

**South Burlington School District**  
**Original Approved on June 24, 2009**  
**Revision Adopted: January 8, 2014**

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# **Ends Policy**

## **1.0 Global Ends Statement**

Students successfully complete their education from the South Burlington School District ready for their next step. They will show cultural and academic competence appropriate to grade and developmental capacity. All graduates will be prepared for college, career, or individually determined next steps. The ends will be met at a cost that the community will support.

*This section updated 1/8/14*

## **1.1 Disposition for Life-long Learning**

Students will demonstrate the ability, knowledge, and skills to adapt and succeed by:

1. Demonstrating independent thought, curiosity, and creativity
2. Responding to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline
3. Gathering and analyzing data to construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
4. Generating alternatives and considering options and different perspectives
5. Solving problems and making decisions based on knowledge, thoughtful debate, and reason
6. Cooperating, collaborating, and leading others

*This section updated 1/8/14*

## **1.2 Academic Proficiency**

Students actively participate in a full and enriching academic experience that includes language and literature, math, science, social sciences, the arts and design, technology, world language, and health and wellness. Students demonstrate proficiency within these courses by:

1. Building strong content knowledge consistent with state-approved standards and district- approved curriculum
2. Comprehending, interpreting, and evaluating a wide range of written material, resources, and information
3. Writing in a clear, concise, and organized manner
4. Actively listening and responding with evidence to ideas, concepts, and opinions
5. Expressing themselves creatively and effectively in a variety of forms
6. Using technology, mixed media, instrumentation as appropriate
7. Effectively solves problems, while attending to precision

*This section updated 1/8/14*

## **1.3 Personal Development**

Students will use self-awareness and interpersonal skills to effectively enhance their own performance and collaborate with others by:

1. Developing an awareness of their individual learning styles, interests and passions
2. Clarifying goals, aspirations and post-secondary plans
3. Building capacity to make informed and healthy decisions/choices
4. Living responsibly with confidence, resilience, and adaptability
5. Demonstrating effective time management and organizational skills
6. Building supportive relationships and respectfully advocating for self and others

*This section updated 1/8/14*

#### **1.4 Citizenship**

Students will understand the impact of history, government, law and the economy on self and society in order to contribute to their community and participate in local, state, and federal government in an informed manner by:

1. Understanding and expressing how diverse cultures and people enrich the human experience
2. Engaging others with honesty, humility, kindness, and good humor
3. Demonstrating respect for self, others, and the environment
4. Supporting, participating, and/or initiating socially responsible actions to benefit the local and global community
5. Practicing ethical behavior in all environments, including as a participant in the digital community.
6. Being proud of our shared experience and having fun along the way

*This section updated 1/8/14*

### **Executive Limitations**

#### **2.0. Global Executive Constraint**

The superintendent shall not allow any practice, activity, decision, or organizational circumstance that is unlawful, unsafe, imprudent, or in violation of commonly accepted educational and professional ethics and practices. The superintendent shall not fail to provide a continuous improvement process, including a complaint process.

#### **2.1. Treatment of Students and Parents/Guardians**

With respect to interactions with students and parents/guardians or those applying to be students or parents/guardians, the superintendent shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decisions that are inequitable, untimely, vague, undignified, or unnecessarily intrusive.

Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, the superintendent shall not:

1. Elicit information for which there is no need
2. Fail to solicit appropriate input or obtain necessary information to fulfill the District's ends policy or comply with the District's policy limitations

3. Use methods of collecting, reviewing, transmitting, or storing student/family information that fail to protect against improper access to the material elicited
4. Fail to operate facilities with appropriate accessibility and privacy
5. Fail to establish with students and parents/guardians a clear understanding of what may and what may not be expected from the district
6. Fail to limit the use of live security video systems to crisis situations and the immediate need of administrators for safety information
7. Fail to limit the use of security video recordings to inquiries by the police about criminal investigations or by district or building administrators to ensure students, staff, or community safety
8. Fail to inform students and parents/guardians of this policy or to provide a way to be heard for persons who believe they have not been accorded protections under this policy

*This section updated 4/18/12*

## **2.2. Treatment of Staff**

With respect to the treatment of paid and volunteer staff, the superintendent shall not cause or allow conditions that are untimely, unfair, undignified, disorganized, or vague.

Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, the superintendent shall not:

1. Operate without written personnel rules that (a) clarify and define rules, rights, responsibilities, and evaluation for staff; (b) provide for effective handling of grievances; and (c) protect against wrongful conditions, such as nepotism and grossly preferential treatment for personal reasons
2. Discriminate against any staff member for non-disruptive expression of dissent
3. Fail to acquaint staff with their protections under this policy
4. Allow staff to be unprepared to deal with emergency situations
5. Fail to create a positive organizational climate conducive to achievement of the Ends.

*This section updated 8/17/11*

## **2.3. Treatment of Community**

With respect to the treatment of the community, the superintendent shall not fail to recognize that community members are the owners of the school programs and facilities and as such are afforded appropriate participation in school programs, appropriate input in significant decisions, and use of facilities.

## **2.4. Financial Condition and Activities**

With respect to the actual, ongoing financial condition and activities, the superintendent shall not cause or allow the development of financial jeopardy or material deviation of actual expenditures from board priorities established in Ends policies.

Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, the superintendent shall not:

1. Expend more funds than have been received or budgeted in the fiscal year to date.

2. Incur debt in an amount greater than can be repaid by certain otherwise unencumbered revenues within ninety days
3. Use any long-term reserves.
4. Conduct interfund shifting in amounts greater than can be restored to a condition of discrete fund balances by certain otherwise unencumbered revenues within thirty days.
5. Fail to settle payroll and debts in a timely manner.
6. Allow tax payments or other government-ordered payments or filings to be overdue or inaccurately filed
7. Make a single unbudgeted purchase or commitment of greater than \$25,000 or the addition of a .5 FTE teacher. Splitting orders to avoid this limit is not acceptable.
8. Spend surplus.
9. Fail to aggressively pursue receivables after a reasonable grace period.
10. Accept non-resident tuition students unless tuition is being paid by other Vermont school districts or the state.
11. Enter into a grant agreement that is not focused on the district ends policy or operations effectiveness and efficiency, totals more than \$400,000, or requires redirection of district resources greater than 10% of the grant over the life of the grant.

## **2.5. Financial Planning and Budgeting**

The superintendent shall not cause or allow financial planning for any fiscal year or the remaining part of any fiscal year to deviate materially from the board's Ends priorities, risk financial jeopardy, or fail to be derived from a multiyear plan.

Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, there will be no financial plans that

1. Risk incurring those situations or conditions described as unacceptable in the board policy "Financial Condition and Activities"
2. Omit credible projection of revenues and expenses, separation of capital and operational items, cash flow, disclosure of planning assumptions, and predicted financial impact
3. Provide less for board prerogatives during the year than is set forth in the Governance Investment Policy

## **2.6. Emergency Superintendent Succession**

To protect the board from sudden loss of superintendent services, the superintendent shall not permit there to be fewer than two other executives sufficiently familiar with board and superintendent issues and processes to enable both in combination to take over with reasonable proficiency until a successor is named. Whenever interim leadership is in place, at least every 60 days, the board, in combination with the administrative team, will evaluate the status of the succession plan and discuss the need for a permanent solution.

*This section updated 12/7/11*

## **2.7. Asset Protection**

The superintendent shall not cause or allow district assets to be unprotected, inadequately maintained, or unnecessarily risked.

Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, the superintendent shall not:

1. Fail to insure against theft and casualty losses to at least 80 percent of replacement value and against liability losses to board members, staff, and the organization itself in an amount greater than the average for comparable organizations.
2. Allow personnel access to material amounts of funds without sufficient safeguards.
3. Subject facilities and equipment to improper wear and tear or insufficient maintenance.
4. Unnecessarily expose the organization, its board, or its staff to claims of liability.
5. Make any purchase (a) wherein normally prudent protection has not been given against conflict of interest; (b) of over \$15,000 without having obtained comparative prices and quality; (c) of over \$75,000 without a stringent method of ensuring the balance of long-term quality and cost. Orders shall not be split to avoid these criteria.
6. Fail to protect intellectual property, information, and files from loss or significant damage.
7. Receive, process, or disburse funds under controls that are insufficient to meet the board-appointed auditor's standards.
8. Compromise the independence of the board's audit or other external monitoring or advice, such as by engaging parties already chosen by the board as consultants or advisers.
9. Invest or hold operating capital in insecure instruments, including uninsured checking accounts and bonds of less than AA rating at any time, or in non-interest-bearing accounts except where necessary to facilitate ease in operational transactions
10. Endanger the organization's public image, its credibility, or its ability to accomplish Ends.
11. Change the organization's name or substantially alter its identity in the community.
12. Agree to settle, without board approval, any claim or case against the school district creating a liability in excess of \$50,000 or reducing a liability to a liquidated amount in excess of \$50,000.

*This section updated 2/1/12*

## **2.8. Compensation and Benefits**

With respect to employment, compensation, and benefits to employees, consultants, contract workers, the superintendent shall not cause or allow jeopardy to financial integrity or to public image.

Additionally, the superintendent shall not:

1. Change the superintendent's own compensation and benefits.
2. Promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment.

3. Establish or change compensation and benefits that deviate materially from the geographical or professional market median for the skills employed.
4. Create obligations over a longer term than revenues can be conservatively projected, in no event longer than one budget year except as provided pursuant to the terms of board approved collective bargaining agreements.
5. Establish or change pension benefits.

*This section updated 11/5/12*

## **2.9. Communication and Support to the Board**

The superintendent shall not cause or allow the board to be uninformed or unsupported in its work.

Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, the superintendent shall not

1. Neglect to submit monitoring data required by the board (see policy 3.4 on monitoring superintendent performance) in a timely, accurate, and understandable fashion, directly addressing the provisions of board policies being monitored
2. Fail to report in a timely manner any actual or anticipated noncompliance with any policy of the board
3. Neglect to submit unbiased decision information required periodically by the board or let the board be unaware of relevant trends
4. Let the board be unaware of any significant incidental information it requires, including anticipated media coverage, substantial grants, threatened or pending lawsuits, and material internal and external changes
5. Fail to advise the board if, in the superintendent's opinion, the board is not in compliance with its own policies on Governance Process and Board-Management Delegation, particularly in the case of board behavior that is detrimental to the work relationship between the board and the superintendent
6. Present information in unnecessarily complex or lengthy form or in a form that fails to differentiate among information of three types: monitoring, decision preparation, and incidental.
7. Fail to provide a workable mechanism for official board, officer, or committee communications
8. Fail, when addressing official business, to deal with the board as a whole except when responding to officers or committees duly charged by the board
9. Fail to supply for the board's consent agenda, along with applicable monitoring information, all decisions delegated to the superintendent yet required by law, regulation, or contract to be board-approved

## **2.10. Curriculum Development and Review**

The Superintendent shall not allow the district to be without written curricula aligned with Vermont standards and Board Ends policies that are coordinated across all grade levels and schools.

Further, the Superintendent shall not fail to review the curricula periodically based upon student performance results, learning opportunities data, new research, and updated content knowledge with the goal of all students meeting the Board's Ends policy.

## **Board-Management Delegation**

### **3.0. Global Governance-Management Connection**

The board's sole official connection to the operational organization, its achievements, and its conduct will be through the superintendent of schools.

### **3.1. Unity of Control**

Only official actions of the board are binding on the superintendent. Accordingly:

1. Decisions or instructions of individual board members, officers, or committees are not binding on the superintendent except in rare instances when the board has specifically authorized such exercise of authority.
2. In the case of board members or committees requesting information or assistance without board authorization, the superintendent can refuse such requests that require, in the superintendent's opinion, a material amount of staff time or funds or is disruptive.

