

	<p>BOARD— SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP PROCEDURE</p>	<p>Procedure No. 1620BP</p> <p>June 7, 2023</p> <p>Page 1 of 3</p>
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As indicated in Policy No. 1620, the successful operation of schools requires a close, effective working relationship between the Board and the Superintendent. The relationship must be one of mutual respect, trust, goodwill, and candor. The Board is charged with establishing district policy and the Superintendent is responsible for implementing that policy and will be accountable to the Board to assure that staff complies with it. The Superintendent is the chief executive of the district to whom the Board delegates the management and administration of the district. The Board provides oversight and perspective which is essential to the governance of the district. It is important that each recognize and respect one another’s areas of responsibility.

The Board is committed to recruiting and retaining good leadership for the district, which in turn improves stability, continuity, and public confidence. This procedure is adopted to promote this objective.

In order to further clarify how Policy No. 1620 shall be implemented, this procedure delineates several key aspects of the relationship between the Board, Superintendent, and district staff.

1. **Advocacy:** Directors should work toward lasting improvement to a situation, outcome, process, or policy by directing the Superintendent using governance level means whenever possible. Governance level means include the approval of policy, budget, and the strategic plan; the hiring, setting expectations for, and evaluation of the Superintendent; and other Board actions. Directors should contact the Superintendent or senior leadership to seek information or advocate actions.
  
2. **Working with the Superintendent:** It is vital to the overall productivity, morale, and smooth functioning of the district that the governance team—the Superintendent and the Board—work together as a cohesive unit in the spirit of collaboration. The Superintendent and the Board should view each other as key advisors. The Superintendent and the Board shall communicate in a thorough, honest, and transparent fashion so that the Board is apprised of the district’s direction and progress. The Superintendent and the Board should first seek to clarify any questions or

resolve misunderstandings between them through direct personal communications.

Directors and the Superintendent should support and affirm the authority, leadership, and decision-making responsibilities of each other.

Disagreements between the Superintendent and the School Board over the direction of the district should be resolved using governance tools.

- 3. Communications between Board, Superintendent, and Staff:** The School Board values open communication between Directors and staff members at all levels. The Superintendent will establish a mechanism so that communications with one Board member are shared with all Board members.

Directors are encouraged to visit schools and discuss education-related issues with staff, and Directors are encouraged to foster a welcoming environment for all staff in the central office as well.

- 4. Public Meetings:** The School Board and Superintendent are committed to maintaining a climate of mutual respect and civility at all times. Disagreements on issues will be addressed respectfully and personal criticisms will be avoided. To the greatest extent possible, Directors shall alert staff to non-routine questions prior to public meetings in order to increase the quality and depth of staff response.

- 5. Responding to Constituents:** Constituent service issues include concerns identified by families, SPS employees, and other members of the public regarding the operation and staffing of schools and administrative departments. Board Directors shall refer all personal appeals, applications, complaints, and other communications concerning the administration of the school district to the Superintendent or their designated representative(s) and refrain from engaging in the administration of any school or district department on behalf of a constituent issue. The Superintendent shall respond within a reasonable time to such concerns and keep Board members appropriately informed.

If Directors would like to address constituent concerns of a broader nature, they should use governance tools to resolve the issue, in alignment with annually established governance priorities.

- 6. Hiring & Terminating Employees:** The authority and responsibility for hiring and terminating employees is delegated to the Superintendent. Directors shall give feedback on the employment status (hiring and firing) of district staff only in private consultation with the Superintendent. Board Directors shall refer constituent feedback on personnel issues to the Superintendent. Individual Directors should not publicly express negative

opinions about staff members or the Superintendent's personnel decisions.

7. **Board Decision Making:** Directors shall use the work session process to provide guidance to staff to help shape staff recommendations. If Directors are not satisfied with the final staff recommendations that result from the work sessions, Directors should submit an amendment to the proposal to the full Board for a public vote.

The first step is to draft and submit an amendment for staff to vet. The expectation is that the Superintendent and staff will have examined amendments raised in advance by Directors in order to provide a response. Further, other Board Directors shall receive the proposed amendment with ample time to understand and consider it prior to the scheduled vote.

8. **Superintendent's Accountability:** The Superintendent shall be held accountable to all areas of responsibility delegated by policy, agreed upon annual goals, or other governance level actions. The Board holds the Superintendent accountable through the Superintendent evaluation process. The Superintendent's evaluation instrument may include such requirements as responding in a timely manner to Directors' questions or comments, maintaining appropriate confidentiality, and making every reasonable effort to protect the integrity of the district and the Board. The Superintendent should not publicly express negative opinions about the Board or Board members.

Board Procedure 1620BP

Adopted: March 2012

Revised: June 2023; October 2022

Cross Reference: Policy Nos. 1005; 1010; 1310; 1620; 1630; 1640; 4220; 5251; District School Directors' Responsibilities

Related Superintendent Procedure:

Legal References: RCW 28A.150.230 District school directors' responsibilities; RCW 28A.320.010

Corporate powers; RCW 28A.330.100 Additional powers of the Board; RCW 28A.400.010

Employment of Superintendent—Superintendent's qualification, general powers, term, contract renewal; RCW 28A.400.030 Superintendent's duties.

Management Resources: