

RSU #3 Board Handbook
(Based on the MSBA Board Handbook and Policy BIA New Board Member Orientation)

THE MISSION of RSU 3 is to ensure personal success through personalized learning.
“Success in Learning – Success in Life!”

VISION STATEMENT

Every RSU 3 learner is prepared to be academically, socially, and emotionally successful in learning and life.
RSU 3 is invested in what our learners know, what they are able to do, and what kind of citizens they are becoming.

EXPECTATIONS FOR OUR LEARNERS

Students are engaged, self-directed, future-focused, lifelong learners. Students are accountable to the expectations of a rigorous and dynamic curriculum based on clear learning targets. Every RSU 3 student is met at his/her developmental learning level, is challenged, and is empowered to reach personal success. Our students are supported by caring adults and peers within a safe learning environment.

THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Students utilize choice in how they learn and demonstrate excitement and understanding to gain ownership and investment in their own learning. Working at their individual maximum pace, students reach their full potential. Every RSU 3 student learns in different ways and timeframes. In order to meet their diverse needs instruction is customized to reflect learning styles and interests. Our proficiency-based system makes clear what students must demonstrate to show mastery. Learning targets are clear, easily accessible and diversely assessed.

OUR SCHOOL/OUR COMMUNITY

Students view the community as an extension of our schools; a place where they engage in a wide variety of opportunities to apply their learning. There is reciprocal involvement between schools and the community. RSU 3 is a direct reflection of our community. Every RSU 3 student is an informed, responsible and engaged citizen of the local and global community.

RSU 3 Board Handbook Contents

1. FOAA (Freedom of Access Act)
 - a. Executive sessions
2. School board governance
 - a. Board norms
 - b. Duties of a School board
 - c. Operating Protocols
 - d. Effective School Boards
3. Superintendent-Board relationship
4. Role and Scope of Board Responsibilities
 - a. Designating the Chief Executive
 - b. Goal Setting
 - c. Planning, Goal Setting and Appraisal
 - d. Development of Policy
 - e. Financial Resources

- f. Collective Bargaining Agreements
 - g. Instruction
 - h. School Facilities
 - i. School Staff
 - j. Students
 - k. Communications with Various Constituents
 - l. Advocacy
 - m. General Administrative Tasks of the Board
 - n. Policy Review
 - o. Budget Development
 - p. Board Self-Evaluation
 - q. Staff/Alumni Awards
5. Board Committees
- a. Policy
 - b. Operations
 - c. Finance
 - d. Personnel
 - e. WCTC-Waldo County Technical Center
 - f. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
 - g. Dropout Prevention
6. Parliamentary procedure
- a. Robert's Rules of Order
7. School performance and the Use of Assessment Data
- a. RSU 3 Assessments
 - b. Data Collection
8. School Board Self-Evaluation
9. School Board Leadership Training
- a. Board Calendar: Reports from the Superintendent, Board Reviews, Board Actions
 - b. Calendar by Monthly Actions
 - c. Annual Board Workshop
 - d. Board Opportunities
10. Board Members and the Public
- a. Handling Complaints
 - b. Community Involvement in Decision Making
 - c. Public Participation at Board Meetings
11. Board Member Education and Preparation
12. MSBA services for the local board
- a. MSMA
 - b. Web based Resources
 - c. Maine Legislature Bill Status
13. Long Term Contractual Agreements

1. FOA (Freedom of Access Law)

(Policy BIC Board Member Freedom of Access Law Training; BIC-E Certification of Completion of FOA training; KDB Public's Right to Know, FOA)

School board meetings are public proceedings governed by Maine's Freedom of Access Law (1 MRSA § 401 et seq.). The Legislature stated its intent as follows:

“...public proceedings exist to aid in the conduct of the people's business. It is the intent of the Legislature that their actions be taken openly and that the records of their actions be open to public inspection...clandestine meetings, conferences, or meetings held on private property without proper notice and ample opportunity for attendance by the public (shall) not be used to defeat the purposes of this subchapter.”

FOA requires that a meeting is posted with a summary/agenda of the items being discussed included. The summary/agenda can be amended if something arises that the chair did not reasonably anticipate.

Email, texts and other forms of communication

- Permissible communications with other members must be non-substantive matters such as agendas, meeting schedules, disseminating information and reports
- Non permissible are communications used as a substitute for deliberations or decisions which should take place in a public meeting; consider that a “group” is 3 or more board members
- Right to Know law permits the conduct of Board business only at public meetings when public notice is given
- Consider all emails and texts regarding school business to be public record

Executive Sessions Policy BEC

An executive session is a portion of a meeting where the public is not allowed to be present. Students and employees who are the subject of an executive session have the right to be present and to request that the hearing/investigation be held in public session.

Executive sessions are strictly regulated by FOA with the following requirements:

- A. An executive session must start with a public meeting and to enter the Executive Session, the board must pass a motion with a recorded vote of 3/5 of the members present and voting.
- B. The motion must state the precise nature of the business of the executive session and include a citation of one or more sources of statutory or other authority that permits an executive session for that business. The nature of each matter must be stated if there is more than one. When labor contracts are the subject of an executive session, the parties must be named.
- C. Only matters stated in the motion may be considered. No official actions shall be finally approved. No public record shall be kept.
- D. The only matters that may be considered in an executive session are:
 - Specific personnel matters (when public discussion could reasonably be expected to cause damage to the individual's reputation or right to privacy);
 - Suspension/expulsion of a student (student, witnesses and legal counsel shall be permitted to be present);
 - Condition, acquisition, or use of real or personal property if premature disclosure would prejudice the school unit;

- Discussion of labor contracts or negotiations;
- Consultations with legal counsel regarding legal rights, pending litigation, and settlement offers when premature public knowledge would give the Board a substantial disadvantage; and
- Discussions of records that are considered confidential by law.

