wis. Stat. § 118.001; Wis. Stat. § 118.24.



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