### **3.2. Accountability of the Superintendent**

The superintendent is the board's only link to operational achievement and conduct, so that all authority and accountability of staff, as far as the board is concerned, is considered the authority and accountability of the superintendent. Accordingly:

1. The board will never give instructions to persons who report directly or indirectly to the superintendent.
2. The board will not evaluate, either formally or informally, any staff other than the superintendent.
3. The board will view superintendent performance as identical to organizational performance so that organizational accomplishment of board-stated Ends and avoidance of board-proscribed means will be viewed as successful superintendent performance.

### **3.3. Delegation to the Superintendent**

The board will instruct the superintendent through written policies that prescribe the organizational Ends to be achieved and describe organizational situations and actions to be avoided, allowing the superintendent to use any reasonable interpretation of these policies. Accordingly:

1. The board will develop policies instructing the superintendent to achieve specified results for specified recipients at a specified cost. These policies will be developed systematically from the broadest, most general level to more defined levels and will be called Ends policies. All issues that are not Ends issues as defined here are means issues.
2. The board will develop policies that limit the latitude the superintendent may exercise in choosing the organizational means. These policies will be developed systematically from the broadest, most general level to more defined levels, and they will be called Executive Limitations policies. The board will never prescribe organizational means delegated to the superintendent.

3. As long as the superintendent uses any reasonable interpretation of the board's Ends and Executive Limitations policies, the superintendent is authorized to establish all further procedures, make all decisions, take all actions, establish all practices, and pursue all activities. Such decisions of the superintendent shall have full force and authority as if decided by the board.
4. The board may change its Ends and Executive Limitations policies, thereby shifting the boundary between board and superintendent domains. By doing so, the board changes the latitude of choice given to the superintendent. But as long as any particular delegation is in place, the board will respect and support the superintendent's choices.

### **3.4. Monitoring Superintendent Performance**

Systematic and rigorous monitoring of superintendent job performance will be solely against the expected superintendent job outputs: organizational accomplishment of board policies on Ends and organizational operation within the boundaries established in board policies on Executive Limitations. Accordingly:

1. Monitoring is simply to determine the degree to which board policies are being met. Information that does not do this will not be considered to be monitoring information.
2. The board will acquire monitoring information by one or more of three methods: (a) by internal report, in which the superintendent discloses interpretations and compliance information to the board; (b) by external report, in which an external, disinterested third party selected by the board assesses compliance with board policies; or (c) by direct board inspection, in which a designated member or members of the board assess compliance with the appropriate policy criteria.
3. In every case, the board will judge (a) the reasonableness of the superintendent's interpretation and (b) whether data demonstrate accomplishment of the interpretation.
4. In every case, the standard for compliance shall be any reasonable superintendent interpretation of the board policy being monitored. The board is the final arbiter of reasonableness but will always judge with a "reasonable person" test rather than with interpretations favored by board members or by the board as a whole.
5. All policies that instruct the superintendent will be monitored at a frequency and by a method chosen by the board. The board can monitor any policy at any time by any method but will ordinarily depend on a routine schedule.

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Month</b>
Ends	Internal	Annually	Feb
Global Executive Constraint	Internal	Annually	Mar.
Continuous Improvement	Internal	Annually	Apr
Treatment of Students and Parents/Guardians	Internal	Annually	May
Treatment of Staff	Internal	Annually	May
Financial Condition and Activities	Internal	Quarterly	Jan, Apr, July, Oct

	External	Annually	Sep
Financial Planning and Budgeting	Internal	Quarterly	Feb, May, Aug, Nov
Emergency Superintendent Succession	Internal	Annually	Oct
Asset Protection	Internal	Annually	Nov
Compensation and Benefits	Internal	Annually	Nov
	External	Biannually	Sep of odd-numbered years
Communication and Support to the Board	Direct inspection	Annually	July

## **Governance Process**

### **4.0. Global Governance Commitment**

The purpose of the board, on behalf of the residents of South Burlington, is to see to it that South Burlington School District (a) achieves appropriate results for students at an appropriate cost (as specified in board Ends policies) and (b) avoids unacceptable actions and situations (as prohibited in board Executive Limitations policy).