2. School Board Governance **Policy BED Regional School Unit 3 By-Laws**

RSU 3 board is composed of 11 elected individuals from each of the 11 towns plus two appointed student board members. **(Policy BBAB Student Board Member)** The board acts as a legislative body within the framework of federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Towns and town voters did not create school boards, and other than voting for school board members, budgets, and referendums, towns and town voters have no authority over school boards. That is why understanding the following principle set forth by Maine's Supreme Court is so important:

The school committee acts as a public board. It in no sense represents the town. Its members are chosen by the voters of the towns, but after election they are public officers deriving their authority from the law and responsible to the State for the good faith and rectitude of their acts.

Therefore, its members are chosen by the voters, but its primary duty is to oversee public education in the manner prescribed by state law and not solely to carry out the actual or perceived will of the local voters. While an important aspect of locally elected school board members is guiding their school system in ways that reflect broad community values, they are not required to follow the desires of special interests in their community.

Board norms:

(Policy BE Board Meetings) Be on time; Come prepared to participate; Treat all with respect by listening, staying on topic and waiting in turn to speak; Keep comments brief; Abide by and publicly support board decisions; Seek consensus; Expand knowledge of public education skills in governance by attending conferences, reading materials from Maine DOE, MSBA and MSMA, and other such research.

An official board meeting cannot be held without a quorum, 7 members in attendance for RSU #3. **(Policy BEDC)** Every board member should make a conscientious effort to attend every board meeting. A vacancy can be declared after a member has three consecutive absences. The town selectmen of the vacancy choose a citizen to fill the seat.

Duties of a School board

Governance: The act of transforming the needs, wishes and desires of the community into policies that direct the community's schools. The district mission and the board mission need to be supportive and provide a clear direction. Then the direction can be evaluated.

Through good governance practices the Board will:

- Establish and promulgate ownership of the district's vision and values
- Articulate district results and monitor progress
- Ensure community wide climate of commitment, respect and trust
- Create conditions for achievement of the district's vision, values and expected results through effective use of the areas of board authority

Operating Protocols guide the board and superintendent (governance) team in their work together. By taking the time to discuss and agree upon expectations of HOW the team will work together will allow members to concentrate on WHAT needs to be accomplished.

Through good governance practices the Board will:

- Establish and promulgate ownership of the district's vision and values
 - Articulate district results and monitor progress
 - Ensure community wide climate of commitment, respect and trust
 - Create conditions for achievement of the district's vision, values and expected results through effective use of the areas of board authority
1. How it will conduct business
 - a. **A school board meeting is a business meeting of the school board that is held in public, and not a meeting of the public**
 - b. The board conducts its business through a set agenda with emerging items to be addressed in subsequent meetings
 - c. Members agree to ask the chair or the superintendent to place items on the agenda prior to the meeting; members may ask for an adjustment to the agenda with $\frac{2}{3}$ vote of the board.
 - d. Decisions are based on facts, and upheld once a decision is made by the majority
 2. How it will communicate
 - a. If members have questions or concerns, they agree to contact the superintendent well in advance of meetings
 - b. Requests for information are channeled through the board chair or superintendent rather than directly to staff
 3. How it will improve
 - a. All new members will be assigned a mentor and participate in an orientation session
 - b. All members will participate in formal trainings organized by the superintendent and chairperson
 - c. Opportunities for continuing education will be provided
 4. What are the limits of power
 - a. The superintendent oversees the hiring, evaluations and handling of personnel matters and the board is responsible to evaluate the superintendent's effectiveness
 - b. The chain of command is followed and personnel complaints and concerns are directed to the superintendent
 5. Operating protocols can provide a basis for talking with members if problems arise.
 - a. Board members will work together to clarify and restate discussions in order to strive for full understanding
 - b. We recognize the importance of honoring the agreed upon Operating Protocols and take individual responsibility to work together

The Center for Public Education, NSBA's research arm, identified eight traits of highly effective school boards that positively impact student achievement:

Effective School Boards:

1. Commit to a vision of high expectations for student achievement and quality instruction and define clear goals toward that vision.
2. Have strong shared beliefs and values about what is possible for students and their ability to learn, and of the system and its ability to teach all children at high levels.
3. Are accountability driven, spending less time on operational issues and more time focused on policies to improve student achievement.
4. Have a collaborative relationship with staff and the community and establish a strong communications structure to inform and engage both internal and external stakeholders in setting and achieving district goals.
5. Are data savvy: they embrace and monitor data, even when the information is negative, and use it to drive continuous improvement.
6. Align and sustain resources, such as professional development, to meet district goals. Effective boards see a responsibility to maintain high standards even in the midst of budget challenges.
7. Lead as a united team with the superintendent, each from their respective roles, with strong collaboration and mutual trust.
8. Take part in team development and training, sometimes with their superintendent, to build shared knowledge, values and commitments for their improvement efforts.

Chairs play a critical role in ensuring that their boards adhere to the district's mission by guiding and focusing the board's work.

3. Superintendent-Board Relationship

Policy BDD Board-Superintendent Relationship

A superintendent functions best when the board develops a clear vision with clear expectations and direction. Effective boards participate in professional development and conduct self-evaluations; understand the distinctions between board and staff roles; understand that the superintendent is the board's one employee; refrain from performing management functions that are the responsibility of the superintendent and staff. **(Policy BHC) Board Communication with Staff** Should a board member wish to visit a school building, it is suggested that the board member notify the superintendent with arrangements for the visit be made through the building principal, with reasons provided for the request. It is not the duty of board members to evaluate personnel (other than the superintendent). However, the board adopts policies on supervision and evaluation of teachers and receives reports from the superintendent on the implementation and results of the processes.

School boards are responsible for the governance of the school unit through the decisions they make and policies they adopt. The superintendent is responsible for the ongoing administration of the school unit and operations of the schools in compliance with board policies and applicable laws and regulations.

Board-Superintendent Roles (Policy CBA Superintendent of School-job description)

Board	Superintendent
• Vision	• Objectives
• Mission	• Action Plans
• Goals	• Regulations
• Policies	• Procedures
• Monitor	
End Results (What)	Means (How)
What???? Why???? How Much \$????	How??? When??? Where??? By Whom????
Action: Vote	Action: Recommend Implementation
Role of the Board and the Superintendent	
School Board	Superintendent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of Policy • Selection of the Superintendent and sustaining an effective relationship • Student suspension/expulsion • Management of School Property • Governing the use of community fiscal resources for education • Negotiating and approving union contracts • Engaging the community in its schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ and supervise teachers, principals, and all staff • Implementation and enforcement of board policy • Business management of school district • Ex official secretary of the school board

4. Role and Scope of Board Responsibilities

Policy BBA School Board Powers and Responsibilities

Designating the Chief Executive: (Policy CBB Recruitment of Superintendent; CBD Superintendent’s Contract; CBI, CBI-R Evaluation of Superintendent) The board is responsible for recruiting, hiring, and evaluating the performance of the superintendent who carries out its policy. And if necessary, the board is responsible for terminating a contract.

See appendix for Superintendent evaluation.

Goal setting: This may involve policy work that decides how resources in the district budget are best used to set the district in the right direction to achieve the vision. The goals should have key actions and benchmarks and be developed in a workshop setting or under a sub-committee. A draft of SMART goals may be completed with the superintendent for consideration by the full board. The board is responsible for monitoring the progress on the goals, best through the development of a year-long agenda, and the use of data. The use of presentations can inform the board about progress towards goals and provide a process of continuous improvement or a guide for needed future actions.

Planning, Goal Setting and Appraisal. This vital leadership role of a board cannot be delegated. Each board must establish a vision based on shared community beliefs for its district, translate that vision into long- and short-range goals, and then set up an organizational structure to accomplish that vision. It is responsible for obtaining from the administration and other sources reliable information on which to make the best possible decisions about the scope and nature of school programs. The board is ultimately accountable for appraisal of the results of these programs, tasks which are frequently delegated to the administration, and for formulating appropriate program alternatives as necessary to ensure students meet learning goals. The board must ensure that goals set in the strategic plan are aligned to the overall district goals

Development of policy: (Policy BG School Board Policy Process; BGA Policy Adoption; BFG Policy Review and Evaluation) A major function of the board is to develop and adopt policies that spell out how the school district will operate. Policies should be based on the board's vision for the school district and should cover every aspect of district operations— employment of staff personnel, administration of pupil services, educational programs, instructional material, school facilities, equipment, finance, and support services. A board can adopt policy upon the recommendation of the superintendent, but the final decisions on policy cannot be delegated. Each year, the state provides to the board a list of policies required by law.

A school board policy is an idea designed to bring action-it tells *what* the board wants to happen and *why* it should happen. Effective policies inform the community about board goals and philosophy. They are clear and focused with a general direction and authority for the superintendent. They provide stability and provide for evaluation and amendment when necessary. During policy development, the board must obtain input from teachers or from other affected groups as well. MSMA recommends that boards review their policy manuals on a regular 3 year cycle.

Financial Resources: (Policy DI Fiscal Accounting and Reporting) In consultation with the superintendent, a board is responsible for approval and adoption of an annual budget that will provide the financial basis for the buildings, furnishings, staff, materials, and equipment needed to carry out educational programs. Most of the responsibility for establishing a structure for the school system is affected by the budget the board adopts. Other financial responsibilities include: Authorizing the administration to make the necessary expenditures budgeted and appropriated by the board; Adopting policies for the purchase, disposal, and distribution of supplies, property, and equipment; and Approving and adopting an insurance program for the district.

Collective Bargaining Agreements: The board negotiates and approves all collective bargaining contracts. Maine law imposes several specific conditions on school boards and employee bargaining agents, including the obligation to bargain "in good faith with respect to wages, hours, working conditions, and contract grievance arbitration." Significantly, however, the law specifies that boards "shall meet and consult but not negotiate with respect to educational policies" with teachers. The list of "educational policies" has expanded over the years and includes issues such as class size, scheduling of duty-free lunches, and many others. Negotiations are handled by the Personnel Committee of the board.

Instruction. Board members should be active ambassadors of the district's instructional program. School Boards are charged under law with adopting courses of study that align with the Learning Results. Maine's system of Learning Results, adopted by the Legislature in 1997 and revised in 2007, is intended to identify the knowledge and skills needed to prepare Maine students for work, higher education, and citizenship. The Learning Results lists Maine's standards for Early Learning, English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Engineering, Social Studies, Visual and Performing Arts, World Languages, Health Education, Physical Education and Life and Career Ready. RSU 3's curriculum document includes the learning expectations for all students in all content areas of the Learning Results. The selection and approval of educational and library materials and adoption of courses of study aligned to the Learning Results are governed by policy.

(Policy IHBH Alternative Education Programs; IKF Graduation Standards and Requirements) With the school administration, a board sets clear expectations/standards and adopts policies upon which K-12 instructional programs are based.

The board can make tangible and positive differences in curriculum by committing to curriculum and providing leadership and insistence that curriculum matters be a major focus to RSU 3. Budget development ensures that there are adequate resources allocated to curriculum development, staff supervision, evaluation and development and that all students have access to up-to-date textbooks and instructional materials. Board members should insist on receiving the information they need to make informed, reasoned decisions on curriculum matters that serve the best educational interests of RSU 3's students.

