



**RIVERSIDE LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD of EDUCATION
HANDBOOK**

BOARD APPROVED

3/12/2026

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Purpose of this handbook	3
The District.....	3
Strategic Plan	3
Vision and Mission Statement.....	3
District Goals	3
School Facilities.....	4
Average Daily Membership and Demographics.....	4
Key Administrative Contacts	5
Board Members (2026).....	5
Organizational Chart.....	5
Budget and Financial Information	6
District Calendar	6
Board of Education Calendar.....	6
Boards of Education	6
Board Member Authority and Duties.....	6
Board Member Code of Ethics.....	8
Board Officers.....	9
<i>Role of the President.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Role of Vice President.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Role of the Treasurer Pro Tempore</i>	<i>9</i>
Operating Protocol.....	10
Board/Superintendent Relationship	10
Board/Treasurer Relationship	10
Evaluation of the Superintendent and Treasurer	10
Board Committees	11
Functions of the Board Committees.....	11
<i>Policy Committee</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Curriculum and Programs Committee</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Buildings & Grounds/Operations Committee.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Finance/Audit and Personnel Committee.....</i>	<i>13</i>
Board’s Role in Employment of School Personnel.....	14
Board’s Role in Termination of School Personnel.....	14
Filling Board Member Vacancies	14
Removal from Office	15
Compensation of Board Members	15
Professional Development.....	16
Reimbursement of Expenses.....	16
Board Meetings	16
Attendance at Board Meetings.....	16
Types of Board Meetings.....	16
<i>Organizational Meeting</i>	<i>17</i>

<i>Board Work Sessions/Retreats</i>	17
<i>Emergency Meetings</i>	17
<i>Executive Session</i>	17
Meeting Agendas	18
<i>Amendments to the Agenda</i>	18
Meeting Protocol	18
<i>Role of the Board President</i>	18
<i>Motions</i>	19
<i>Public Participation</i>	19
<i>Voting</i>	19
<i>Respecting the Will of the Majority</i>	20
Sunshine Law and Public Records	20
Ohio's Sunshine Law	20
What Board Members Need to Know	20
Executive Sessions	20
Penalties for Violation of the Sunshine Law	21
Public Records Law	22
Levies and Bond Issues	22
What is a tax levy?	22
Common Types of School Tax Levies	22
What Is a Mill?	23
Board of Education Involvement in Levy Campaigns	23
Appendices	24
Glossary of Educational Acronyms	24

Introduction

Board service is both a tremendous challenge and a rewarding commitment. Being elected by a community to act as one of its representatives to the local school district board of education is an opportunity that should not be taken lightly. The board's leadership is crucial to the overall function of the district and its students' achievement.

Purpose of this handbook

This handbook serves as a ready reference for the members of the Riverside Local School District Board of Education to reinforce the board's work and provide a common understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each board member. It is imperative that all members fully understand their role and work as a cohesive team to effectively govern the district.

It is important to note that this handbook is not intended to replace the board's policy manual. All board members should be well acquainted with the board-adopted comprehensive policy manual. This can be found at:
<http://go.boarddocs.com/oh/rlsd/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CAJPWP65030E>

The District

Strategic Plan

A link to the district's current strategic plan may be found here:
<https://www.riversidelocalschools.com/protected/ArticleView.aspx?iid=6YYYP02&dasi=3U30>

Vision and Mission Statement

The district's Vision statement is "One Community. Pursuing Greatness. Getting Better Every Day"

The district's Mission statement is "Through a culture of excellence, immerse students in educational opportunities and empower them to excel in an interconnected world."

District Goals

The strategic plan focuses all district work within four broad and diverse areas: teaching and learning; fiscal sensibility; safety, climate and wellness; and advocacy, partnership and engagement.

About the District

The 65 square miles that encompass the Riverside Local School District are located in Lake County and serve nearly 4,300 students residing in Painesville Township, Concord, Leroy, Grand River, and a small section of northern Chardon. Riverside prides itself in offering an excellent education program to its students at great value to district taxpayers.

School Facilities

The Riverside Campus is home to students grades 8-12, while LaMuth Middle School serves students in grades 5-7. Buckeye and Melridge Elementary serve Kindergarten through 4th grade, Parkside Elementary serves grades kindergarten – 5th grade, and Riverview Elementary serves grades pre-kindergarten – 5th grade.

The Riverside Campus houses students in grades 8-12 and offers a variety of high-quality experiences for its students. Many students have earned an associate degree from Lakeland Community College before earning their high school diploma. Riverside Campus students have embraced the Credit Flexibility provision with students applying to receive high school credit for activities outside the traditional classroom setting.

Riverside High School joins an elite group of high schools being recognized by U.S. News & World Report as a “Best High Schools Bronze Award Recipient.” LaMuth Middle School is a 5-7 building that has won numerous awards from the Ohio Middle Level Association (formally Ohio Middle School Association) in the areas of teaming, scheduling, and interdisciplinary curriculum. The four elementary schools (PK-4/5) are working together to provide common educational experiences and assessments across the vast district.

Average Daily Membership and Demographics

4,100 students across the district, which covers Concord, Leroy and Painesville Townships as well as Grand River and a small portion of Painesville City and Chardon.

Demographics:

White: 79.5%

Hispanic: 10.8%

Multiracial: 4.9%

African American: 3.8%

Asian/Pacific Islander: 0.8%

Key Administrative Contacts

Dr. Christopher J. Rateno, Superintendent,
Christopher.Rateno@riversideschools.net
Dr. Stephen Thompson, Treasurer/CFO,
Stephen.Thompson@riversideschools.net
Dr. Melissa Mlakar, Assistant Superintendent,
Melissa.Mlakar@riversideschools.net
Camille Ritt, Executive Director of Pupil Services
Camille.Ritt@riversideschools.net
Nick Carrabine, Marketing and Communications Director,
Nick.Carrabine@riversideschools.net
Mallory Aliff, Director of Human Resources,
Mallory.Aliff@riversideschools.net
Michael Patrizi, Assistant Treasurer,
Michael.Patrizi@riversideschools.net

Board Members (2026)

Lori Krenisky, President, Lori.Krenisky@riversideschools.net
Belinda Grassi, Vice President, Belinda.Grassi@riversideschools.net
Denise Brewster, Board Member, Denise.Brewster@riversideschools.net
Joseph Audino, Board Member, Joseph.Audino@riversideschools.net
Jimmielee Vires, Board Member, Jimmielee.Vires@riversidechools.net

Organizational Chart

A full district organizational chart can be found in the policy manual and is referenced below. Board members are responsible for the hiring, guidance and evaluation of the superintendent and treasurer. All other administrators and staff in the district are selected, managed and evaluated by these two educational administrators.

The Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA) regularly refers to the board, superintendent and treasurer as the district's leadership team.

Reference Board Policy:
[District Organization, po1100](#)

Budget and Financial Information

It's important that board members have a general understanding of the district's budget and are able to speak to community members and others about the financial position, needs and outlook.

Monthly financial reports are available at this link:

<https://www.riversidelocalschools.com/TreasurerCFO.aspx>

The board relies on the district's 5-year Forecast to make decisions and to predict how best to govern the district. The forecast changes on a regular basis and is discussed with the board members by the treasurer at November and May board meetings. Details on the current Forecast are available here:

<https://www.riversidelocalschools.com/TreasurerCFO.aspx>

Reference Board Policy:

[Budget Planning, po6210](#)

[Financial Report, po6820](#)

District Calendar

The Board shall determine annually the total number of hours when the schools will be in session for instructional purposes with students in attendance - including scheduled classes, supervised activities and approved education options. More information about the district and school calendar is detailed in the district's policy manual.

Reference Board Policy:

[School Calendar, po8210](#)

Board of Education Calendar

Board meetings are held monthly and are determined and approved for the year at the Organizational Meeting in January. A full list of current board meetings, including additional or special meetings added during the course of the year, is available on the district website:

<https://www.riversidelocalschools.com/BoardofEducation.aspx>

Boards of Education

Board Member Authority and Duties

The role and function the board and its members are often misinterpreted by the public and in some instances by board members themselves.

The Ohio legislature has essentially delegated the organization, administration and control of the public schools to boards of education. While boards of education have very broad powers, their authority isn't unlimited. The courts have held that the board has only such authority as is expressly given by statute or necessarily implied. The courts have generally supported the sound judgment of boards when they act in good faith, are not arbitrary or unreasonable, and are not in clear violation of the law.

A board's primary function is that of policy making. A board should have clear and concise policies to do the job it was elected to do and effect the orderly administration of the district's schools. The task of understanding and approving the policies within the district's policy manual falls directly on the board. Once policies are adopted and administrative procedures are established, the board should depend on its superintendent and treasurer for implementation.