### **4.1. Governing Style**

The board will govern lawfully, observing the principles of the Policy Governance model, with an emphasis on (a) outward vision rather than an internal preoccupation, (b) encouragement of diversity in viewpoints, (c) strategic leadership more than administrative detail, (d) clear distinction of board and superintendent roles, (e) collective rather than individual decisions, (f) future rather than past or present, and (g) proactivity rather than reactivity. Accordingly:

1. The board will cultivate a sense of group responsibility. The board, not the staff, will be responsible for excellence in governing. The board will be the initiator of policy, not merely a reactor to staff initiatives. The board will not use the expertise of individual members to substitute for the judgment of the board, although the expertise of individual members may be used to enhance the understanding of the board as a body.
2. The board will direct, control, and inspire the organization through the careful establishment of broad written policies reflecting the board's values and perspectives. The board's major policy focus will be on the intended long-term impacts outside the staff organization (Ends), not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those effects.
3. The board will enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence. Discipline will apply to matters such as attendance, preparation for meetings, policymaking principles, respect of roles, and ensuring the continuance of governance capability. Although the board can change its Governance Process policies at any time, it will scrupulously observe those currently in force.

4. Continual board development will include orientation of new board members in the board's Governance Process and periodic board discussion of process improvement.
5. The board will allow no officer, individual, or committee of the board to hinder or serve as an excuse for not fulfilling group obligations.
6. The board will monitor and discuss the board's process and performance regularly. Self-monitoring will include comparison of board activity and discipline to policies in the Governance Process and Board-Management Delegation categories.

#### **4.2. Board Job Description**

Specific job outputs of the board, as an informed agent of the ownership, are those that ensure appropriate organizational performance.

Accordingly, the board has direct responsibility to create:

1. The linkage between the ownership and the operational organization
2. Written governing policies that realistically address the broadest levels of all organizational decisions and situations
  - A. Ends: organizational products, impacts, benefits, outcomes, recipients, and their relative worth (what good for which recipients at what cost)
  - B. Executive limitations: constraints on executive authority that establish the prudence and ethics boundaries within which all executive activity and decisions must take place
  - C. Governance process: specification of how the board conceives, carries out, and monitors its own task
  - D. Board-management delegation: how power is delegated and its proper use; the superintendent's role, authority, and accountability
3. Assurance of successful organizational performance on Ends and Executive Limitations.
4. Advocate for legislative change which positively impacts public education
5. In addition the board has taken on the following non-governing output(s):
  - A. Negotiating contracts with teachers, administrators, and support staff unions
  - B. Recognition of the contribution of individuals to the success of the district
  - C. Naming of programs and facilities involving a third party commitment
  - D. Conditional gifts or gifts with accompanying liabilities

*This section updated 8/8/12*

#### **4.3. Agenda Planning**

To accomplish its job description with a governance style consistent with board policies, the board will follow an annual agenda that (a) completes a reexploration of Ends policies annually and (b) continually improves board performance through board education and enriched input and deliberation.

1. The cycle will conclude each year on the last day of May so that administrative planning and budgeting can be based on accomplishing a one-year segment of the board's most recent statement of long-term Ends.
2. The cycle will start with the board's development of its agenda for the next year.
  - A. Consultations with selected groups in the ownership, or other methods of gaining ownership input, will be determined and arranged in the first quarter, to be held during the balance of the year.
  - B. Governance education and education related to Ends determination (presentations by futurists, demographers, advocacy groups, staff, and so on) will be arranged in the first quarter, to be held during the balance of the year.
  - C. A board member may recommend or request an item for board discussion by submitting the item to the Chair no later than five days before the agenda is to be warned.
3. Throughout the year, the board will attend to consent agenda items as expeditiously as possible, however an individual board member can remove an item from the consent agenda for discussion
4. Superintendent monitoring will be included on the agenda if monitoring reports show policy violations, if policy criteria are to be debated, or if the board, for any reason, chooses to debate amending its monitoring schedule.
5. Superintendent remuneration for the following school year will be decided in December after a review of monitoring reports received in the last year.