School Facilities. A board is responsible for determining school housing needs: communicating those needs to the community; purchasing, disposing of, or leasing school sites; and for approving building plans that will support and enhance educational programs. Upon the recommendation of the superintendent, a board will employ architects, hire building contractors, and contract for operational and maintenance services.

School Staff. The board is responsible for ensuring that the staff receive appropriate supervision and evaluation, as well as meaningful in-service development opportunities. If a board member has a question or concern about school operations or personnel, it is to be directed to the superintendent, who can address the issue appropriately within the lines of authority.

Students. (Policy JIC Student Code of Conduct; JK Student Discipline; JKE Expulsion of Students) Board members have a responsibility to continually ask how the programs, proposals, or policies they are considering will affect the students, their education, and their future. Policies that guide the actions of administration and other school staff must be viewed in light of their effect on all students' equal access to educational opportunities.

Students have legal rights in public schools. These rights include, but are not limited to, the right to attend school, the right to a level of due process before being suspended or expelled, protection from unreasonable search and seizure, and free speech protections. Students also have the right to attend schools that are safe and in which there is an atmosphere of mutual respect. Boards are required to have policies on certain issues involving student rights (such as nondiscrimination, student attendance, student discipline, and weapons in schools). Policies which clearly delineate student rights and responsibilities foster a healthy learning atmosphere, provide legal protection for the board, and communicate expectations to the community, parents, students, and staff. (Policy ECAC Video Surveillance)

Board members can create opportunities for interaction with students, the most obvious way by being visible at student activities such as at sporting events, concerts, plays, and art shows. Consider chaperoning a school dance or making a presentation to a class. Seeing board members at student activities can be meaningful to students.

Communication with Various Constituencies. To be an effective board member, you will want to maintain ongoing, two-way communication with school staff, students, and members of the community. The board must see to it that there are adequate and direct means for keeping the local citizenry informed and for keeping itself informed about the wishes of the public. These communication techniques should be both formal (public hearings, newsletters, official school district publications) and informal. The board should receive copies of all communications and suggest ideas to improve school communications through newsletters, informational meetings, open houses, volunteer programs, student outreach and community services, and other creative means. The more knowledge people have of the schools and the more accessible the schools are, the more likely people are to be proud of them and to support their needs.

Advocacy. Many children come to school with problems that impede their ability to learn. Board members need to serve as advocates for children and support programs that help meet the needs of all children. Collaborate and establish strong relationships with families, community organizations and other agencies that benefit the children and the community. Celebrate the achievements of students and the staff of RSU 3.

General Administrative Tasks of the Board:

1. Elect board officers and assign committees: this occurs annually at the July meeting after new board members are seated
2. School calendar approval: Maine law requires 175 days of student instruction for a 180 day school year, the additional five days for staff in-service education and other non-instructional activities. RSU 3 calendar is formed in conjunction with the Waldo County Technical Center such that not more than 5 days in the calendar differ.
3. Retain an attorney/law firm and appoint a School Doctor
4. Board workshops: Topic driven and called as needed by the board chair. Board members need knowledge of the District organization, programs, curriculum, budget, data used to monitor progress and the laws and regulations related to education and the work of the board.
5. Student Handbooks approval: **(Policy CHCA)** The Board conducts an annual review of the student handbooks. All first editions of handbooks and any substantive revisions are to be reviewed by legal counsel and approved by the Board prior to publication.
6. Curriculum approval: **Policy IGA Curriculum Development and Adoption)** The board reviews and adopts all curriculum guides, course descriptions and courses of study prior to their implementation
7. Staff hiring approvals: The superintendent nominates all teachers and upon approval by the board, the superintendent may employ those who were nominated and approved. The board may not tell the superintendent whom to nominate. The superintendent appoints stipend positions and reports to the board. New teacher hires are probationary for their first two years. After the two-year probationary period, if the teacher is renewed, the teacher is placed on a continuing contract at which point the teacher has more rights and the steps necessary to dismiss are far more complicated.
8. Public hearings: Budget hearings are held in May and June prior to the general referendum. Hearings deal with a particular subject or a timely matter of interest and may be held as needed or directed.
9. Policy Review: On going and reviewed and brought forth to the full board

Budget Development: Board members should develop a basic understanding of where money comes from to operate the schools and how it is expended, and how the budget development and approval process works. In the broadest sense, the school board is responsible for ensuring that RSU 3 has the resources for staff, buildings, furnishings, and instructional materials to carry out the educational program.

The superintendent develops the annual budget by gathering information and requests from each school and budget manager. This includes Special Education, WCTC, Athletics, Student and Staff Support, System Administration, Operations (Facilities and Transportation), School Nutrition Program, and Adult Education. In the spring, the budget is shared with the public in workshops, one workshop specifically targets town selectmen and the other for the general public. The superintendent leads the workshops but the board is present.

School Funding: The school budget is funded with a combination of state General Purpose Aid and local Property taxes. The state share is calculated by how much each school district should be spending for Essential Programs and Services (EPS). By law, the state must fund 55% of the calculated EPS. The percentage the state does not cover, plus the amount RSU 3 spends above the EPS formula, becomes the local property tax share. The EPS formula does not take into consideration specialty classes, school

sports, or school nutrition programs. The local share is divided between the 11 towns in RSU 3 according to the town's valuation.