Helping new board members become familiar quickly is another important role for veteran board members. OSBA offers Five Fast Facts about new board member orientation here:

<https://www.ohioschoolboards.org/sites/default/files/FastFacts-NBMtransition.pdf>

The most recent copy of OSBA's Five Fast Facts are included in the Appendix to this handbook.

Riverside Local Schools' policy manual may be found here:

<http://go.boarddocs.com/oh/rlsd/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CAJPWP65030E>

Boards are not administrators. The function of hiring and evaluating staff is not within the direct authority of the board or its individual members with exception of the superintendent and treasurer. It's important for the board to ensure that a sound administrative process is in place for the evaluation of all staff and to hold the superintendent and treasurer accountable for the administration of adopted procedures.

The board is responsible for adopting an evaluation procedure and administering the evaluations of the superintendent ([RC 3319.01](#)) and the treasurer ([RC 3313.22](#)) in accordance with the adopted procedure. Both of these school administrators should be evaluated each year.

Riverside's policies related to Superintendent and Treasurer employment and evaluation may be found by:

Reference Board Policy:

[Employment of the Superintendent, po1220](#)

[Evaluation of the Superintendent, po 1240](#)

[Employment of the Treasurer, po1310](#)

[Evaluation of the Treasurer, po1330](#)

An important function of the board is to be accountable to the community and advise the superintendent on the climate of the community. Board members should be very careful to distinguish between listening to community stakeholders and to intercede as individuals in matters that pertain to the entire board or the administrative team. Individual board members only have legal authority when the board is convened in public session.

Board Member Code of Ethics

Ohio laws set minimum ethical standards for public officials, including school board members, school district employees and members of school district financial planning and supervision commissions. The ethics law is found in [RC Chapter 102](#). Additionally, there are two ethics restrictions found in the criminal code ([RC 2921.42](#) and [RC 2921.43](#)) and two statutes, ([RC 3319.21](#) and [RC 3313.33](#)), that apply specifically to school board members. It is important to read and understand these statutes.

The Ohio School Boards Association offers the guidelines for good board member behavior as a Code of Ethics. It may be found at: <https://www.ohioschoolboards.org/code-ethics> but includes the following:

- Remember that my first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of all students attending the public schools;
- Obey the laws of Ohio and the United States;
- Respect the confidentiality of privileged information;
- Recognize that as an individual board member I have no authority to speak or act for the board;
- Work with other members to establish effective board policies;
- Delegate authority for the administration of the schools to the superintendent, treasurer and other staff;
- Encourage ongoing communications among board members, staff and the community;
- Render all decisions based on the available facts and my independent judgment rather than succumbing to the influence of individuals or special interest groups;
- Make every effort to attend all board meetings;
- Become informed concerning the issues to be considered at each meeting;
- Improve my boardmanship by studying educational issues and by participating in professional development programs;
- Support the employment of staff members based on qualifications and not as a result of influence;
- Cooperate with other board members and administrators to establish a system of regular and impartial evaluations of all staff;
- Avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance thereof;

- Refrain from using my board position for the benefit of myself, family members or business associates;
- Express my personal opinions but, once the board has acted, accept the will of the majority.

Board Officers

In accordance with Ohio statute [RC 3313.14](#), the board elects a President and Vice President at its organizational meeting in January to serve a term of one year. Any member may be voted into either position by a simple majority vote of the members present.

Role of the President

The president presides over all board meetings and carries out other important leadership responsibilities, such as:

- Maintain the orderly conduct of all board meetings;
- Sign all approved meeting proceedings after the signature of the treasurer;
- Act as the board's representative when signing contracts, memoranda of understanding, [5705.412](#) (.412) certificates and other official board documents;
- Ensure that the community has a voice at meetings (within board policy);
- Call special meetings of the board as necessary;
- Facilitate good communication among the board members and administration.

Role of Vice President

The vice president is authorized to fulfill all responsibilities and duties held by the president, in the event of that person's absence.

Role of the Treasurer Pro Tempore

If the treasurer is absent for any meeting(s), the **board is required to elect a treasurer pro tempore from its membership**. The treasurer pro tempore is responsible for keeping record of the meeting's procedures, including meeting start and end times, taking roll call, keeping record of motions and votes and certifying the contents of the official minutes of the meeting.

Reference Board Policy:

[Officers, po0152](#)

[Incapacity of Treasurer, po1350](#)

Operating Protocol

Board/Superintendent Relationship

One of the board's greatest responsibilities is the selection and employment of a competent superintendent. The only positions reporting directly to the board are the superintendent and treasurer. The success of the school system depends to a great extent on the working relationship between the board and its superintendent. The most important element of this relationship is trust. Each member of the board needs to understand the role of the board and the role of the superintendent and respect those roles.

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) defines the role of the superintendent as the district's chief educational leader with direct responsibility for the administration and operation of the school district. The superintendent is charged with implementing board-approved policies and presenting recommendations for board consideration and approval. Communication is crucial to allow the board to function in its role of governance oversight and accountability.

Reference Board Policy:

[Board/Superintendent Communication, po1210](#)

Board/Treasurer Relationship

The treasurer reports directly to the board and is responsible for the accounting of all money received and spent by the district. The treasurer maintains the official financial records and must keep the board well informed of all financial forecasts. Riverside's Current Five-Year Forecast is available on this webpage: <https://www.riversidelocalschools.com/TreasurerCFO.aspx>

In addition to the treasurer's financial duties, he or she acts as the board's secretary. The secretary is responsible for maintaining the official minutes of all board meetings including the date, time, location, board member roll, and record of all actions taken and approved by the board.

Reference Board Policy:

[Duties of the Treasurer, po1320](#)

Evaluation of the Superintendent and Treasurer

The board is required to adopt procedures for the evaluation of its superintendent ([RC 3319.01](#)) and treasurer ([RC 3313.22](#)). The board must consider the evaluation when deciding to renew or not to renew the superintendent or treasurer. However, the evaluation does not imply continued employment.

Board Committees

The board may authorize the establishment of committees from among its membership as it deems necessary for operation of the district. It is typically the responsibility of the board president to assign board members to board committees, but board members may express a desire to be assigned to specific committees for which they have personal expertise or interest. Committee assignments are designated at the organizational meeting in January. Ideally this is done in consultation with each member to best align with his or her area of expertise and interest.

The Board President does not have the ability to unilaterally decide to appoint and assign a task to a group and thereby give it the status of a committee of the board.

Currently, Riverside utilizes four board committees: a Policy Committee, a Curriculum and Programming Committee, a Buildings & Grounds/Operations Committee and a Finance/Audit and Personnel Committee.

Copies of past board committee meeting minutes are on file with the Treasurer.

Functions of the Board Committees

Because the Riverside committees are formed by the action of the Board of Education for the purpose of advising the board with respect to their subject areas, these committees are considered public bodies and subject to the open meetings laws.

Board committees may make recommendations for board action but do not have the authority to act for the board. Committees typically serve in an advisory capacity only and provide recommendations to the full board based on their analysis of an issue. The full Board of Education should give careful consideration to the recommendations of their committees, but the final action and responsibility remains with the full board of education.

In instances when a majority of the board would like to participate in the discussion of a typical committee issue, the board should consider calling a special meeting of the board of education instead of using the committee structure to accomplish the work. This allows information to be provided to all board members simultaneously and will facilitate immediate discussion - allowing all board members to benefit from the input and collaboration of consultants, experts or members of the community.

A Committee Chair will be assigned to each board committee and an additional member will be appointed. The Committee Chair is responsible for calling the committee meeting to order and overseeing the momentum of the meeting.

The committee will be an effective method for the Administrative Team to have in-depth conversation with members relating to departmental topics that the full board should be made aware of. The Committee chair will be responsible for communicating such topics to the full board of education at regularly scheduled board meetings. The Committee Chair may assist in the development of the committee meeting agenda along with the Administrative Team when board initiatives requested by the full BOE have been charged to committee work. The Committee chair is tasked with preparing a summary report to present to the full board relating to committee tasks and items on the board agenda. Such reports by the Committee Chair will be supplemented by additional information as provided by the Administrative Team at each regularly scheduled board meeting.

Committee members are expected to attend all committee meetings. It is preferred that meetings will be scheduled on a regular and routine basis each month unless otherwise agreed upon. An annual committee meeting calendar will be kept and posted to the district website along with the regular board meeting calendar that is set at the organizational meeting each year.

Committees will be a place of deliberation of recommendations brought forth by the administrative team. Committees will not be used as a personal space for personal agendas.

Policy Committee - The Policy Committee will serve as a platform for in-depth discussion on matters relating to Board Policy which will allow the Administrative team - in collaboration with the committee and subsequently the full Board of Education - to address and manage the broad oversight of the educational and business operations of the district.

- Review of all policy changes as proposed by the District's policy provider.
- Review of administrative guidelines updated in conjunction with the policy provider's proposed policy changes
- Reason for policy changes
- Any other policy changes that might be requested by a majority of the Board of Education
- Discussion with administrative team members (and legal council if required) any policy concerns raised by students, parents or staff
- Annual review & update of board policy handbook
- Other items that may arise from time to time

Curriculum and Programs Committee - The Curriculum & Programs Committee will serve as a platform for in-depth discussion on the following matters which will allow the Administrative team - with support of the

committee and subsequently the BOE - to proactively address and manage day-to-day courses of study and educational opportunities provided to all students in the Riverside District.

- New courses to be offered - why, when, where, staffing, purpose
- Courses to be eliminated - why, when, staffing
- Course offerings made available to all students each year
- Curriculum outlines for all subjects
- New ODEW requirements for core curriculums
- Graduation seals, pathways to graduation, graduation rates
- State report cards
- DLT/BLT/TBT issues, concerns and progress
- Professional development offerings
- Professional competency & subject mastery
- District selected assessment results
- Program materials and curriculum selection
- Other items that may arise from time to time

Buildings & Grounds/Operations Committee - The Buildings and Grounds Committee will serve as a platform for in-depth discussion on the following topics - allowing the Administrative Team - with support of the committee and subsequently the BOE - to proactively address and manage day-to-day optimal functioning of our educational spaces.

- Review of the PI Budget and 5-Year PI Forecast
- Discussion of bond levy financing and repayment requirements for PI purposes
- Immediate facility projects and routine long-term facility repair and maintenance projects that require advance planning for financial obligations and occupancy
- Bid proposals
- RFQs or RFPs for all facility needs
- Staffing needs for maintenance department
- Summer projects and employment needs
- How all projects fit within the strategic plan goals relating to long-range facility planning
- State & federal grants possible relating to facility, maintenance and long-term plans
- Other items that may arise from time to time

Finance/Audit and Personnel Committee - The Finance/Audit and Personnel Committee will serve as a platform for in-depth discussion on matters relating to Finance and Personnel which will allow the Administrative team - in collaboration with the committee and subsequently the BOE - to address and manage the broad oversight of the finance and human resource operations of the district

- Staff needs (certified & classified)
- Salary Studies

- OTES requirements, teacher evaluations & professional competency
- Annual contract renewals for certified & classified staff
- Administrative contract renewals & evaluations - goals set and attainment of goals
- Employee benefit considerations
- Employee recognition programs
- Appropriations & Expenditures
- Financing, banking & investing
- Grants & Federal Funds
- Year end audit
- Five Year Forecast
- Tax levies & property tax collections
- Other funds & cash balances
- Other items that may arise from time to time

Board's Role in Employment of School Personnel

Other than the superintendent and treasurer, the board acts on the hiring of all other school employees ([RC 3319.07](#)) but does not recommend which employees to hire or serve on hiring committees.

No teacher may be initially hired by the district unless such person is first nominated by the superintendent ([RC 3319.07](#)). The board may designate someone other than the superintendent to nominate a teacher for employment if the superintendent's nomination would create a conflict of interest in a public contract ([RC 3319.07](#)).

Board's Role in Termination of School Personnel

As with hiring, no employee may be terminated or non-renewed without official board action.

Filling Board Member Vacancies

A vacancy on any board can occur for various reasons, including but not limited to:

- Death of the sitting member
- Move to a residence outside the district
- Resignation
- Removal from office
- Failure of a person elected to office to qualify within 10 days after the organizational meeting or of his or her appointment or election

- Accepting a public office that is incompatible with the office of board of education

OSBA maintains a fact sheet on board vacancies that can be found here: <https://www.ohioschoolboards.org/sites/default/files/OSBABoardVacanciesFactSheet.pdf>

Removal from Office

All elected officials in Ohio are subject to removal from office for misconduct through a court proceeding pursuant to [RC 3.07](#) and [RC 3.08](#). Grounds for removing a board member may include:

- Willfully and flagrantly exercising authority or power not authorized by the State of Ohio
- Refusing or neglecting to perform any official duty
- Gross neglect of duty
- Gross immorality
- Drunkenness
- Misfeasance, malfeasance, or nonfeasance

To initiate proceedings for removal, a recall petition must be signed by at least 15% of the total vote cast for governor at the most recent election for office of governor. The petition must state the charges alleged against the said board member. The law directs that a hearing on the removal be conducted within 30 days. At the hearing, the judge, or if requested, a jury, may order the removal of a board member.

Reference Board Policy

[Resignation or Removal, po0146](#)

Compensation of Board Members

Board members may be compensated for their service (see Ohio Revised Code Section (RC) [3313.12](#), [3311.19](#)).

The Ohio Constitution prohibits increases or decreases in compensation for public officials during a term of office ([Oh. Const. Art. II, Sec. 20](#)).

A board may pass a resolution or change board policy to change board compensation amounts at any time, but those changes will apply only to board members beginning new terms or for those appointed to a vacancy after the change is made.

OSBA maintains a fact sheet on Board Member Compensation which may be found here:

<https://www.ohioschoolboards.org/sites/default/files/OSBABoardCompensationFactSheet.pdf>

Professional Development

Board members are expected to seek opportunities for continued professional growth while serving in office. All board members shall complete the 3-hour online course on Ohio Public Records and Sunshine Law as provided by the Ohio Auditor of State's office at minimum of once per election cycle term. Upon completion, the board member shall provide the District Treasurer with a certificate of completion.

Reference Board Policy

[School Board Conferences, Conventions and Workshops, po0175.1](#)

Reimbursement of Expenses

[RC 3315.15](#) permits districts to create a "service fund" which can be used to pay those expenses actually incurred by board members in the performance of their official duties. This fund may not exceed the equivalent of \$2 per student enrolled in the district, or \$20,000, whichever is greater. It also may be used to pay the expenses actually incurred by board members-to-be for training and orientation occurring between the date of election or appointment and the date of administration of the oath of office.

Board Meetings

Board meetings are crucial to the work of the school board. As public officials, the law requires that the board conduct its business in public. No vote is valid unless it is recorded in a public session. The way in which the board conducts its business in public reflects on the quality of the work of the entire district.

Attendance at Board Meetings

A quorum of members is required for a board meeting to be considered official. At Riverside Local, this is three of our five sitting board members. As a member of the board, your attendance is crucial to the board's ability to conduct its business. This includes all regular and special meetings, committee meetings, emergency meetings, workshops and trainings, etc.

Types of Board Meetings

A "meeting" is defined as any prearranged discussion of the public business of a board of education, committee or subcommittee by a majority of its members.

There are two basic types of board meetings: regular and special. Under those two overarching headings, there are several variations of meetings formats.

Organizational Meeting

City, local, exempted village and JVS boards are required to hold a regular “Organizational Meeting” no later than Jan.15 each year. An ESC board has until the end of the month to hold its organizational meeting. At this meeting, the board must elect a president and vice president, each to serve a one-year term. Other items typically included in the organizational meeting agenda are:

- Oath of office for new members
- Establishing dates, times and locations for the year’s regular meetings
- Approving membership in the Ohio School Boards Association
- Appointments to the JVS board
- Adoption of the district’s tax budget per [RC 5705.28](#)
- Board committee appointments

Board Work Sessions/Retreats

These meetings usually refer to meetings at which the board will discuss matters but take no action. If scheduled at the organizational meeting, work sessions are considered regular meetings. If the work session or training was not set by the board in January at the organizational meeting, it’s a special meeting. Although no votes are typically taken at these meetings, the work session will likely meet the definition of a “meeting” and the Open Meetings Act will apply, including the requirement to properly notice the meeting, make it open to the public, and take minutes.

Emergency Meetings

Boards may hold an emergency meeting to discuss matters of exceptional urgency that require immediate board action. In the event of an emergency, the standard rule of 24-hour notice to the media and 48-hour notice to board members is replaced with a requirement to provide notice as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Executive Session

Executive session is only to be used for specific reasons, which are clearly indicated in the Sunshine Law. It is vitally important for all board members to observe 100% confidentiality of any items or issues that are discussed. Any discussion of executive session content outside of the session is a serious breach of trust and a sign of poor boardsmanship, and should be avoided under all circumstances.

Specific legal boundaries for executive sessions are covered in the Sunshine Law and Public Records section.

Meeting Agendas

Meeting agendas and related meeting materials are distributed to each board member prior to the meeting. As a board member, you are expected to understand the agenda and become familiar with the packet contents before arriving at the meeting. Questions about the agenda and meeting materials should be directed to the board president or superintendent prior to the meeting.

