

# Maine School Administrative District No. 11

150 Highland Avenue  
Gardiner, ME 04345

Patricia Hopkins  
Superintendent of Schools

Phone: 207-582-5346  
Fax: 207-582-8305  
[www.msad11.org](http://www.msad11.org)

Angela Hardy  
Director of Curriculum & Instruction

**MERLE E. PEACOCK, JR. BOARD ROOM**  
**Special School Board Meeting**  
**August 22, 2019**  
**4:00 p.m.**

- I. Call to Order
- II. Nominations
  - Special Education Teacher, Gardiner Regional Middle School
  - Jeffrey Trippe, ELA Teacher – Grade 7, Gardiner Regional Middle School
- III. Executive Session
  - Discuss Central Office Staff Salaries – 1 MRSA 405 § (6)(D)
- IV. Adjournment

**School Board Workshop**  
**August 22, 2019**  
**Immediately following Special Board Meeting**

- I. Call to Order
- II. School Board Training – Facilitated by Great School Partnership
- III. Dinner - 5:30 – 6:00 p.m.
- IV. Start School Later Committee – Angela Hardy
- V. Legislative Update
- VI. Adjournment

# Maine School Administrative District #11

## School Board Workshop

Tuesday August 22, 2019; 4-5:30 pm

*Superintendent's Office 150 Highland Avenue, Gardiner, ME 04345*

### Proposed Outcomes

1. Review foundational documents outlining Board member powers and responsibilities;
2. Develop a shared understanding of how Board members will work effectively together in support of all students;
3. Experience being a member of a learning community through activities and dialogue.

Time	Activity
	Opening and welcome: Superintendent Hopkins & Chair Fles
4:10 pm	Overview of the session Session agreements
4:15 pm	Activity #1: Introductions + Why you want to be a school board member
4:30 pm	Activity #2: Text-based discussion (two groups): <i>In what ways do the ideas represented in these documents support your commitment to be an impactful school board member in MSAD #11?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <a href="#">Eight traits of effective school boards</a> – Ohio School Board Association Journal (May 2011)</li><li>▪ MSAD #11 <a href="#">Board Member Code of Ethics</a> (BCA)</li></ul> <i>Additional related resources:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ MSAD #11 <a href="#">Board-Superintendent Relationship</a> (BDD)</li><li>▪ MSAD #11 <a href="#">School Board Powers and Responsibilities policy</a> (BBA)</li><li>▪ MSAD #11 <a href="#">Board Member Authority and Responsibilities</a> (BBAA)</li></ul>
5:05 pm	Whole group discussion. Guiding question: “How will we act upon our responsibilities and effectively work together this year?”
5:20 pm	Reflection and sharing: “One way I hope to contribute meaningfully to our work as a Board this year is... One thing I will need to be an effective Board member is...”
5:30 pm	Adjournment: Superintendent Hopkins & Chair Fles



# Eight traits of effective school boards

*The research is clear: High-achieving boards exhibit habits and characteristics that are different from their low-achieving counterparts*

by Patte Barth  
director, National School Boards  
Association's Center for Public Education

What makes an effective school board, one that boosts student achievement? From a research perspective, it's a complex question that involves evaluating virtually all of a board's functions, from internal governance and policy formulation to communication with teachers, building administrators and the public.

But the research that exists is clear, according to a brief published by the National School Boards Association's Center for Public Education (CPE) in late January. The brief, which examined

seven research studies conducted between 1993 and 2008, says high-achieving boards exhibit habits and characteristics that are markedly different from their low-achieving counterparts.

## **What makes a board effective?**

Here are eight characteristics found in the research:

### **High expectations, clear goals:**

Effective school boards are committed to a vision of high expectations for student achievement and quality instruction. They define clear goals to meet the vision, make sure they remain the top priorities and allow nothing to detract from them.

### **Belief that all children can learn:**

Effective school boards 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. In high-achieving districts, poverty, lack of parental involvement and other factors were described as challenges to be overcome, not as excuses. Board members expected to see improvements in student achievement quickly as a result of initiatives.

**Focused on achievement:** Effective boards are accountability driven. They spend less time on operational issues and more time focused on policies to improve student achievement.

### **Collaborate and communicate:**

Effective boards have a collaborative relationship with staff and the community. A strong communications structure is in place to inform and engage key groups — internal and external — in setting and achieving the district's goals.

**Data savvy:** Effective school boards embrace and monitor data, even when the information is negative, and use it to drive continuous improvement. In high-achieving districts, board members identify specific student needs through data and justify decisions based on that data.