The largest component of EPS is the instructional costs (salary and benefits). The student count determines the number of teachers and administrators that are funded by EPS. Student-teacher ratios set in statute are: 15:1 PreK/K and 16:1 for grades 1-12. Other student-staff ratios that affect allocation include regular education technicians 103:1 for pK-5; 281:1 for 6-8 and 284:1 high school; school administration 275:1 for pK-8 and 284:1 for high school; guidance staff 315:1 for pK-8 and 225:1 for high school; librarians 720:1 for pK-12; library techs at 450:1 for pK-12; health staff 720:1 for pK-12; and clerical staff 180:1 for pK-12.

Districts are allocated more money for students in four specialized groups, meaning the per-pupil rate is increased for students in a given category based on the weight given that group. Those categories include: Grade K-2 students weighted 1.1, a 10 percent increase over the standard per pupil rate; Economically Disadvantaged students weighted 1.15, a 15 percent increase; Limited English Proficiency students weighted from 1.5 to 1.7, a 50 to 70 percent increase; Special Education students, weighted 2.25, a 125 percent increase for each student up to the point where special education students make up 15 percent of the student population. It goes down to 1.38, a 38 percent increase for the number of special education students that exceed 15 percent of the overall student population.

The state also allows for adjustments for high-cost in-district and out-of-district placements for students with special needs. It allocates a per-student amount for items such as maintenance, supplies, administration, technology, professional development, assessments, co/extra-curricular activities and Instructional Leadership support.

How the EPS formula is applied to RSU 3 is best shown on a form sent to each district (usually by mid-February) by the Department of Education called an ED279. The 279s state the percentage of the EPS allocation covered by the state and that required of local taxpayers. This form can easily found on the web.

Board Self-evaluation: Completed annually in late Spring.

Staff/Alumni Awards-Board Recognition Awards Program and Outstanding Alumni

5. Board Committees (**Policy BDE Board Standing Committees**)

- **Policy (Superintendent)** Reviews and recommends all policy changes to be considered by the board. Board members may submit policy suggestions to the committee which will review and research each suggestion and then make recommendations to the board. Per change in educational policy, the Policy Committee will initiate contact with the teacher organization.
- **Operations (Operations Director)** In collaboration with the Operations Director, Operations Committee reviews the long-term facilities plan for needed updates and maintenance, assists in the planning and development of any ongoing construction projects, reviews transportation issues and changes to routes and budget.
- **Finance (Business Manager) (Policy DJA Purchasing Authority; DN School Property Disposal Procedures)** Approves spending of allocations budgeted by the board. The finance committee is responsible for reviewing business transactions, checking monthly reports and reviewing and signing warrants. The committee meets annually with the auditor to review the final audit.

- **Personnel (Superintendent)** At least one member attends and represents the board during negotiations with the bargaining units: Support Educators (ed techs, secretaries, custodians, cooks, bus/van drivers, mechanics), Administrative team (principals and pupil services director) and Professional (teachers). The committee serves as an advisor to the superintendent on personnel issues and matters that are requested.
- **WCTC (WCTC Director)** The RSU #3 Board appoints 2 members plus one at-large to the Region Seven Cooperative Board for terms of 2 years. The Cooperative Board totals 9 members, with additional representation of 2 from Searsport (RSU 20) and 4 from Belfast (RSU 71). WCTC provides programs of education and training in trade, industrial, agricultural, business, technical and service occupations to secondary school students. WCTC Adult Education program provides personal enrichment and vocational education.
- **Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (Assistant Superintendent)** The committee reviews educational materials/textbooks, curriculum and adherence to the Maine Learning Results and makes recommendations to the full board.
- **Dropout Prevention Policy BDEI; JFC** Studies the problem of dropouts, habitual truancy and the need for alternative programs K-12. The Committee submits a plan of action, reviews the plan and makes recommendations for addressing the problems. The committee meets annually.

6. Parliamentary Procedure

Robert's Rules of Order (**Policy BEDD**) requires that the chair follow the posted agenda; the speaker is recognized by the chair; all members have an opportunity to speak before others speak again; the chair may move a meeting along by stating, "Without objection, we will declare to close....."

Robert's Rules of Order <http://www.jimslaughter.com/handouts.cfm>

- Motions are stated and seconded prior to discussion and restated prior to the vote
- One agenda item at a time with discussion germane to pending motion; speaker is ruled out of order if new matters are entered
- Main motions may be amended with voting on amendment taken prior to the original motion vote
- No interruptions or surprises
- Simple majority rules (**Policy BEDF Voting Method; Policy BEDFA Abstentions**)
- Silence implies consent
- Motions to close debate, withdraw, postpone or table a motion or refer to committee are allowed
- Motion may be made at the start of the next board meeting to reconsider a decision made at the prior meeting; the motion is made by a member who was on the side of the majority vote.
- No member may speak twice to the same issue under debate until everyone else has had the opportunity to speak

- The 10 must know Parliamentary motions:

Motion	Debatable	Amendable	Vote
Adjournment	No	No	Majority
Recess	No	Yes	Majority
Lay on the table	No	No	Majority
Close debate	No	No	2/3
Limit / extend debate	No	Yes	2/3
Postpone to a certain time	Yes	Yes	Majority
Refer to committee	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend main motion	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend Amendment	Yes	No	Majority
Main Motion	Yes	Yes	Majority

7. School Performance and the Use of Assessment Data (Policy IKA Assessment Systems)

Effective boards engage in continuous assessment of conditions that affect education. This should include monitoring student achievement from a variety of assessments in order to evaluate the quality and equity of education, inform the public on the status of the district's programs, provide appropriate staff and board training opportunities, encourage curricular assessment and innovation and fulfill governance responsibilities as required by state and federal law. The district's progress needs to be reported to the community and parents on a regular basis. The board needs regular reports from administrators with presentations on issues such as:

- What are we doing to ensure that there is continuity in curriculum between grade levels?
- How is our school unit meeting the curriculum and staff development requirements of the Learning Results?
- What assessment tools are we using, and how are we using the data to improve the curriculum?
- What is our plan for evaluating and revising major curriculum areas?
- How are we using our staff development time, and what more needs to be done?
- When new courses of study, curriculum, or textbooks are being discussed, what is the research that indicates that the recommended material is the best for our school unit?
- Is the curriculum balanced, and does it provide for the differing needs of our students?
- Are we providing multiple pathways for students to demonstrate they are meeting learning goals?
- Is there a Response To Intervention (RTI) program in place to identify those students who are not achieving and offer help before a student fails?