Individual board members who wish to add items to the meeting agenda should provide detail and a request to the board president or directly to the superintendent. Other board members may/should also be consulted about whether such item requests merit addition.

During the meeting itself, discussion should be contained and limited to agenda items once motions have been made and seconded. Board members should endeavor to contribute meaningful discussion to these items and to ask related questions if warranted. Conversation and discussion unrelated to the agenda approved at the beginning of the meeting is not recommended.

Amendments to the Agenda

Amendments may be made to the agenda prior to its adoption during the meeting. A majority vote adopts an agenda. After it's adopted, only a 2/3 vote or unanimous consent may change the agenda.

Meeting Protocol

Meetings follow the guidelines set forth in "Robert's Rules of Order." The treasurer acts as the official record keeper and is responsible for keeping the minutes of the meeting's proceedings. In the event that the treasurer is absent or unable to perform his or her duties, the board must elect a Treasurer Pro Tempore from its membership to serve in the treasurer's capacity as the meeting record-keeper.

Role of the Board President

The board president has a crucial role as the meeting's parliamentarian. He or she is responsible for maintaining proper meeting decorum. It's important that the president be comfortable with meeting procedures. The president should be willing to take control of the meeting if the proceedings become disorderly and ensure that all have a fair and equal voice.

Motions

Superintendent recommendations and other agenda items before the board must be put in the form of a motion (so moved by a member of the board) and seconded by another member before they may be discussed and brought to a vote. The point of a motion is to ensure that only one idea at a time is before the board for discussion. This maintains an orderly progression for the meeting. Once a vote is taken, that motion may not be reconsidered in the same session.

Public Participation

An important consideration for every board meeting is allowing time for members of the public to address the board. This should not be a time of public debate. All members of the board and public should be aware of and abide by the board's public participation policy.

Reference Board Policy

[Public Participation at Board Meetings, po0169.1](#)

Voting

It is important for every board member to be familiar with the legal rules relating to voting. In most cases, a simple majority is sufficient to carry a motion provided a legal quorum is in attendance, but in some instances, that is not sufficient. [RC 3313.18](#) specifies that the following items require a majority vote of ALL members for passage:

- to adopt a resolution authorizing the purchase or sale of real or personal property;
- to employ a superintendent, treasurer, teacher or other employee;
- to elect or appoint an officer;
- to pay any debt or claim; and
- to adopt any textbook.

It is the professional responsibility of each member to vote. However, in some instances, abstention, or the removal of oneself from the voting, may be required by law. For instance, a board member may not vote or participate in the making of a contract of a public school teacher or instructor where the board member is related to the individual under consideration as father, brother, mother, or sister ([RC 3319.21](#)). Members are also forbidden under [RC 2921.42](#) to secure approval of an individual contract with his or her spouse. [RC 3313.33](#) prohibits a board member from having any pecuniary interest either directly or indirectly in any contract of the board.

There are exceptions to these general rules. In cases where there are questions about voting, OSBA or the board's attorney may be contacted.

Reference Board Policy

[Voting, po0167](#)

OSBA maintains the *Voting Makes a Difference* fact sheet at:
<https://www.ohioschoolboards.org/sites/default/files/OSBABoardVotingFactSheet.pdf>

Respecting the Will of the Majority

Once a motion has been made and seconded and any discussion requested and considered, the board president will ask the treasurer to “call the roll” and each board member will cast their vote with an “aye/yes” or a “nay/no”. Once the vote has been taken, and a motion passed or failed, the board has “spoken”. Opinions should be voiced during the discussion phase of the motion. The product of the vote is a board – not individual – outcome. It is recommended that members of the community or media who request an individual board member’s perspective should be directed to the meeting’s official video and minutes.

Sunshine Law and Public Records

Ohio’s Sunshine Law

Ohio's Sunshine Law (RC 121.22) requires that all acts and most deliberations of boards of education and other public bodies, as well as their committees and subcommittees, be conducted in public. The board must provide notice of when those meetings will occur and keep minutes of the proceedings.

What Board Members Need to Know

As a board member, it is important to remember that if a majority of the board (3 or more of a five-member board) meet formally or informally to discuss district business, that could be construed as a board meeting and is subject to the Sunshine Law. The law allows for a majority of board members to be present at any given meeting as long as they are observers and not engaging in any board-related discussion.

Please see OSBA’s updated fact sheet on Ohio Sunshine Law at:
<https://www.ohioschoolboards.org/sites/default/files/OSBASunshineLawFactSheet.pdf>

Executive Sessions

The rules of executive session are clearly stated in the Sunshine Law. For the Riverside board to enter executive session, there must be a motion, second and roll call vote. The purpose or purposes of the session must be stated in the motion and while in session those are to be the only topics of discussion. No official action or vote may be taken in executive session. Each board member is expected to observe strict confidentiality regarding executive session discussion.

Sharing executive session content outside of session is a sign of poor boardmanship and in some cases may cause legal liability.

There are seven acceptable topics for executive session that apply to boards of education. They are:

- The appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion or compensation of an employee or official, or the investigation of charges or complaints against an employee, official, licensee or student, unless the employee, official, licensee or student requests a public hearing.
- The purchase of property for public purposes, or the sale of property at competitive bidding, or the disposition of unneeded, obsolete or unfit-for-use school property.
- Conferences with the board's attorney to discuss matters which are the subject of pending or imminent court action.
- Preparing for, conducting, or reviewing negotiations or bargaining sessions with employees.
- Matters required to be kept confidential by federal law or rules or state statutes.
- Specialized details of security arrangements and emergency response protocols for a public body or a public office.
- To consider confidential information related to marketing plans, specific business strategy, production techniques, or personal financial statements of an applicant for economic development assistance or related to negotiations with other political subdivisions respecting requests for economic development assistance.

[RC 121.22](#) provides specific wording for each executive session topic, which should be used in the actual motion.

Penalties for Violation of the Sunshine Law

The Sunshine Law makes it clear that any board action is invalid if the board violated any of the notice provisions of the law. A court may issue an injunction compelling members of the board, committee or subcommittee to comply with the Sunshine Law.

Please see OSBA's updated fact sheet on Ohio Sunshine Law at:

<https://www.ohioschoolboards.org/sites/default/files/OSBASunshineLawFactSheet.pdf>

Public Records Law

Like the Open Meeting Law, the Public Records Law requires public offices to keep and make available for inspection and copying records pertaining to school business. In most districts, the treasurer is responsible for keeping all records and complying with public record requests. Any member of the public may make a request but must follow the board's public records request policy.

It is important to remember that under [RC 1306.01](#), any document, device, or item, regardless of physical form or characteristic, including an electronic record which serves to document the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the office are deemed public records. This may include emails or text messages.

OSBA offers a "Five Fast Facts" board members should know about the Public Records Law: <https://www.ohioschoolboards.org/sites/default/files/FastFacts-PublicRecords.pdf>

Levies and Bond Issues

What is a tax levy?

Boards of education may propose additional local revenues in the form of a specific tax by a board resolution. School districts can place a levy on the ballot up to three times a year on specific election dates. If a majority of voters who vote on the issue approve the tax, county officials charge and collect the tax under the terms specified in the tax levy proposal. The funds collected are then disbursed to the district. When a levy is placed on the ballot, it must identify as its objective a legally defined school district purpose. Permissible uses for a tax levy depend on the type of levy, but may include:

- Operating expenses
- General ongoing improvements
- Specific permanent improvements
- Purchase of educational technology
- Debt service for bonds issued for school construction

Common Types of School Tax Levies

There are several types of levies, including General, Emergency, Dual Purpose, Incremental, Growth and Bond issues.

OSBA offers detailed information on Understanding Tax Levies here: <https://www.ohioschoolboards.org/sites/default/files/OSBAUnderstandingLeviesFactSheet.pdf>

What Is a Mill?

The unit of value for expressing the rate of property taxes in Ohio is the mill. A mill is defined as one-tenth of a percent or one-tenth of a cent (0.1 cents) in cash terms. Millage is the factor applied to the assessed value of property to produce tax revenue.

Board of Education Involvement in Levy Campaigns

Ohio Revised Code [RC 3315.07](#) specifically prohibits boards of education from spending public money to support or oppose the passage of a levy or bond issue. [RC 9.03](#) allows boards to use public funds to publish and distribute communications, as long as the purpose behind the communication is to provide information about the school district and not to sway the recipient of the communication.

Under [RC 3313.77](#), a board of education may allow community groups to use its facilities for auxiliary, educational, recreational, cultural, civic, social, religious or other board-approved purposes that promote the welfare of the community.

