



**Responsible Office:** Office of the Superintendent

## **BOARD POLICY 9050**

### **GOVERNING MODEL OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

#### **PURPOSE**

It is the mission of the Board of Trustees (Board) to serve as stewards of the Washoe County School District (District) to create an education system where all students achieve academic success, develop personal and civic responsibility, and achieve career and college readiness. The intent of this policy is to outline the basic principles of the governing mission of the Board of Trustees. By engaging in the Balanced Governance Model the Board intends to set and monitor high end-goals for student learning and be knowledgeable about the means used to reach those ends.

#### **DEFINITIONS**

1. "Balanced Governance" is a governance model that reinforces the Trustee's role of informed oversight by ensuring a "balance" of governance that discourages micromanagement of the Superintendent and District staff while setting out a constructive role for Trustees with "informed oversight".
2. "Informed oversight" is avoiding any tendency for Trustees to become disengaged and abdicate their oversight responsibilities to the superintendent or, conversely, to engage in over-reach into the management duties of the Superintendent or staff.

#### **POLICY**

1. Governance Commitment. The Board, on behalf of the people of Washoe County and for the benefit of students and families of the District, commits to adopt the Balanced Governance Model in order to:
  - a. Provide informed oversight to ensure the District achieves appropriate and measurable progress toward fulfilling the District's Values, Mission, Vision, Strategic Goals, Balanced Governance Model Standards, and the advancement of learning for all students;
  - b. Equip Trustees to better dialogue with community stakeholders;
  - c. Craft targeted policy language that intelligently oversees formative progress on adopted processes and programs; and

- d. Function as stewards of District resources.
2. Functional Governance. The Board, as the functional governing body of the District:
    - a. Ensures that student learning is the District's ultimate "bottom line;"
    - b. Hires a Superintendent to serve as Chief Executive Officer of the District, works in close partnership with the Superintendent, ensures that clear, detailed Superintendent performance targets are set, and evaluates Superintendent performance against the targets at least annually. Superintendent performance targets and his/her evaluation shall be linked to District Values, Mission, Vision, Strategic Goals, and Balanced Governance Model Standards;
    - c. Establishes and monitors the District's educational, financial, and administrative performance against clearly defined targets;
    - d. Ensures that the District reflects transparency and accountability; and relationships with key constituents are meaningful and contribute to the implementation and success of the District's mission;
    - e. Advocates for all students, the District, and public education generally in the legislative arena and other appropriate forums; and
    - f. Strives to ensure that the District possesses the financial and other resources necessary to realize its vision and carry out its mission fully in Washoe County;
  3. Governing Style. The Board shall govern lawfully with an emphasis on Balanced Governance Model and strategic leadership on behalf of students. The Board is accountable to the people of Washoe County for providing informed oversight to ensure the competent, conscientious, and effective accomplishment of the District's Values, Mission, Vision, Strategic Goals, and Balanced Governance Model Standards focused on improved learning for all students. Accordingly, the Board shall:
    - a. Practice balanced governance by cultivating and enforcing a balance between the oversight role of the Board and the administrative role of the Superintendent. Accordingly, the Board shall use its knowledge of community needs and their judgment as to the District's progress on the District Values, Mission, Vision, Strategic Goals, and Balanced Governance Model Standards to initiate and/or approve new or revised policy. The Board shall consistently use relevant data and expertise

regarding federal, state, contractual, and staff needs, provided by the Superintendent, in initiating and requesting new policy and policy revision and in consideration of policy approval.

- b. Cultivate a sense of group responsibility. The Board shall consider diverse viewpoints from the community and staff but not substitute individual expertise or interests for the judgment of the Board. Similarly, while the expertise of individual Trustees is recognized and may enhance the understanding of the Board decisions shall be made only as a full Board. Individual members of the Board statutorily hold no individual authority and therefore should not be provided, through policy or practice, undue influence on policy and/or program development nor given deference in Board discussion, nor undue influence in Board decision making.
- c. Govern the organization with informed oversight through the careful establishment of broadly written policies, which reflect the needs of the District's students and the community's values and perspectives. The Board's major policy focus shall be on addressing:
  - i. Meeting the educational interests of all students;
  - ii. Supporting progress toward the District's Values, Mission, Vision, Strategic Goals, and Balanced Governance Model Standards and improve learning for all students; and
  - iii. Locally defined needs and issues.
- d. Provide informed oversight through the Superintendent ensuring the Board is knowledgeable of administrative and programmatic means of attaining those effects. However, the Board shall delegate the implementation of policy, administrative regulations, and procedures to the Superintendent. By doing so, the Board shall maintain a balanced role with the Superintendent.
- e. Receive information from the Superintendent that reflects the progress or the need for improvement toward the District Values, Mission, Vision, Strategic Goals, and Balanced Governance Model Standards. The Board may craft within policy, tracking and reporting protocols for the Superintendent to ensure quality control and the necessary data to practice informed oversight. Superintendent or staff reporting to Board during Board meetings shall, at a minimum, follow the Balanced Governance Model tracking and reporting protocols outlined in the Principles of Operation section of Board Policy 9051, Board Conduct, Ethics and Operational Protocols.

- f. Hold the Superintendent responsible for acting on and communicating timely updates to Board members regarding requests for information or reports of community or staff concerns.
- g. Govern with excellence in matters such as attendance, preparation for meetings, policy-making principles, respect of roles, adherence to the Balance Governance Model standards, and personal adherence to the Balance Governance Model Individual Board Member Characteristics.

### **LEGAL REQUIREMENTS AND ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

1. This Board Policy reflects the goals of the District's Strategic Plan and aligns/complies with the governing documents of the District, to include:
  - a. Board Policy 9051, Board Conduct, Ethics and Operational Protocols;
  - b. Board Policy 9055, Officers and Duties of the Board of Trustees;
  - c. Board Policy 9060, Annual Goals, Objectives and Evaluation of the Board of Trustees;
  - d. Board Policy 9062, Orientation and Continuous Education of the Board of Trustees;
  - e. Board Policy 9080, Hiring and Monitoring Superintendent Performance;
  - f. Board Policy 6175, Student Performance Growth; and
  - g. Board Policy 9110, Meeting Protocols.

### **REVISION HISTORY**

Date	Revision	Modification
1/29/2008	1.0	Adopted
9/24/2013	2.0	Revised: converted to new Board Policy template
10/25/2016	3.0	Revised: number changed from 9001; inclusion of language related to Balanced Governance Model
11/24/2020	4.0	Revised for consistency to Board Policy 9070 and to make changes for clarity
1/20/2022	4.1	Revised: updated format per Board Policy 9070