There will often be strong pressure from interest groups—both among the staff and in the community—for the board to adopt particular materials or set a particular direction. Board members should insist on receiving the information they need to make informed, reasoned decisions on curriculum matters that serve the best educational interests of our students.

RSU 3 Assessments

- NWEA: Reading, Math, Language Usage; twice/year: K-8 & 11
- Science Assessment (New Meridian): 5, 8, 11
- Benchmark Assessment System (BAS): 3x/year; 1-5
- Early Literacy Behaviors: K
- Letter Name/Sound: K-2
- Phonological Awareness Skills Test (PAST): K-2
- Qualitative Spelling Inventory: K-5
- Lucy Calkins Writing Prompts: K-5

RSU 3 Data Collection

- Economic demographics
- Enrollment Certified Oct 1 and Apr 1
- Attendance: Quarterly; Chronic absences and truancy
- Behavior: Quarterly; instances of school suspension; instances of restraint and seclusion
- Bullying: Quarterly/substantiated reports
- Drop out certification
- Graduation certification
- Out of district placements
- Transportation: Bus inventory mileage; out of district costs, homeless, Career and Technical Education

8. School Board Self-evaluation

The board annually assesses its performance in terms of progress towards the achievement of long- and short-term goals and that the allocation of resources effectively supports the district vision. The Five areas of assessment are: Vision, Leadership and Planning; Board governance and Policy; Communication and Community Relations; Fiscal and human resources; and Ethics and Accountability.

See Appendix for Board Self-evaluation and results from previous self-evaluations

9. School Board Leadership Training

Board calendar-Annual Cycle: each year, the board should develop a calendar for speakers/presentations so that the constituents may prepare in advance for the topics.

Reports from Superintendent

- Annual: **AEC Accountability-Reporting to the Public**
 1. Prepare appropriate reports that will provide the Board with the information it needs to make appropriate policy and planning decisions. This addresses the activities of RSU 3 and recommendations for improving student learning and system operations.
 2. Inform the public regarding the academic progress of its students, the effectiveness of school programs, and the needs of the school system.
- Annual **ADF School District Commitment to Learning Results**: Report provides information on student achievement and progress towards implementation of the Learning Results
- Annual **GCGA Substitute Teachers**: Board approves pay rate for subs for coming fiscal year
- Annual **IHCDA Post-Secondary Enrollment Options**: Superintendent report on number of students taking courses at post-secondary schools and the courses taken, *early college and dual enrollment offerings*.

Board Reviews

- Annual **AD- RSU 3 Mission and Vision Statement** review
- Annual **AEC Accountability-Reporting to the Public**: Board reviews and approves Comprehensive Education Plan and results of the Local Assessment System
- Annual **BDEI Dropout Prevention** committee report: Committee submits plan of action to board with recommendations for improvement
- Annual **EBCA Emergency Response Plan**: Board reviews the plan

Board Actions

- **JL Student Wellness, Nutrition and Food Sales on School Property**: Board appoints a district wide Wellness Committee that is made up of board member, administrator, food director, student rep and parent and/or community rep
- Board Recognition Awards Program: 6 Awards to recognize the work of staff and community members to be recognized on the last June staff day; Outstanding, faculty, staff, community, team and leadership awards.

Calendar by Month per policy required Board Actions:

January:
February: Approval of High School Program of Studies for the next Academic year, prior to student registration

<p>March: Per evaluation approved May 2021, Informal update by superintendent on goals' progress. Board chair facilitates specific questions/concerns from the board</p>
<p>April: Board recognition Awards committee formed for June awards</p>
<p>May: Board self-evaluation provided to board members and returned before June meeting</p>
<p>June: BBAB-R: Board appoints Student representative for 2 yr term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board self-evaluation results reviewed to full board
<p>July: BBBAA: Chair and vice-chair elected (chair termed out after 3 years); Board committees formed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · CBI-R Evaluation of the Superintendent: Board and Superintendent meet to discuss progress toward meeting the employment goals and objectives for the past year, and to agree upon new goals for the coming year. Per evaluation adopted May 2021, Formal Update with evidence provided to board prior to meeting. Questions from board members are prepared and the chair facilitates questions and delivers them to the superintendent prior to the meeting. · JJ MVHS Extra/Co-curricular handbook: Sports program Report to board on disciplinary actions, academic suspension, parent appeals
<p>August: GCQCB Professional and Staff exit interviews: Superintendent report on departure numbers, positions, length of service and reasons for departures in order to obtain ideas for district improvement and maintaining positive conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Board Workshop
<p>September:</p>
<p>October: Per evaluation approved May 2021, Informal update by superintendent on goal's progress. Board chair facilitates specific questions/concerns from the board</p>
<p>November: Each Board member is provided a packet for the superintendent's formal evaluation. Two weeks later, board members are to send their packet to the board chair which the board chair will use to facilitate the evaluation process at the December meeting.</p>
<p>December: · CBI-R Evaluation of the Superintendent: Board with Superintendent discuss the performance in relation to established criteria and discuss progress on goals established at the July meeting. Chairperson writes a reflective summary of the evaluation which both parties sign and placed in the personnel file. Per Evaluation adopted May 2021, the formal evaluation with supporting materials from the Superintendent is presented to board members prior to the December meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · JJ MVHS Co-curricular handbook: Sports program Report to board on disciplinary actions, academic suspension, parent appeals