Under the Equal Protection Clause and the First Amendment, a school district may not grant the use of its facilities to people whose views it finds acceptable, but deny use to those wishing to express less favored or more controversial views.

Appendices

Glossary of Educational Acronyms

Following are some of the many abbreviations commonly used among educators, but perhaps unfamiliar to board members.

AAA (American Arbitration Association) Aids in resolving disputes outside the court system.

AASA (American Association of School Administrators) Provides a number of services for school administrators, including conducting studies and surveys on educational issues.

AASPA (American Association of School Personnel Administrators) Works to establish acceptable school personnel standards, techniques and practices.

ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) Protects individual rights set forth in the U.S. Constitution.

ACT (American College Testing Program) Standardized test taken by high school students seeking admission to college.

ACTE (Association for Career and Technical Education) Promotes and improves vocational education in high school, postsecondary and adult education.

ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Federal law protecting the rights of persons with disabilities.

ADM (average daily membership) The enrollment of students receiving services under the superintendent's supervision.

AERA (American Education Research Association) The major professional organization of educators involved in educational research.

AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor/Congress of Industrial Organizations) The largest federation of unions in the United States.

AFSA (American Federation of School Administrators) Union for school administrators.

AFSCME (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees) The largest public employee and health care workers' union in the country.

AFT (American Federation of Teachers) An integral part of the American labor movement and a member affiliate of the AFL-CIO.

AGO (Attorney General's Opinion) Interpretation of a legal question by the Ohio attorney general (OAG), usually at the request of a local or state government official.

AP (Advanced Placement) Test taken by high school students to earn college credit.

ASCA (American School Counselors Association) Promotes the rights and welfare of children and improves professional standards in school counseling.

ASBO (Association of School Business Officials International) Promotes improvement and advancement of school business officials, school board members and others interested in school business management.

ASCD (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development) Supports educators as they develop, evaluate and improve curricula.

BASA (Buckeye Association of School Administrators) A professional association for Ohio's public school administrators.

BCI (Bureau of Criminal Investigation) Investigative arm of the Ohio attorney general's office.

BRF (Bond Retirement Fund) School district fund dedicated to the payment of debt service charges.

BWC (Bureau of Workers' Compensation) State agency that administers worker injury claims.

CBE (competency-based education) State testing program to assess student achievement in grades one through eight.

CCSSO (Council of Chief State School Officers) A nationwide organization of the 58 public school officials who head departments of public education in the U.S. states, territories, D.C., Department of Defense Education Activity, and Bureau of Indian Education.

CGCS (Council of the Great City Schools) Conducts studies of problems shared by urban schools.

CIP Continuous improvement plan.

COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986) Federal law that allows employees to continue to receive health insurance after they leave a school district.

DOE (U.S. Department of Education) Federal government agency.

ECS (Education Commission of the States) Collects information on laws and standards in education and about administrators, principals and teachers. Also researches state policy issues.

EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) Federal agency formed in 1964 to enforce federal laws, making it illegal to discriminate against a job applicant or employee on the basis of on race, color, sex (including gender identity, pregnancy and sexual orientation), religion, national origin, age, disability or genetic information.

EL English learner.

ELA (Education Law Association) Works to improve education by promoting interest in and understanding of the legal framework of education and the rights of students, parents, school boards and school employees.

ERI (early retirement incentives) Programs that provide monetary incentives to school district employees who retire early.

ESC (Educational Service Center) Name given to Ohio county offices of education in 1995.

ESEA (Elementary and Secondary Education Act) The original federal education act enacted in 1965.

ESEA was updated in 2002 as the No Child Left Behind Act and reauthorized in 2015 as Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) The most recent reauthorization of ESEA.

ETS (Educational Testing Service) Provides evaluative instruments, research, and services related to educational testing programs such as the PSAT, SAT, GRE and GMAT. Also conducts the National Assessment of Educational Programs (NAEP).

EV (exempted village school district) Name given to Ohio school districts centered in villages.

FAPE (free appropriate public education) Special education and related services that are provided at public expense without charge.

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) Federal law that addresses inspection and disclosure of student records.

FLSA (Fair Labor Standards Act) Federal law concerning wages and benefits for school district and other employees.

FMLA (Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993) Federal law that authorizes unpaid leave for employees who are ill, become parents or who must care for sick relatives.

GED (General Education Development test) Test that allows students who did not graduate from high school to obtain an equivalent diploma.

GF (General Fund) School district fund receiving all moneys dedicated to the payment of current operating expenses.

GMAT (Graduate Management Admissions Test) Test taken by college students seeking admission to graduate school in business.

GRE (Graduate Record Examination) Test taken by college students interested in studying for advanced degrees in academic fields.

GRF (General Revenue Fund) Major fund of state government from which services are funded.

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) Federal law passed in 1975 to provide for the education of children with disabilities.

IEL (Institute for Educational Leadership) Coordinates programs at national, state and local levels that are designed to support and enhance the capabilities of educators and policymakers.

IEP (individualized education program) Plan devised by a school district for the education of a child with disabilities.

JVSD (joint vocational school district) Name given to school districts providing career and technical training to public school students and adults.

LAF (OSBA Legal Assistance Fund) Provides supportive assistance to boards of education in cases or controversies of statewide significance, primarily at the appellate level.

LEP (limited English proficient) Students and families for whom English is not the primary language.

LPDC (local professional development committee) Local committee comprised of teachers and administrators which approves professional development plans of educators needed to obtain or retain licensure.

NABSE (National Alliance of Black School Educators) Promotes awareness, professional expertise and commitment among black educators.

NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) Authorized by Congress, NAEP determines the nation's progress in education.

NAESP (National Association of Elementary School Principals) Sponsors programs designed to teach principals about new curricula and technology, to clarify educational issues and trends, and to inform them of new educational research developments.

AIS (National Association of Independent Schools) Assists independent elementary and secondary schools to strengthen their programs and more effectively serve their students and families.

NAPE (National Association of Partners in Education) Promotes the value of school volunteer and partnership services.

NASBE (National Association of State Boards of Education) Improves the policymaking skills and leadership abilities of state boards of education.

NASSP (National Association of Secondary School Principals) Conducts activities and events to enhance the effectiveness of middle and high school principals.

NBPTS (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards) Seeks to strengthen the profession of elementary and secondary teaching and thereby raise the quality of education in the U.S.

NCES (National Center for Education Statistics) An agency of the U.S. Department of Education. Collects and disseminates statistics and other data related to education in the U.S.

NCLB (No Child Left Behind Act) 2002 reauthorization of ESEA.

NCSL (National Conference of State Legislators) Works to improve the quality and effectiveness of state legislators.

NEA (National Education Association) A national teacher's union.

NGA (National Governors' Association) Serves as a vehicle through which governors influence the development and implementation of national policy and apply creative leadership to state problems.

NSBA (National School Boards Association) An organization for state school board associations and local school boards. It seeks to improve the leadership and policymaking abilities of board members.

NSPRA (National School Public Relations Association) An association that promotes better public understanding of the objectives, accomplishments and needs of education.

OAC (Ohio Administrative Code) Publication containing rules and regulations of Ohio's executive agencies.

OACBDD (Ohio Association of County Boards of Developmental Disabilities) Ensures the availability of programs, services, and supports that assist eligible individuals with developmental disabilities.

OAESA (Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators) Promotes quality education and advances elementary school administration.

OAG (Ohio attorney general) Elected official charged with enforcing and administering Ohio's laws.

OAPE (Ohio Association of Professional Educators) Group dedicated to classroom teaching in a nonunion environment.

OAPSE (Ohio Association of Public School Employees) Represents nonteaching public school employees affiliated with AFL-CIO and AFSCME.

OASBO (Ohio Association of School Business Officials) Promotes professional growth and welfare of business officials in schools.

OASCD (Ohio Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development) A statewide professional organization dedicated to improving instructional supervision and curriculum development.

OASSA (Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators) State association for administrators actively engaged in administration or supervision of secondary or middle school students.

OESCA (Ohio Educational Service Center Association) Group including Ohio's educational service centers, formerly known as county boards of education.

OCRC (Ohio Civil Rights Commission) State agency charged with enforcing anti-discrimination laws in employment and other venues.

OCSBA (Ohio Council of School Board Attorneys) An organization for attorneys who represent or have represented Ohio boards of education.

ODE (Ohio Department of Education) Ohio's state department of education.

OEA (Ohio Education Association) A state teacher's union that promotes the interests of teachers and the improvement of education in Ohio.

OFT (Ohio Federation of Teachers) Works to raise the standards of teaching by securing the conditions essential to the best professional service.

Ohio ACTE (Ohio Association for Career and Technical Education) Promotes and protects vocational education and vocational educators.

OHSAA (Ohio High School Athletic Association) Administers interscholastic sports programs.

