

WELCOME TO THE “BLUEHAWK NATION”

Hudson City School District New Board Member Orientation

Congratulations, you’ve just been elected to the Board of Education! Now what?

The Board of Education is the policy making body for the School District, creating policies to achieve District goals. The Superintendent is responsible for the execution of the policies set by the Board.

The success of every school system depends on an effective working relationship between the school board and the Superintendent.

Responsibilities of School Boards

General responsibilities of the Board of Education are to:

- Select the Superintendent of Schools as chief school officer to operate the school district
- Identify District goals and direction
- Adopt District goals; monitor and evaluate progress toward achieving goals
- Recommend a budget for voter approval
- Communicate District needs to the community
- Approve staff appointments
- Oversee supervision of District buildings and facilities
- Ensure safe transportation for pupils
- Monitor fiduciary responsibilities and fiscal matters pertaining to all the above
- Consider the financial impact on all community groups in the development of its financial multiyear plan

4 Major Roles of a Board Member

1. Representative - of the total community
2. Governance - of the District
3. Steward - of two precious resources: children and \$\$\$ and all that \$\$\$ buys
4. Advocate - of public education...and of an educated public

What to Expect

You can expect to be given selected materials of the previous year covering the function of the Board and the school district, including:

- Copies of Key Reports prepared during the previous year by Board committees and/or the administration
- The *Becoming a Better Board Member* handbook prepared by the NYSSBA and copies of any pertinent materials they have developed
- Latest Financial Report of the District
- Access to minutes of the Board meetings of the previous year and *School Law* handbook
- Access to the Policy Manual or you can access this on the School Website (*it will be helpful to become familiar with the policy section beginning with #2000*)

Required Board Member Instruction:

- New York State School Boards Association Financial Oversight, Accountability and Fiduciary Responsibilities of School Board Members

Encouraged but Not Required:

- The New York State School Boards Association's workshop for New School Board Members

Board Meetings

"A school board is a public corporate body" and as such, it can act only by majority of the whole number of the Board (e.g. ed law 1701).

Board meetings are the Board's meeting in public. They are held at least once or twice a month.

The Agenda is prepared by the Superintendent and Board President.

Robert's Rules of Order provides common rules and procedures for deliberation and debate in order to place the whole Board on the same level. It provides for constructive and democratic meetings to help the Board "work through" the issues.

Public comment is held during each Board meeting, allowing the public to comment on an issue. (If the Board needs to answer a question from the public, it will do so once factual information is obtained.)

Executive sessions are used to discuss personnel matters within the District. These are not open to the public.

As a new Board member elect, you will be invited to attend all Board meetings and functions, excluding executive sessions, until you are sworn in. All public officers including members of the Boards of Education in New York are required to take the oath of office:

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the constitution of the United States, and the constitution of the State of New York, and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office of school board, according to the best of my ability."

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