Annual Board workshop-August

This is a time to focus on Student achievement and create and evaluate goals that support Students and are tied to the Mission and Vision of RSU 3. The goals may be based on the results of the Board's self-evaluation. The workshop provides time for reflection and discussion for review of and revision of operating protocols

This is a time to create a year-long planning calendar for board meetings that may include items such as Speakers to invite (legislators, selectmen, specific school staff report on goals/needs for @school, time sensitive items such as results of assessments and other data)

Board Opportunities

October-MSMA annual conference: workshops, speakers related to school board needs

10. Board Members and the Public

As an elected school board member, you are part of a representative government. In order to represent your constituents, you need to actively seek input, listen carefully to all viewpoints, and keep your finger on the pulse of your community. This means being in touch with all of the various constituencies in town. These constituencies include parents (who may have different interests at different grade levels), senior citizens, municipal officials and local state legislators, community opinion leaders, service and business organizations, and others. Learn as much as you can about issues before the board, and then make every decision through the lens of what is in the best interest of the students and the educational program. A board member must never make a commitment to vote for or against something until you are in the board meeting, have had full discussion with fellow board members, and have reached an informed conclusion.

Handling complaints: (Policy KE Public Complaints; KEC Instructional Materials) It is appropriate to listen carefully to the issue, but then refer the person to the staff member, administrator or other person who is in the best position to address the complaint. Let the superintendent and/or board chair know about the complaint. No further intervention is necessary. Even if you think you agree with the complaint, it is wise not to say so. If you express an opinion on the matter, you may put yourself in legal jeopardy.

Community Involvement in Decision Making: Policy BDF Advisory Committees to the Board School boards and schools have become increasingly open to involving the community in the decision-making process, where no official actions are taken, through the use of citizen advisory committees, workshops to seek public input, public participation at board meetings, community surveys, and the like. Community involvement in decision making can yield very useful information, and it can help boards anticipate how a new idea will be received by the community and lay a foundation for acceptance. This is particularly important when major changes are being planned—such as a new building, new program or instructional approach, or the school calendar. However, it is important to keep community involvement in decision making processes in context. The board must ensure that it retains its statutory policy making authority and that the public clearly understands this up-front. The board should make it clear through its policies that community input is both welcomed and appreciated but that this input is considered advisory.

Public Participation at Board Meetings: (Policy BEDH) All members of the public have the right to attend the meetings. In order to have an orderly and non-disruptive public comment opportunity, the RSU3 board has set aside a specific time on the agenda for members of the public to speak with certain restrictions on what may be said and may limit the time allotted for comments on a particular topic. Those that wish to speak will sign in with their name, town and topic and will be recognized by the board chair during public comment time. Speakers are

not permitted to share gossip nor make complaints or allegations about any RSU 3 employee or student. (These concerns will be referred through established policies.)

The board will hear, but not discuss or act on topics not already on the agenda. Clarifying questions may be asked through the Chair, but members must refrain from arguing or debating the issues. At the board's discretion, the board may decide to place the topic on a future agenda. Concerned citizens may also submit requests through the superintendent for inclusion on the agenda, when appropriate.

School boards are not required to allow for members of the public to speak at its meetings. The Freedom of Access Act merely requires that school boards conduct the public session of their meetings in public. Stated simply, the rights of voters in a school unit are (1) to watch the school board meet when it is in public session, (2) to vote for school board members, and (3) to vote on the school budget and referendums.

11. Board Member Education and Preparation

The work of the board is to aim to increase student achievement through effective board practices in goal setting, policy and resource alignment, evaluation, accountability, and fostering a climate for success. Parents entrust their children to our schools for six hours a day, 175 days a year and expect our schools to provide a safe environment that also supports their broader development of skills, interests, character, and values. The school board must respond to the diverse and varied communities of our district, as well as set broader education and social policies and practices that address specific interests of the communities. The board must also provide oversight to ensure that the policies are met.

Board members must become knowledgeable of the organization, programs and curriculum, budget, use of data, laws and regulations that are related to education and the work of the board. Town officials/legislators may be invited to meetings to present information on relevant state activities and to learn about challenges of our district.

School board members will find our superintendent, fellow board members, the Maine Department of Education (MDOE), the Maine School Boards Association (MSBA), and the Maine School Management Association (MSMA) all to be important resources. Familiarize yourself with RSU 3's board policy manual that may be found online on the RSU 3 website. Review the Maine statutes governing education (Title 20-A), which can be viewed on the web at www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/. The Freedom of Access training must be repeated within 120 days of taking the oath of office each time a Board member is elected to serve a new term. The required Freedom of Access Act training is online at www.maine.gov/foaa.

MSMA is a statewide, non-profit federation of local school boards, superintendents, and assistant superintendents consisting of the Maine School Boards Association and the Maine School Superintendents Association. MSMA serves as an advocate for the interests of the state's public school students and school units and provides such programs and services as are required to fulfill the needs of the membership. As a dues-paying member of MSBA, our board is entitled to the various services offered. MSMA keeps members informed of legislative activity and other matters of immediate importance through MSMA's website www.msmaweb.com and various other means.

Questions to ask yourself as you prepare in the role of board member

1. What does the board do for your school district? What should the board do that it does not do now?
2. Does the board have a vision for the school district? Do you concur with that vision? Why or why not?
3. What changes has the district undergone in the past five years? What changes are anticipated in the next two years? Five years?
4. What are the district's major objectives this year? Next year? Do these relate to the board's vision?
5. How does the board go about setting goals and objectives for the district? How is the community involved?
6. If the district could accomplish one major objective next year, what would you want it to be?