### **Goals and resources aligned:**

Effective school boards align and sustain resources, such as professional development, to meet district goals. This occurs even during the most severe budget challenges, such as the ones districts now face.

**Team leadership:** Effective school boards lead as a united team with the superintendent, each from their respective roles, with strong collaboration and mutual trust. Boards in successful districts define an initial vision for the district and seek a superintendent who matches this vision.

**Team training:** Boards that are effective take part in team development and training, sometimes with their superintendents, to build shared knowledge, values and commitments for the district's improvement efforts. Training is formal, deliberate and often on specific topics.

### **Danger signs**

CPE did not set out to specifically focus on what makes boards ineffective. However, some descriptions — described as “a dozen danger signs” — of ineffective boards emerged in the research review.

Ineffective school boards:

- are only vaguely aware of school improvement initiatives and seldom able

to describe actions being taken to improve student learning;

- focus on external pressures as the main reason for lack of student success, such as poverty, lack of parental support, societal factors or lack of motivation;
- offer negative comments about students and teachers;
- micromanage day-to-day operations;
- disregard the agenda process and the chain of command;
- are left out of the information flow, with little communication between the board and superintendent;
- describe a lack of parent interest in education or barriers to community outreach;
- look at data from a “blaming” perspective, describing teachers, students and families as major causes for low performance;
- have little understanding or coordination on staff development for teachers;
- are slow to define a vision;
- did not hire a superintendent who agreed with their vision;
- receive little professional development

together as a board.

Though the research on school board effectiveness is in the beginning stages, the studies included in this report make it clear that school boards in high-achieving districts have attitudes, knowledge and approaches that separate them from their counterparts in lower-achieving districts. In this era of fiscal constraints and a national environment focused on accountability, boards in high-performing districts can provide an important blueprint for success. In the process, they can offer a road map for school districts nationwide. □

*Reproduced with permission from the March 2011 issue of American School Board Journal. Copyright © 2011, National School Boards Association.*

*Patte Barth (pbarth@nsba.org) is the director of NSBA's Center for Public Education. The full report, “The Eight Characteristics of Effective School Boards,” written by researchers Chuck Dervarics and Eileen O'Brien, is available at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/68623>.*

## **Struggling to reach a peaceful resolution? Let OSBA help!**



OSBA can offer your district expertise and extensive experience when your district has found itself at an impasse. OSBA professionals can represent your district for all arbitration and SERB representation matters — **for one flat rate**. Let us help you by:

- offering advice on strategy
- working with mediators
- helping you present and package remaining issues
- providing a second opinion to help you see the big picture
- meeting with you in person or consulting with your district behind the scenes

Contact Van D. Keating, director of management services, at (614) 540-4000 or (800) 589-OSBA to take advantage of these quality services.



## **BOARD MEMBER CODE OF ETHICS**

Having accepted the responsibility to serve on this School Board, I accept the principles set forth in the following code of ethics to guide me in helping to provide free public education to all the children of MSAD #11 within the State of Maine.

- A. I will view service on the School Board as an opportunity to serve my community, state, and nation because I believe public education is the best means to promote the welfare of our people and to preserve our democratic way of life.
- B. I will at all times think of children first and base my decisions on how they will affect children, their education, and their training.
- C. I will make no disparaging remarks, in or out of the Board meetings, about other members of the Board or their opinions.
- D. I will remember at all times that as an individual I have no legal authority outside the meetings of the Board, and that I will conduct my relationship with the school staff, the local citizenry, and all media of communications on the basis of this fact.
- E. I will recognize that my responsibility is not to operate the schools but to see that they are well operated.
- F. I will seek to provide education for all children in the community commensurate with their needs and abilities.
- G. I will listen to all citizens but will refer all complaints to the proper authorities, and will discuss such complaints only at a regular meeting after failure of administrative solution.
- H. I will support a decision made by the majority of the Board graciously.
- I. I will not criticize employees publicly, but will make such criticism to the Superintendent for investigation and action, if necessary.
- J. I will make decisions openly after all facts bearing on a question have been presented and discussed.
- K. I will refuse to make promises as to how I will vote on a matter that should properly come before the Board as a whole.
- L. I will not discuss the confidential business of the Board in my home, on the street, or in my office, the place for such discussion being the School Board meeting.
- M. I will confine my Board action to policy making, planning, and appraisal, leaving the administration of the schools to the Superintendent.