OHSPRA (Ohio School Public Relations Association) The state chapter of the national association, OHSPRA members work to improve school public relations.

ORC (Ohio Revised Code) Also referred to as RC.

OSBA (Ohio School Boards Association) Serves Ohio public school board members and the diverse districts they represent through superior service, unwavering advocacy and creative solutions.

OFCC (Ohio Facilities Construction Commission) Provides funding, management oversight and technical assistance in construction and renovation of school facilities.

OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Act) Name given to both state and federal laws that promote workplace safety.

OWE (occupational/work experience programs) School district programs that prepare vocational education students for entry into the workplace.

PDK (Phi Delta Kappa) A professional honorary society for men and women in education.

PERS (Public Employees Retirement System) Provides retirement, disability and survivor benefits to public employees.

PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test) Test taken by high school students to prepare for taking the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT).

PTA (Ohio Parent-Teacher Association) Works to promote the health, education and welfare of children and youth.

RC (Revised Code) Also known as the Ohio Revised Code.

SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) Test taken by high school students seeking admission to colleges or universities.

SERB (State Employment Relations Board) Administers and enforces Ohio's public employee collective bargaining law.

SERS School Employees Retirement System.

SDIT (school district income tax) Tax imposed on income of residents by school districts after voter approval.

STRS State Teachers Retirement System.

ULP (unfair labor practice) Conduct by employers or employees defined as unfair under Ohio's collective bargaining law.

USC (United States Code) Multi-volume compilation of federal laws.



Portrait of a Riverside Board of Education Member

Riverside Board of Education Members commit to the following principles, ensuring leadership, skills, and habits are all directed toward the success of all students and the fiscal health of the district.

Lifelong Learner

Principle: Board members are committed to continuous learning, recognizing that informed governance is essential for student success and the responsible management of public resources.

Commitments (Actions):

- Challenges themselves to stay informed on educational trends but **recognizes that it is okay not to be an expert in everything**, choosing instead to seek out and value the knowledge of the administration.
- Sets clear governance goals and reflects on progress during evaluation times to ensure the district is constantly "getting better every day".

Collaborator

Principle: Board members view the relationship with the administration, community, staff, and each other as a vital partnership, working together to achieve department and district-wide objectives with a shared mission of educating excellence as one community.

Commitments (Actions):

- **Collaborates with the administrative team** in achieving department and district-wide objectives, providing the resources and trust necessary for them to succeed.
- **Value teamwork** by listening to all perspectives, ensuring that collaborative efforts are always aimed at the overarching goal of district greatness.

Creative Thinker

Principle: Board members are solution-oriented, capable of seeing multiple perspectives to ensure all decisions are made in the best interest of all stake-holders and the long-term sustainability of the district.

Commitments (Actions):

- Skillfully and strongly questions current conventions to ensure the district is meeting the needs of a diverse student body.
- Remains **resilient** and flexible during crises, working alongside experts to implement the most effective solutions.

Innovator

Principle: Board members are visionary and persistent, possessing an "entrepreneurial spirit" regarding the district's future, balancing aspirational goals with financial prudence.

Commitments (Actions):

- **Empowers administration** to "think outside the box" by experimenting with new, researched based, educational methods, tools and opportunities.
- **Dreams big** for the community, encouraging staff to find new ways to utilize resources to improve outcomes for every student.

One Community, Pursuing Greatness, and Getting Better Every Day.



High Character (Professionalism)

Principle: Board members are trustworthy, empathetic, and deeply committed to the integrity and accountability of the district, especially in matters of public trust and financial stewardship.

Commitments (Actions):

- **Makes the right choice for all students**, even when those decisions are unpopular or difficult.
- Maintains **accountability** by acknowledging mistakes and accepting constructive feedback, modeling the high standards expected of everyone in the Riverside community.

Communicator

Principle: Board members are patient, attentive, and proactive in sharing information with the public and staff, ensuring clarity on the district's vision.

Commitments (Actions):

- Engages in **active dialogue** with all stakeholders, ensuring they feel heard and supported as they lead the daily work of the district.
- Utilizes appropriate channels to **articulate the board's vision** clearly and concisely, keeping the community informed and engaged.

Leader

Principle: Board members are motivated, confident, and inclusive, entrusting administration with daily management while focusing on high-level, data-driven governance.

Commitments (Actions):

- **Entrusts and empowers administration** by **delegating tasks** to those with subject-area expertise, allowing them to lead the work effectively.
- **Makes decisions** based on relevant data and professional recommendations to ensure the district remains a "community pursuing greatness" for every student.

Self-Awareness

Principle: Board members are reflective and mindful of the impact their words and actions have on the district's culture and their role as stewards of the community's trust.

Commitments (Actions):

- **Modifies behavior** based on feedback and is honest about personal strengths and weaknesses.
- **Knows when to step back** and allow subject-matter experts to lead, maintaining a clear distinction between governance and daily management.

*By embodying these principles, Board members act as the foundation for a district that is **One Community Pursuing Greatness**, ensuring that all decisions, **especially those related to the district's finances and resources**, are directed toward the success of the Riverside Local School District*



FIVE FAST FACTS

OSBA Accidental Death and Dismemberment Coverage

The OSBA Insurance Agency LLC offers accidental death and dismemberment coverage to school board members, school district administrators and their dependents through The Prudential Insurance Company of America.



1. Who is eligible?

All board members of OSBA-member school districts and their spouses and children. Additionally, all superintendents, assistant superintendents, treasurers, business managers, principals, supervisors, directors, attorneys, administrative assistants and other administrative personnel of OSBA-member school districts and their spouses and children are eligible for coverage.

2. What is covered?

For a complete listing, please visit OSBA's website (www.ohioschoolboards.org/osba-insurance-agency) and view the certificate of coverage. Note that the benefit amount payment depends of the type of loss.

FAST FIVE FACTS — OSBA ACCIDENTAL DEATH AND DISMEMBERMENT COVERAGE

RESOURCES

OSBA Insurance Agency Web page
www.ohioschoolboards.org/osba-insurance-agency

3. What coverage is available and how much does it cost?

Covered person	Amount	Annual cost
School board member business travel AD&D	\$100,000	Free
School board member 24/7 personal AD&D	\$100,000	\$36.00
School board member's spouse	\$50,000	\$14.00
School board member's child or children*	\$10,000	\$5.00
Administrative staff business travel AD&D	\$100,000	\$18.00
Administrative staff 24/7 personal AD&D	\$100,000	\$18.00
Administrative staff's spouse	\$50,000	\$14.00
Administrative staff's child or children*	\$10,000	\$5.00

* one flat fee covers all children

4. When is the open enrollment period and when does coverage begin?

The open enrollment period begins on Feb. 1 and runs through the end of the month. The coverage period runs annually from March 1 through the end of February the following calendar year.

5. How long will coverage last?

Coverage will last as long as your premium is paid in full by the end of February; you are a school board member or administrator; and your district is a member of OSBA. If you are no longer a school board member or administrator or if your district cancels its OSBA membership, coverage will terminate and no refund will be issued for the remainder of your premium.

Please visit OSBA's website for more details.



Ohio School Boards Association

8050 N. High St., Ste. 100
 Columbus, Ohio 43235
 (614) 540-4000
www.ohioschoolboards.org
facebook.com/OHschoolboards
twitter.com/OHschoolboards

OSBA leads the way to educational excellence by serving Ohio's public school board members and the diverse districts they represent through superior service, unwavering advocacy and creative solutions.

© Ohio School Boards Association
 July 2013



FIVE FAST FACTS

Tips on running successful board meetings

Board meetings are the only opportunity for board members and district administrators to discuss issues of importance to the district as one body. It's important that meetings are conducted in a way that encourages progress and offers all board members an opportunity to contribute.



1. Start with a good agenda, one all board members have seen ahead of time and had an opportunity to review.

District policies about board meeting agendas vary. However, in many districts, the superintendent and treasurer work together to draft the board meeting agenda. The draft is normally shared with the board president, who is able to ask questions and amend agenda items. The amended draft may be shared with other board members by the board president. Once all board members have seen the draft agenda, a final version (with attachments as needed) is sent to board members. The agenda also is distributed to the media and members of the community.

2. Start on time and stay on task.

District administrators, staff and others asked to attend board meetings should understand when meetings begin and that they will always begin on time. Parliamentary procedure can help as board members move through the agenda. The treasurer's ability to take clear and concise minutes also can assist if questions arise about what was said or agreed to. Public participation should be kept to an announced time limit (often stated in board policy). Certain situations and topics will cause meetings to go much longer than normal. This is to be expected, but should be the exception rather than the rule.