#### **4.4. Chair's Role**

The Chair, a specially empowered member of the board, ensures the integrity of the board's process and, secondarily, occasionally represents the board to outside parties. Accordingly:

1. The assigned result of the Chair's job is that the board behaves consistently with its own rules and those legitimately imposed on it from outside the organization.
  - A. Meeting discussion content will consist solely of issues that clearly belong to the board to decide or to monitor according to board policy.
  - B. Information that is for neither monitoring performance nor board decisions will be avoided or minimized and always noted as such.
  - C. Deliberation will be fair, open, and thorough but also timely, orderly, and kept to the point.
2. The authority of the Chair consists in making decisions that fall within topics covered by board policies on Governance Process and Board-Management Delegation, with the exception of (a) employment or termination of a superintendent and (b) areas where the board specifically delegates portions of this authority to others. The Chair is authorized to use any reasonable interpretation of the provisions in these policies.
  - A. The Chair is empowered to chair board meetings with all the commonly accepted powers of that position, such as ruling and recognizing.
  - B. The Chair has no authority to make decisions about policies created by the board within Ends and Executive Limitations policy areas.

Therefore, the Chair has no authority to supervise or direct the superintendent.

- C. The Chair may represent the board to outside parties in announcing board-stated positions and in stating chair decisions and interpretations within the area delegated to her or him.
- D. The Chair is required to inform the board of statements made on their behalf.
- E. The Chair may delegate this authority but remains accountable for its use.

#### **4.5. Board Members' Code of Conduct**

The board commits itself and its members to ethical, businesslike, and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as board members.

- 1. Members must demonstrate loyalty to the ownership, unconflicted by loyalties to staff, other organizations, or any personal interests as parents/guardians.
- 2. Members will protect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature and other matters that may compromise the integrity or legal standing of the board and district, including matters discussed in executive session. Board members retain the right, like any citizens, to express their views as they wish. However, they acknowledge that the way in which they choose to exercise this right can affect the board's ability to work together effectively to build trust among members and an environment conducive to effective governance and interaction with the press, public, and other board members. The members of the board aspire to:
  - A. Focus on issues rather than personalities;
  - B. Support the legitimacy and authority of the final determination of the board on any matter;
  - C. Exercise honesty in all written and interpersonal interaction, never intentionally misleading or misinforming each other;
  - D. Honor the right of individual members of the board to communicate with the community;
  - E. Make every reasonable effort to protect the integrity and promote the positive image of the District and one another; and
  - F. Never embarrass each other or the District.
- 3. Members will be properly prepared for board deliberation.
- 4. Members will support the legitimacy and authority of the final determination of the board on any matter, irrespective of the member's personal position on the issue.
- 5. The board commits itself to ethical, businesslike, and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as board members. Accordingly:
  - A. Board members will represent the interests of the citizens of the entire school district. This accountability to the whole district supersedes:
    - Any conflicting loyalty a member may have to other advocacy or interest groups,

- Loyalty based upon membership on other boards or staffs,
  - Conflicts based upon the personal interest of any board member who is also a parent of a student in the district,
  - Conflicts based upon being an employee or a relative of an employee of the district, or
  - Loyalty to staff/school employees.
- B. Members must avoid conflicts of interest as well as the appearance of conflicts of interest. **Conflict of interest** means a situation when a board member's private interests, as distinguished from the board member's interest as a member of the general public, would benefit from or be harmed by a board decision.

## Implementation

In order to comply with the obligations thus imposed, the Board and its members will adhere to the following standards.

1. A Board member will not give the impression that he or she would represent special interests or partisan politics for personal gain.
2. A Board member will not use his or her position on the Board to promote personal financial interests or the financial interests of family members, friends or supporters.
3. A Board member will not solicit or accept anything of value in return for taking particular positions on matters before the Board.
4. A Board member will not give the impression that his or her position on any issue can be influenced by anything other than a fair presentation of all sides of the question.
5. Board members will be familiar with, and adhere to, those provisions of Vermont education law which define School Board powers and govern Board member compensation and public bidding processes.
6. Board members will not conduct business with the District, except to the extent expressly permitted by law and appropriately disclosed.
7. Board members will not use their Board position to obtain employment in the organization for themselves, family members, or close associates. Should a Board member apply for employment, he or she must first resign from the Board.