- N. I will welcome and encourage cooperation and participation by teachers, administrators, and other personnel in developing policies that affect their welfare and that of the children they serve.
- O. I will endeavor at all times to see that schools have adequate financial support within the capabilities of the community and state, in order that every child may receive the best possible education.
- P. I will resist every temptation and outside pressure to use my position as a School Board member to benefit myself or any individual or agency apart from the total interest of MSAD #11.
- Q. I will come to all meetings fully prepared to conduct the MSAD #11 Board business.
- R. I will endeavor to attend every regular and special Board meeting recognizing that my presence means representation for my town or city. If I find that this is not possible for an extended length of time, I will give consideration to resigning from my position on the Board.
- S. I will recognize at all times that the School Board of which I am a member is an agent of the state, and as such, I will abide by the laws of the state and the regulations formulated by the Maine Department of Education and by the State Board of Education.

Cross Reference: BCB – Board Member Conflicts of Interest

Adopted: Prior to 1985

Revised: June 5, 1986; November 1, 1990; October 1, 1992; June 15, 2006;  
February 5, 2015



## Text-Based Seminar

---

*Developed by Gene Thompson-Grove.*

### **Purpose**

Enlargement of understanding of a text, not the achievement of some particular understanding

### **Time**

At least 45 minutes.

### **Ground Rules**

1. Listen actively.
2. Build on what others say.
3. Don't step on others' talk. Silences and pauses are OK.
4. Let the conversation flow as much as possible without raising hands or using a speaker's list.
5. Make the assumptions underlying your comments explicit to others.
6. Emphasize clarification, amplification, and implications of ideas.
7. Watch your own air time — both in terms of how often you speak, and in terms of how much you say when you speak.
8. Refer to the text; challenge others to go to the text.

### **Facilitation**

Text-Based Seminars can be remarkably engaging and productive for both students and adults. A Text-Based Seminar facilitator has 2 primary tasks: posing the framing question and keeping the group focused without pushing any particular agenda.

Facilitating a Text-Based Seminar is not terribly difficult, but it can be challenging. A few tips might make the job easier:

1. Invest time in creating the framing question. It needs to be substantive, clear, relevant to the participants' experience, and likely to push their thinking in new directions. Above all, constructing a response to the question should require close reading of the text. We recommend that the framing question be genuine for everyone, including the facilitator, so that the entire group is engaged in the inquiry. Framing questions are often based on a quote from the text, which begins to establish a pattern of using the document as a basis for the conversation.
2. In addition to the framing question, create a few follow-up questions that seem to raise the level of participants' thinking. If the group takes off, you may never use them (or you may create new ones that come from the conversation itself), but it's a good idea to have something in your hip pocket, especially if you aren't very experienced at this kind of facilitation.



3. Unless the entire group does Text-Based Seminars routinely, it is useful to go over the purposes and ground rules before you begin. Because so many conversations (in school and out) are based more on opinion than evidence, and aim toward winning the argument rather than constructing new knowledge, it is often important to remind the group of the basics: **work from the text** and **strive to enlarge your understanding**.
4. Give the group time (about 5-10 minutes) to re-read the text with the framing question in mind.
5. The most common facilitation problems in this kind of seminar come from 2 kinds of participants: the folks who have to win, and those who want to express opinions independent of the text and will use any quote they can find as a springboard. Usually, a reminder of the ground rules will pull them back, although it is sometimes necessary to redirect the conversation if you are dealing with a particularly insistent “winner.” With the “winner,” it sometimes helps to ask the group to closely examine the assumptions underneath the arguments or opinions being presented. When someone doesn’t stick to the text, it is often helpful to ask the group to look for evidence of the opinion being expressed in the text. What you **don’t** want to do is ask these 2 types of participants a direct question, or ask them to cite the evidence in the text for their opinions (although you might be tempted to do so). The goal is to redirect the conversation away from these folks, not to get them to talk more!
6. It is sometimes useful to keep running notes of the conversation, and to periodically summarize for the group what has been said.
7. It is also sometimes useful (especially if you are nervous) to have a “plant” among the participants — someone who will model ideal participant behavior at an early point in the seminar.
8. As is always the case when facilitating, try to keep the conversation balanced. Don’t let 1 or 2 people dominate. If there are many quiet people, asking them to speak in pairs for a few minutes on a particular point can sometimes give them an entry into the conversation when you come back to the large group. Sometimes you just have to say, “let’s have someone who hasn’t said much yet speak,” and then use **lots** of wait time, even though it may feel somewhat uncomfortable to do so.
9. When debriefing the protocol, ask the group how they might improve their seminar skills, both individually and collectively.