FAST FIVE FACTS — TIPS ON RUNNING SUCCESSFUL BOARD MEETINGS

RESOURCES

OSBA book: *Boardmanship*
www.ohioschoolboards.org/node/3311

3. Consider using a consent agenda.

A consent agenda allows the board to consider multiple “like” items at one time, or to approve or disapprove such items with one vote instead of multiple ones. The consent agenda should not be used to consider disparate items, and any board member may ask that any individual item contained within a consent agenda be removed for separate consideration.

4. Ensure public participation is managed respectfully and professionally.

Many board meetings get out of hand during the public participation section of the meeting. Ohio public school districts are not obligated to offer public participation. However, the majority of boards believe this is an important way to encourage community engagement. The board president should begin the session by stating the guidelines for public participation and guests should be offered a copy of the policy related to this topic when entering the meeting.

5. Organize the meeting to minimize disruption and delay.

Meeting events that include large numbers of guests — such as student reports or performances, or reports on teacher or staff accomplishments — or involve lengthy discussion and debate should be placed on the agenda in such a way that the change from one to the other goes smoothly. Consider having events that include students and families before a brief recess, so that they can leave following this item if they would like. Issues that will require lengthy debate and discussion should be tackled at the beginning of the meeting, when board members are fresh, and should be limited in number during a single meeting, if possible.



Ohio School Boards Association

8050 N. High St., Ste. 100
Columbus, Ohio 43235
(614) 540-4000
www.ohioschoolboards.org
[facebook.com/OHschoolboards](https://www.facebook.com/OHschoolboards)
twitter.com/OHschoolboards

OSBA leads the way to educational excellence by serving Ohio's public school board members and the diverse districts they represent through superior service, unwavering advocacy and creative solutions.

© Ohio School Boards Association
May 2013



FIVE FAST FACTS

Board policy roles

Policy development begins when the board identifies an issue requiring a long-term solution. Needs that call for policy development come to the board's attention from many areas, such as legislation passed at the state and federal levels; State Board of Education standards; state auditor's office directives; attorney general opinions; and the school community's local needs.



1. Board policies guide the direction of the district and provide tools that bring about prudent change in the district.

The board is ultimately accountable to its citizens for the way schools are governed and managed, and the results achieved. Well-written policy establishes the parameters within which the district operates. It tells the school community what the board wants and why.

2. Policy development is a cooperative effort involving the board, staff and school community.

After identifying an issue that requires a policy, it's time for information to be gathered. How will the law limit actions and decisions on this issue? What costs are involved? What are other districts doing?

The next step is drafting the policy. The superintendent usually is assigned this step. OSBA policy services is available to assist districts with drafting a new or newly revised policy. When the draft is completed, the policy should be disseminated to those affected by it and those responsible for implementing it. The district may offer the appropriate stakeholders an opportunity to discuss the policy.

FAST FIVE FACTS ON BOARD POLICY ROLES

RESOURCES

OSBA Policy Services
[www.ohioschoolboards.org/
Policy-Services](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/Policy-Services)

3. Policy adoption is a function of the board.

OSBA recommends a district hold two readings of the new or newly revised policy. Districts are not required by law to have two readings. After the two readings are held, the board may adopt the policy.

Once the policy is adopted, those affected by it should be notified. If it is a policy that affects employees, all employees should get a copy. This also should occur in the case of students, parents and other stakeholders.

4. Policy implementation is a function of the superintendent and staff.

The superintendent is responsible for carrying out, through regulations or procedures, the policies established by the board. All district employees and students are expected to follow all board policies and regulations.

Principals establish procedures for conducting activities in their individual schools within the larger framework of district regulations and board policies. Make sure any handbooks that refer to policy are updated at the time of implementation.

5. Policy review and evaluation is a function of the board and a responsibility of the superintendent.

Now that the policy is in place, the administration must implement it through regulations or procedures. Not every policy needs a regulation, but there are some that do. And, not every regulation needs to be in the policy manual; some regulations may be placed in handbooks. State law requires boards to make “rules and regulations” for the governance of the district, employees, students and all others entering the district’s grounds and premises.

Policies need periodic review by the board to determine if they are compliant with state and federal laws and meet the district’s needs. Policy development is a constant process, requires diligence on the part of the board and administration and assistance from a trusted policy service provider.



Ohio School Boards Association

8050 N. High St., Ste. 100
Columbus, Ohio 43235
(614) 540-4000

www.ohioschoolboards.org
facebook.com/OHschoolboards
twitter.com/OHschoolBoards

OSBA leads the way to educational excellence by serving Ohio’s public school board members and the diverse districts they represent through superior service, unwavering advocacy and creative solutions.

© Ohio School Boards Association
August 2016



FIVE FAST FACTS

OSBA bond program

Ohio Revised Code (RC) requires certain school district employees to be bonded. The Ohio School Boards Association's bond program offers public official bonds for treasurers, business managers and fiscal officers of community schools, as well as position bonds to member districts. These bonds provide a combination of surety and fidelity coverage and fulfill the RC requirements.



1. Treasurer, business manager and fiscal officer of community school bonds guarantee the bonded persons will perform the duties of office faithfully and honestly.

This type of bond assures the recovery of financial loss incurred by a school district that results from the employee's noncompliance with state regulations and ordinances. The RC sections requiring treasurers, business managers and fiscal officers to be bonded are 3313.25, 3319.05 and 3314.011, respectively.

2. Treasurer, business manager and fiscal officer of community school bonds must cover the length of the employee's contract.

If an interim employee is hired, the name must be changed on the existing bond. A new bond is issued when a new employee is hired.

3. Blanket bonds and/or position bonds purchased by school districts do not cover treasurers, business managers and fiscal officers since those bonds exclude statutorily bonded employees.

Because these positions are legally required to be bonded, the individual must be specifically named on the bond. Blanket and position bonds do not name an individual.

FAST FIVE FACTS — OSBA BOND PROGRAM

RESOURCES

Ohio Revised Code sections on bonding requirements and applications

<http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/33>

OSBA bond program

www.ohioschoolboards.org/osba-bond-program

4. Superintendents, board presidents, secretaries and other school employees may be covered by OSBA's position bonds, but the coverage is not required by law.

Position bonds guarantee the performance of covered persons in positions specifically scheduled on the bond by the school district. School district volunteers are not eligible for coverage.

5. OSBA's Bond Program is administered by Hylant Administrative Services and underwritten by Travelers Insurance.

Hylant Administrative Services teams with highly rated insurance carriers, reinsurers and other partners to provide comprehensive products and services. Travelers Casualty and Surety Company of America is consistently given high ratings by independent rating services — including A.M. Best, Moody's and Standard and Poor's — for financial strength and claims-paying ability.



Ohio School Boards Association

8050 N. High St., Ste. 100

Columbus, Ohio 43235

(614) 540-4000

www.ohioschoolboards.org

facebook.com/OHschoolboards

twitter.com/OHschoolboards

OSBA leads the way to educational excellence by serving Ohio's public school board members and the diverse districts they represent through superior service, unwavering advocacy and creative solutions.

© Ohio School Boards Association
May 2013



FIVE FAST FACTS

Helping new board members transition to your leadership team

New board members have so much to learn. In fact, veteran board members often say that it takes two or three years of service before they feel truly comfortable in the position. Here are five things continuing board members and administrators can do to orient new members.

1. Don't assume they know — or don't know — the basics.

Some new board members will have already memorized the district's website and may have attended some board meetings, while others will not have this background. Start with a personal meeting with the new board member, superintendent and board president to establish the baseline. Address basics such as their comfort with board meeting protocol (setting agendas, parliamentary procedure, public participation); their knowledge of the policy process; or their familiarity with the district's organizational chart.

2. Offer to set up introductory meetings.

Does the new board member know the curriculum director, principals, the athletic director, the superintendent's administrative assistant or other directors? These are the people who really get the work done, and much conversation will take place that will include their names and work agendas. New board members might appreciate a brief meeting with each of these key staff members.



FAST FIVE FACTS — Helping new board members transition to your leadership team

RESOURCES

OSBA New Board Member
Web page

[www.ohioschoolboards.org/
for-new-board-members](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/for-new-board-members)

3. Provide resources that matter.

Make sure new board members understand the support available to them. Do they know about OSBA and the many resources available on its website? Do they know how they will receive their mail, email or other information? Do they know how and when to expect board meeting materials? Have they received copies of the policy manual or new board member materials?

4. Set up a grand tour.

Take the new board member (and perhaps his or her partner or spouse) on a grand tour of your district. Many new board members will appreciate the “back-stage” tour as it provides the context for future discussions. The bus parking area and garage, transportation dispatch area, kitchens and cafeterias, supply areas and football field press box are interesting visits for new board members now that they are “insiders.”