## Avoiding Conflicts

Board members will disclose their involvements with any entity or person having a matter or matters before the Board.

When a Board member becomes aware that he or she is in a position that creates a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest as defined in state law or this policy, he or she will declare the nature and extent of the conflict or appearance of conflict for inclusion in the Board minutes, and will abstain from voting or participating in the discussion of the issue giving rise to the conflict.

## **Complaints of Conflict of Interest**

When a conflict of interest claim against a Board member is brought to the Board in writing and is signed by another Board member or a member of the public, and the Board member against whom the claim is made does not concur that a conflict in fact exists, the following Board procedures will be followed.

1. Upon a majority vote of the remaining Board members, or upon order of the chair, the Board will hold an informal hearing on the conflict of interest claim, giving both the Board member and the person bringing the claim an opportunity to be heard.
2. At the conclusion of the informal hearing, the remaining Board members will determine by majority vote whether to:
  - A. Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is not supported by the evidence and is therefore dismissed;
  - B. Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is supported by the evidence and that the member should disqualify him or herself from voting or otherwise participating in the Board deliberations or decision related to that issue, as required by Vermont statute; and/or
  - C. Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is supported by the evidence and the Board member should be formally censured or subjected to such other action as may be allowed by law.
3. Board members shall not attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization.
  - A. A board member will not give the impression that he or she has the authority to make decisions or take action on behalf of the board or the school administration.
  - B. Members' interactions with the superintendent or with staff must recognize the lack of authority vested in individuals except when explicitly board authorized. Except as expressly authorized by other policy or board resolution, members will not give personal direction to any part of the operational organization or assume personal responsibility for resolving operational problems or complaints.

### **4.6. Board Committee Principles**

Board committees, when used, will be assigned so as to reinforce the wholeness of the board's job and so as never to interfere with delegation from board to superintendent.

Accordingly:

1. Board committees are to help the board do its job, not to help or advise the staff. Committees ordinarily will assist the board by preparing policy alternatives and implications for board deliberation. In keeping with the board's broader focus, board committees will normally not have direct dealings with current staff operations.
2. Board committees may not speak or act for the board except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. Expectations and authority will be carefully stated in order not to conflict with authority delegated to the superintendent.

3. Board committees cannot exercise authority over staff. Because the superintendent works for the full board, he or she will not be required to obtain the approval of a board committee before an executive action.
4. Board committees are to avoid over identification with organizational parts rather than the whole. Therefore, a board committee that has helped the board create policy on some topic will not be used to monitor organizational performance on that same subject.
5. Committees will be used sparingly and ordinarily in an ad hoc capacity.
6. This policy applies to any group that is formed by board action, whether or not it is called a committee and regardless of whether the group includes board members. It does not apply to committees formed under the authority of the superintendent.

#### **4.7. Board Committee Structure**

A committee is a board committee only if its existence and charge come from the board, regardless of whether board members sit on the committee. Unless otherwise stated, a committee ceases to exist as soon as its task is complete.

#### **4.8. Governance Investment**

Because poor governance costs more than learning to govern well, the board will invest in its governance capacity. Accordingly:

1. Board skills, methods, and supports will be sufficient to ensure governing with excellence.
  - A. Training and retraining will be used liberally to orient new members and candidates for membership, as well as to maintain and increase existing member skills and understandings.
  - B. Outside monitoring assistance will be arranged so that the board can exercise confident control over organizational performance. This includes, but is not limited to, financial audits.
  - C. Outreach mechanisms will be used as needed to ensure the board's ability to listen to owner viewpoints and values.
2. Costs will be prudently incurred, though not at the expense of endangering the development and maintenance of superior capability. The board will establish its cost of governance budget for the next fiscal year during the month of November for board member education, third-party monitoring, and linking with the community.