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP

The MSAD #11 Board believes that exercising its legislative function through policymaking is its most important responsibility. The MSAD #11 Board is also responsible for setting the direction for the school district and evaluating progress toward goals.

The management of the schools is the function of the Superintendent. The MSAD #11 Board holds the Superintendent responsible for complying with all applicable laws, rules and regulations; for administering MSAD #11 Board policies and decisions; for the operation of the schools and educational program; for the system of supervision and evaluation of staff; and for keeping the MSAD #11 Board informed about school operations, problems and opportunities. The MSAD #11 Board recognizes that the Superintendent may delegate certain responsibilities to other personnel. Such delegation does not relieve the Superintendent of the final responsibility for actions taken.

The MSAD #11 Board, collectively and as individual members, shall:

- A. Recognize the Superintendent as the educational leader of the school district;
- B. Provide direction for the Superintendent through written policies, objectives and goals for the school district;
- C. Give the Superintendent full administrative authority and support for properly discharging his/her professional duties, while holding him/her responsible for acceptable results;
- D. Hold all MSAD #11 Board meetings in the presence of the Superintendent, except as otherwise permitted by law or when the Superintendent voluntarily excuses him/herself at the request of the Board. The Superintendent will attend all meetings of standing and/or advisory meetings.
- E. Refer complaints, criticisms, and requests to the Superintendent or other appropriate personnel and discuss them at MSAD #11 Board meetings only after administrative solutions have been exhausted; and
- F. Evaluate the Superintendent and provide appropriate opportunities for the Superintendent to share his/her perceptions regarding the working relationship between the MSAD #11 Board and Superintendent.

Legal Reference: 1 MRSA § 401 et seq.  
20-A MRSA §§ 1001 et seq.; 1051 et seq.; 13201; 13301

Cross Reference: BBA - School Board Powers and Responsibilities  
BCA - Board Member Code of Ethics  
CB - School Superintendent  
CB-R - Superintendent Job Description  
CBI - Evaluation of the Superintendent

Adopted: Prior to 1985

Revised: June 5, 1986; November 1, 1990; October 1, 1992; June 15, 2006  
January 8, 2015

## SCHOOL BOARD POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The MSAD #11 School Board shall have general charge of all the public schools of this district and shall exercise such other responsibilities as specifically provided by law.

The MSAD #11 Board shall concern itself primarily with broad questions of policy rather than with administrative details. The application of policies is an administrative task to be performed by the Superintendent and his/her staff, who shall be held responsible for the effective administration and supervision of the entire school system.

The MSAD #11 Board, functioning within the framework of laws, court decisions, attorney generals' opinions, and similar mandates from the state and national levels of government, and recognizing the authority of the state, fulfills its mission as the governing body of a political subdivision by acting as follows in the execution of its duties:

- A. Enacts policy;
- B. Selects, employs and evaluates the Superintendent;
- C. Provides for the planning, expansion, improvement, financing, construction and maintenance of the physical plant of the school system;
- D. Prescribes the minimum standards needed for the efficient operation and improvement of the school system;
- E. Requires the establishment and maintenance of records, accounts, archives, management methods and procedures incidental to the conduct of school business;
- F. Approves the budget, financial reports, audits, major expenditures, payment of obligations, and policies whereby the administration may formulate procedures, regulations, and other guides for the orderly accomplishment of business;
- G. Estimates the funds necessary from taxes for the operation, support, maintenance and improvement of the school system;
- H. Adopts courses of study;

- I. Provides staff and instructional aids;
- J. Evaluates the educational program to determine the effectiveness with which the schools are achieving the educational purposes of the school system;
- K. Provides for the dissemination of information relating to the schools necessary for creating a well-informed public; and
- L. Approves/disapproves personnel nominations from the Superintendent and determines (where appropriate via collective bargaining) compensation and working conditions of all staff.

Legal Reference: 20-A MRSA § 1001

Adopted: October 1, 1992

Revised: May 2003; June 15, 2006; December 4, 2014

## BOARD MEMBER AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Members of the MSAD #11 Board have authority only when acting as a board legally in session. The MSAD #11 Board shall not be bound in any way by any action or statement on the part of any individual MSAD #11 Board member except when such statement or action is in pursuance of specific instructions from the MSAD #11 Board.

Legal Reference: 20-A MRSA §§ 1001-1003

Adopted: October 1, 1992

Revised: June 15, 2006; December 4, 2014