

Board Member Orientation 2019

Lake George Charter School

“At the heart of effective governing is a shared vision or goal. There will always be a variety of ways to realize that vision or goal. Ultimately, respecting and acknowledging the differences is much easier when the common goal drives the governing work.”

Mary Nichols, board member and CASB director, Littleton Public Schools

Date: January 14, 2019

Time: 4:30 – 5:30

Agenda General – Pamela Adams or Barbara Egan

School Big Picture – Zoe Ann Holmes

School Finance – Nichole Lamb

Questions / Discussion – Pamela Adams or Barbara Egan

The Board Works As a Group

Who belongs to the board?

Board members may take office by election or appointment, and they may choose to serve for many different reasons, but all share the same basic qualifications for office: they are residents of the charter district, or they are not residents of the district but have been a volunteer at the school, or they are the parent or guardian of a student attending the school, and they have never been convicted of a sexual offense against a child.

Board members might have children in the local schools, or not; they may be employed by businesses that contract with the school district, or not; they may own property in the district, or not. The local electorate determines at the ballot box who will best serve the community's interests.

What is the board's structure? The board is made up of five members. The members are elected at-large. After each election, the board's secretary places a slate of officers on the agenda at the next meeting. When the time comes for voting and making decisions, the individual serves as a member of the board and has a responsibility to reflect the best interests of the whole charter district. Whatever

other “hats” are worn by the board member, they must be set aside to consider the big picture.

What is a public meeting?

A public meeting is any gathering of three or more members of the board at which any public business is discussed or at which any formal action may be taken, regardless of whether the meeting occurs by telephone, electronically or in person. These public meetings are open to the public at all times.

Chance meetings or social gatherings at which discussion of public business is not the central purpose are not considered public meetings.

When do boards meet?

Boards meet after providing full and timely notice to the public, which involves posting information regarding the meeting and its agenda at the board’s designated posting place in the district at least 24 hours before the meeting begins. publicizing meetings in this way meets the requirements of law for those meetings the board schedules as part of its annual calendar, called “regular meetings.”

How Does the Board Act?

The board acts through voting in open sessions during public meetings. Voting must occur aloud, in alphabetical order, with all members present participating. (exceptions: members with a conflict of interest abstain from voting, and the board may excuse a member from voting for good cause.) If the board has adopted an electronic participation policy, board members participating remotely pursuant to that policy are considered present and may cast votes.

There was a time when many felt that all decisions of the board should be unanimous. however, experience has revealed that schools can function effectively and efficiently even when the board arrives at a decision through a split vote. in some cases, when controversial issues are before the board for consideration, the healthy discussion and debate that surrounds an issue may lead to a better board decision. it also lets the community and staff know that the board considered all viewpoints and information before making its decision.

As a matter of ethical practice, board members should be prepared to accept decisions made by a majority vote. It is destructive for members who disagree with a majority decision to use the issue to promote community unrest and dissension. people who are sincerely interested in the welfare of the district can disagree on issues without destroying their capacity to work together if ethical practices are observed. Board members should treat each other’s opinions with respect and

courtesy, no matter how much they may disagree on an issue. The most effective board member is usually one who has learned to disagree agreeably.

Executive Session

1. The eight purposes for entering executive session are as follows:
1. The purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer or sale of any real, personal or other property interest. [C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(a).] However, no executive session shall be held to conceal the fact that a member of the local public body has a personal interest in such property transaction.
2. Conferences with an attorney for the purpose of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions. [C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(b).] The mere presence or participation of an attorney at an executive session is not sufficient to satisfy this requirement.
3. Matters required to be kept confidential by federal or state law or rules and regulations. [C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(c).] The board must announce the specific citation of the statute or rules that are the basis for such confidentiality before holding the executive session.
4. Specialized details of security arrangements or investigations. [C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(d).]
5. Determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations, developing strategy for negotiations and instructing negotiators. [C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(e).]
5. Personnel matters; except if the employee who is the subject of the session has requested an open meeting. [C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(f).] If the employee does not request an open meeting, the board will hold the discussion in executive session. The board may, at its discretion, invite the employee into the session. If the personnel matter involves more than one employee, all of the employees have to request an open meeting for the board to conduct the discussion in public. Discussion of personnel policies that do not require discussion of matters specific to a particular employee are not considered “personnel matters.” Discussions concerning a member of the board, any elected official or the appointment of a board member are not considered personnel matters.
6. Consideration of any documents protected under the mandatory nondisclosure provision of the Open Records Act, except that consideration of work product documents and documents subject to the governmental or deliberative process privilege must occur in a public meeting, unless an executive session is otherwise allowed. [C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(g).]

7. Discussion of individual students where public disclosure would adversely affect the person or persons involved. [C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(h).]

Legal Requirements

- Hold regular and special meetings in public
- Adopt policies and regulations for the efficient administration of the affairs of the district
- Adopt conflict-of-interest policies for board members
- Ensure that effective educational programs are carried on in the school, and textbooks for any course of instruction or study in such programs are prescribed
- Adopt the school's calendar
- Provide instruction about the use and effect of alcohol and controlled substances
- Educate children with disabilities
- Adopt a student discipline and conduct code
- Adopt a student publications code
- Enforce the school attendance law
- Employ all personnel required to maintain school operations and carry out the educational program
- Implement a personnel evaluation system
- Adopt a salary schedule or salary policy
- Keep complete and accurate financial and accounting records
- Adopt a budget for each fiscal year

Board Member Code of Ethics

As a member of the Lake George Charter Board, acknowledging that my actions must be centered on the educational welfare of all students, I shall adhere to the following ethical standards:

- Be fair, just and impartial in all the decisions as a school board member
- Come to every meeting prepared for the work to be undertaken at that session
- Accord other members, parents and the community with respect
- Uphold all laws, regulations and final court orders pertaining to schools and related processes

- Be honest with my colleagues, school personnel, community members, and other interested parties
- Respect the professional expertise of staff in the management of school
- Ensure the prudent and accountable use of the school's resources and finances
- Listen to other points of view with an open mind
- Pursue opportunities to improve my knowledge of educational issues and board skills
- Keep confidential any information that is privileged under Colorado law or board policy
- Recognize the scope of my role as a board member and that of the board as a whole
- Work collaboratively with fellow board members to adopt and apply board policies
- Refer issues requiring administrative action to the appropriate school authority (chain of command)
- Refrain from actions which would encroach on the assigned responsibilities of school personnel
- Avoid conflicts of interest as well as any public appearances of conflicts with my office
- Express my personal opinion but upon final board action accept the will of the majority
- Make no promise or take individual steps that may impede the ethical performance of my duties.

Board Committees

Finance Committee

Barbara Egan, chair – Zoe Ann Holmes, Nichole Lamb

BAC

Jen Geffre, chair

Policy Committee

Pamela Adams, Chair – Julie M Gilley,