7. Has the board taken full advantage of the materials and programs available from MSBA?
8. Does the board have a strategic planning process in place?
9. In your judgment, should the board give more or less attention to policy making than it does? Why?
10. How does the board know whether its policies are implemented in the schools?
11. What are the ground rules in the district for determining what is “board business” and what is “staff” work?
12. How does your board evaluate administrative efforts?
13. How are school programs evaluated?
14. How is legal advice provided to your district? How does your district use this advice?
15. How does the board participate in budget preparation?
16. What major budget cuts have been made within the last two years? Why?
17. How does the board participate in setting the salaries of teachers and other school employees?
18. Does the board use standing or ad hoc committees? Citizen advisory committees? If so, what are their responsibilities? What impact do committee recommendations have on board decisions?
19. In what ways does the board communicate with the public? School employees? The press?
20. What is the school board’s role in setting student achievement expectations (standards)? What is the board’s role in developing strategies to help students meet the standards?
21. How does the board respond to complaints from citizens? What should you do when a citizen complains to you about a school-related matter?
22. Does the board act as an advocate for children in the RSU 3 community? Does the board act as an advocate for the district’s instructional program? Does its advocacy role need to be strengthened?
23. Does the board engage in regular self-evaluation?
24. How is the agenda for each board meeting set?
25. Does the board comply with applicable “Sunshine” laws when it addresses matters in its executive (closed) sessions? Can the types of concerns discussed legally take place behind closed doors?
26. What staff development opportunities are provided to school employees?
27. How does the board influence the school curriculum?
28. How does the board collectively participate in state and national legislative deliberations? What is the relationship of the board to MSBA’s legislative activities?

12. MSBA services for the local board

MSMA offers services such as the MSMA Annual Fall Conference in October, regional and individualized board workshops on a variety of topics, assistance with policies, and superintendent searches.

Publications are sent periodically to Board Members from Maine School Boards Association (MSBA) and Maine School Management Association (MSMA)

- MSBA Update
- MSMA Legislative Bulletins
- MSMA Special Bulletins
- MSMA Newsletters
 - o School Law News
 - o Labor Relations News
 - o Policy Development News
 - o Legislative News

Web-based Resources

- Maine State Chamber of Commerce: educatemaine.org k-12 funding process and history of Maine's public education system

Maine School Management Association: www.msmaweb.com

- U.S. Department of Education: www.ed.gov/

- State Department of Education: www.maine.gov/education

- Maine DOE Commissioner Letters (Administrative and Informational): www.maine.gov/education/edletrs/

- Maine State Board of Education: www.maine.gov/education/sb/

- National School Boards Association: www.nsba.org

- Education Week: www.edweek.org

- American School Board Journal: www.asbj.com

- Maine Law (Click on Title 20-A and Title 20 for Education Law):

www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes

- DOE Rules: www.maine.gov/sos/cec/rules/05/chaps05.htm

- Maine Legislature: www.maine.gov/legis

- Maine Legislators email addresses:

House of Representatives: www.maine.gov/legis/house/e_mail.htm

Senators: www.maine.gov/legis/senate/senators/email/maillst.htm

- Maine Legislature Bill Status: www.mainelegislature.org/LawMakerWeb/search.asp

13. Long Term Contractual Agreements with RSU #3

- Revision Energy: Board approved February, 2022 an initial term for a 20 year contract. Expected Commercial Operation startup: 6/1/2023. Solar farm location: Huston Rd, Gorham. Purchased 31.9% of the solar farm output to meet approximately 85% of the present RSU #3 annual KWH usage.
- Sewell Report for Operations-long range report for facilities needed upgrades/repairs
- Ecology Learning Center, charter school located in Unity: Contracts for RSU #3 to provide nursing, transportation, special education services, access to athletic program and RSU 3 courses
- Atlantic Academy: Lease at Unity Elementary School
- The Game Loft: IKME program at MVMS, 78-A Main St. Belfast, Maine 04915
Ray Estabrook, Founding co-Director r.estabrook@thegameloft.org 322-3229 338-6447
- RSU 3 and WCAP (Waldo Community Action Program) Partnership pre-K classrooms at Unity, Walker, Morse and Monroe
- Restorative Justice Project of Maine. Grant from July 2022 to June 2023. Sponsored by Zachary Freeman; Project Manager Sarah Matari; Stakeholders: MVHS, Equity & Culture Response Team, RSU 3 Board, community, RJP Board. Purpose: to Support schools to hold their own spaces for needed conversations and social and emotional learning amongst staff and students. Contracted for \$120,250.

Notes

New policy thoughts for the back burner:

- Hire a PR Director to provide information to the news media and oversee website and to make website inviting to folks moving to the district that includes an easily accessible calendar of events (sports, arts, speakers, etc). Could be a part-time position or as a consultant.
- Policy to encourage identification of students to pursue one of the multiple pathways to graduation such as internships, mentorships and apprenticeships
- With declining enrollments that is contrary to 2010 study of projected enrollment figures for RSU 3, we should explore where are the students going? How can we reach out to students enrolled elsewhere within our district to inform them of opportunities through RSU 3 programs for which they are eligible? Superintendent agreements, home schooling waivers, private schools? What can we do if we know these numbers?

How can the board support the vision and mission to provide a program of study that is reflective of the needs and interests of the students? What does RSU 3 Offer and does it Meet the student's needs?

How can the board make use of public input through advisory committees as per policy BDF?

What does educational excellence look like/defined by the board?