

## Missoula County Public Schools

Board of Trustees 1521

### Guiding Principles for Board-Administrative Team Relationships

The most effective way to operate and supervise a school district is through close cooperation among the School Board, the Superintendent and the administrative team. Each group plays a different role, and each role is essential to the success of the entire system. In order to allow each group to complement and ensure the success of the others, agreement is necessary on both some philosophical ideas and some practical ways of working together to achieve the common goal - quality education for each student.

The Board and the administrative team have an obligation to provide educational leadership. The public expects the best in educational expertise, communication, decision making and planning. All policies and decisions of the Board-administrative team must be weighed, then tested, against the fact that the primary concern is for students.

### Guiding Principles for Board-Administrative Team Relationships

The following set of guiding principles are intended to create and nurture an open, productive environment as a team approach to school management:

#### 1. School Climate

The Board holds as its philosophy that building administration is accountable for establishing a friendly, productive and positive climate within the building and contributing to a positive climate within the District.

The administration shall assume the responsibility for developing a process to handle District emergencies, while at the same time maintaining a progressive educational climate.

Maximum emphasis will be placed on educational opportunities for students.

#### 2. Cooperation and Support

An effective team process is dependent upon the support and cooperation of each team member individually and as a group.

The Board has the responsibility to give full support to the administration when it has followed the District policies, philosophy, this code and sound educational practices.

The administrators' responsibility is to support all official actions taken by the Board.

#### 3. Loyalty

Each administrator has the responsibility of demonstrating loyalty to the District. This obligation shall be evidenced by positive, supportive actions.

There should be a sense of loyalty among members toward the actions of the full Board.

#### 4. Justice and Due Process

The Board will follow appropriate due process procedures in the conduct of all of its official personnel business. Such procedures will be monitored by the administration and legal counsel.

It is the administrator's responsibility to be familiar with all the steps and legalities involved with due process procedures, as they apply to this District. Whenever matters are brought before the Board by the administration, it will be the administrative responsibility to provide concise, accurate information showing how all due process procedures were followed on any particular case.

#### 5. Decision-Making

Every decision that is to be made in the District should first and foremost consider the effects it will have on students. Students are of primary concern in all decision-making activities. An orderly process will be followed which will provide opportunities for employees, parents and others to discuss their concerns as well as to address planned programs and policies under consideration by the Board. Channels will be kept open for individuals to respond to policies and practices which affect them. District philosophy will guide all action taken.

The Board will call upon the administration to provide the professional resources and

recommendations on matters brought before it.

It will be the administrators' function to solicit, throughout the process of developing recommendations, the appropriate input by those whom are affected by any pending decisions.

#### 6. Complaints, Criticism, and Rumors

All informal complaints, criticism and rumors, reported to Trustees from the public, shall be forwarded to the Superintendent. Formal complaints filed are to follow File 5241 Citizen Complaint.

Constructive criticism which emanates from the Board or a trustee shall be directed to the appropriate administrator only through the Superintendent. The Superintendent may process the concern using the review of services, an evaluation process, or a one-to-one review of the situation. Any concerns, complaints, criticism or rumors that are to be acted on by the Board will be processed only through the Superintendent in accordance with acceptable procedure.

When a trustee or administrator knows that criticism, complaints or rumors are unfounded, he/she has an ethical responsibility to ignore it or to provide complete, honest information in order to refute the allegation.

#### 7. Policies and Philosophies

Policies that are adopted shall be referred to as "District Policies."

The Board shall ensure that all philosophy development includes District-wide input. In order to keep policies current, the Board will call for regular review of all policies.

#### 8. Communication

It shall be the responsibility of each Board Member and each administrator to keep fully informed. All principals and central office administrators are expected to attend Board meetings, including any meeting related to conditions of their employment.

To foster good communications, administrative decisions at the central office and all decisions made at any administrative level shall be promptly disseminated to those whom are affected by any of these decisions.

#### 9. Working Relationships

Each member of the team is charged with the responsibility of working with the team to find the best ways to evolve a system in which cooperation, support and mutual respect can prevail.

The Board understands its responsibility to establish policy and recognizes the importance of delegating the administration to implement these policies. The Board determines what the policy will be and the administration is given the flexibility to determine how the policy is best implemented.

#### 10. Morale

The Board recognizes the importance of and is pledged to promote practices which enhance good administrative morale. Examples of important morale boosters are providing for shared goal setting, clearly defining expectations, maintaining consistency in action, expecting equality of input on decisions in the decision-making process. Administrator morale problems or concerns are expected to be communicated to the Board through the Superintendent.

#### 11. Monitoring the Provisions of this Code

The Board, through its Chair, shall have the responsibility of implementing the provisions of this code as it applies to the membership of the Board. The Board shall establish its own monitoring and remediation provisions for its own membership. It is expected that each Board Member will act in a professional and ethical manner, will follow this code of guiding/operating principles, as well as the Board's own code of ethics.

Each administrator will be personally responsible and will hold those supervised accountable for the provisions of District policy. This includes the administrative responsibility for the legal support and implementation of official District policies and

philosophies.

Policy History:

Adopted on: November 12, 1996

Revisions adopted on: December 9, 1997