5. Be open and welcoming at board meetings.

Your board member may be new, but he or she was elected or appointed because you and others regarded their skills and abilities as important for your district. Don't make the mistake of shutting them out. They may not understand where and when they should offer opinions, so prompt them when appropriate. Ask if they have thoughts or questions about the discussion topic. New board members will appreciate being included, and this inclusion will help bring them quickly up to speed.

New board members bring new ideas and energy to a district. Helping them have a positive impact from the start will benefit everyone. A good orientation program will mitigate much of the frustration new board members feel because they are new, uninformed or worried about doing a good job.



Ohio School Boards Association

8050 N. High St., Ste. 100
Columbus, Ohio 43235
(614) 540-4000

www.ohioschoolboards.org
facebook.com/OHschoolboards
twitter.com/OHschoolboards

OSBA leads the way to educational excellence by serving Ohio's public school board members and the diverse districts they represent through superior service, unwavering advocacy and creative solutions.

© Ohio School Boards Association
July 2013



FIVE FAST FACTS

Ohio's Public Records Law

Ohio's Public Records Law grants access to government records to the public, including school district records meeting the definition of a public record under the law. School districts are required to make public records available for inspection within a reasonable time, adopt a public records policy and attend public records training.



1. Anyone may make a public records request.

Any individual, corporation or governmental agency may make a public records request to a school district. The request may be made to any district employee and be transmitted in any format, including written, verbally or via facsimile or email.

2. Public records must be made available for inspection within a reasonable time.

Upon request, a school district must promptly prepare public records and make them available for inspection at reasonable times during regular business hours. The records must be available regardless of format. However, if the records contain information that is exempt from the public records law, that information may be redacted. Any redaction must be plainly visible or the school must inform the requestor of any redaction.

3. School boards must adopt a public records policy.

Each board of education must adopt a public records policy for responding to public records requests. The policy must be distributed to the district records custodian and to each school building. The policy may not limit the number of records an office will make available to a single person; limit the number of records it will make available during a fixed period of time; or establish a set period of time before a district will respond to a public records request unless that period is less than eight hours. The policy or a poster describing it must be posted in a conspicuous location in the board of education's main office and in the main office of each building. The policy also must be included in the employee handbook or manual.

FAST FIVE FACTS — OHIO'S PUBLIC RECORDS LAW

RESOURCES

RC 109.43

<http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/109.43>

RC 149.011

<http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/149.011>

RC 149.43

<http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/149.43>

4. A fee may be charged for public records requests.

A school district may charge only the actual costs it incurs in making copies for public records requests. The district may require the requestor to pay the costs of the copies and mailing in advance. Districts are not required to provide copies of records to the requestor if he or she is unable or unwilling to pay the costs of copies.

5. A district employee may be designated to attend a public records training.

All public officials, whether elected or appointed, have an individual obligation to attend a public records training approved by the Ohio attorney general once per term of office. Alternatively, the board may act to designate an individual to attend the training on behalf of the public officials on the board at that time. The training must be three hours for each term of office for which the elected official was appointed or elected to the public office. Generally, school boards will designate a district employee to attend the training. Since board member terms are staggered, the board will need to designate a designee every two years to meet the requirement of attending once per term for each board member, if the board determines to send a designee to a public records training. If an individual is appointed to the board, that person must attend the training or the board must designate someone to attend once during the term of office.

If you have additional questions, contact OSBA's legal division at (614) 540-4000.



Ohio School Boards Association

8050 N. High St., Ste. 100

Columbus, Ohio 43235

(614) 540-4000

www.ohioschoolboards.org

facebook.com/OHschoolboards

twitter.com/OHschoolboards

OSBA leads the way to educational excellence by serving Ohio's public school board members and the diverse districts they represent through superior service, unwavering advocacy and creative solutions.

© Ohio School Boards Association
October 2013



FIVE FAST FACTS

Strategic planning

1. Strategic planning is a school district's process of defining its direction and implementing strategies to reach a vision agreed upon by all stakeholders. In doing so, the district makes decisions to allocate its human, financial and material resources to pursue and align with that vision.



2. A forward-thinking strategic plan maps out the means to achieve long-term goals through by completing shorter-term objectives without limiting the flexibility necessary to respond to unforeseen challenges or opportunities.

3. A quality strategic plan gives order to all others plans — it doesn't supplant or add to them. Strategic planning provides a structure that builds connection between units and objectives and maximizes the value of any single initiative. It is the single most important element of "systems-thinking," tearing down silos and creating unity of purpose.

4. The strategic planning process creates a dynamic opportunity to involve a wide range of community members, staff, parents and other partners — many with diverse opinions — in a meaningful process to build understanding of and investment in the district.

5. A strategic plan created through a well-facilitated and inclusive process can serve as a road map for all board of education decisions and provides a shared, consistent expectation for district alignment, evaluation and results.



Ohio School Boards Association

8050 N. High St., Ste. 100 Columbus, Ohio 43235 • (614) 540-4000

www.ohioschoolboards.org • facebook.com/OHschoolboards • twitter.com/OHschoolboards



FIVE FAST FACTS

Ohio's Sunshine Law

Ohio's Sunshine Law (Ohio Revised Code Section (RC) 121.22) requires public bodies, including boards of education, to hold public meetings, provide notices of when those meetings will occur, keep minutes of those meetings, permit executive sessions for discussion of limited subjects and establish penalties for violations of the law.



1. School boards must give the public notice of public meetings.

A “meeting” is defined as any prearranged discussion of the public business of a board of education, committee or subcommittee by a majority of its members. Regardless of what name is given for a gathering (e.g. work session, study group, retreat, etc.), if it meets the definition, it is a meeting. Boards are required to adopt a rule establishing a method by which people can determine when board meetings will occur. Regular meetings of the board are set at the organizational meeting and the board must issue notice of the time and place of those meetings. For special meetings (any meeting not set at the organizational meeting), the notice must provide the time, place and purpose(s) of the meeting and be sent at least 24 hours in advance to news media that have requested notification. Written notice must be provided to each board member at least two days prior to the meeting date.

2. Depending on the board members' actions, a community forum or levy committee meeting may become a board of education meeting if a majority of the board members attend.

If board members are present only as observers and do not discuss board business, attendance at a community or levy event does not meet the definition of a meeting. However, if the board members engage in discussion with one another about the public business of the public body at the meeting, it's possible the board has met the definition of a meeting, making it subject to the Sunshine Law. Board members should be aware of the parameters for participation at community meetings. A conservative approach would be to have fewer than a majority present at such meetings.

FAST FIVE FACTS ON OHIO'S SUNSHINE LAW

RESOURCES

Fact sheet: *Understanding Ohio's Sunshine Laws*

<http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/81215>

Ohio Attorney General's Sunshine Laws Manual

<http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/63125>

RC 121.22

<http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/121.22>

3. Only certain matters may be discussed in executive session.

A board may only discuss the following six topics in executive session:

- the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion or compensation of an employee or official, or the investigation of charges or complaints against an employee, official, licensee or student, unless the employee, official, licensee or student requests a public hearing;
- the purchase of property for public purposes or the sale of property at competitive bidding;
- conferences with the board's attorney to discuss matters which are the subject of pending or imminent court action;
- preparing for, conducting or reviewing negotiations or bargaining sessions with employees;
- matters required to be kept confidential by federal law or rules or state statutes;
- specialized details of security arrangements.

Executive sessions are for the purpose of deliberations only. No action may be taken during an executive session.

4. School boards must follow proper procedures to enter executive session.

There must be a motion and a second to go into executive session, followed by a roll call vote. The motion must state which of the purposes listed above is the reason for executive session. While it is fine to use general topics to help remember the reason(s) the board can properly go into executive session, the actual wording of the resolution should incorporate the words found in RC 121.22. The board may invite any other persons into an executive session.

5. School boards must promptly prepare, file and maintain minutes of regular and special meetings.

Meeting minutes constitute the official record of all board actions.

Minutes should be of sufficient specificity that an individual not present at the meeting could read, understand and appreciate both the board's official actions and the rationale behind those actions. A public body can meet its obligation to keep records of a board meeting by any of three methods: a verbatim written record; an audiotape or videotape of the meeting; or abstracts of discussions. Minutes should not be kept of executive sessions. However, the minutes of the meeting at which the executive session occurs must reflect the general subject matter discussed in the executive session.



Ohio School Boards Association

8050 N. High St., Ste. 100
Columbus, Ohio 43235
(614) 540-4000

www.ohioschoolboards.org
facebook.com/OHschoolboards
twitter.com/OHschoolboards

OSBA leads the way to educational excellence by serving Ohio's public school board members and the diverse districts they represent through superior service, unwavering advocacy and creative solutions.

© Ohio School Boards Association
May 2013