

## **SECTION B SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS**

### **BIA NEW BOARD MEMBER ORIENTATION**

In order that newly appointed Board members may cast informed votes and function effectively as board members, the Board and Director will extend to them the fullest measures of courtesy and cooperation, and will make every reasonable effort to assist newly appointed Board members in understanding the Board's functions, policies, procedures and current issues.

- A. In the interim between a new member's appointment and his/her assuming office, the Board, through the Director, will invite newly appointed members to attend meetings, except those held in executive session, and provide newly appointed members with agenda, minutes and reports applicable to those meetings. During the time between appointment and the assumption of office, the status of the future-member remains that of a private citizen and not that of an appointed official.
- B. The Board, through the Director, will provide new members with copies of appropriate publications, such as the Board policy manual, student handbook(s), collective bargaining agreements, and current budget documents.
- C. The Board Chair or Director will remind Board members of their obligation to complete, not later than the 120<sup>th</sup> day after the date of taking the oath of office, training on the requirements of Maine's Freedom of Access Law. The Chair or Director will provide Board members with information regarding available training options. Each Board member shall attest by means of a written or electronic record that he/she has completed the training and provide a copy of such record to the Director's Office. To facilitate documentation of training, the Director will make available to Board members copies of the State's sample Certification of Completion of Freedom of Access Training form.
- D. The Board will encourage new members to attend appropriate orientation and/or boardsmanship workshops. Reimbursement for such activities must be approved in advance by the Board Chair, in consultation with the Director, and is subject to the availability of funds.
- E. The Chair and Director will schedule and arrange for an orientation session for new Board members as soon as practicable after appointment. A reasonable amount of time will be provided for discussion of:
  - 1. The roles and responsibilities of the Board and individual members;
  - 2. Basic operational procedures of the Board;
  - 3. Placement of items on the agenda;
  - 4. The role of committees, subcommittees and advisory committees;

5. How and why executive sessions may be held;
6. What is considered confidential or privileged information;
7. Appropriate responses of an individual member when a request or complaint is made directly to him/her by a student, parent or member of the community;
8. How the Board responds to complaints involving personnel;
9. General information about the school system and its resources;
10. How Board members, in fulfilling their duties, may request information concerning school's operations, finances and personnel;
11. How Board members may make arrangements to visit the school and the protocol for such visits;
12. Protocol for dealing with the media; and
13. Other relevant topics.

All Board members will be invited to the orientation session and encouraged to attend. The orientation is intended to serve as a useful review of basic boardmanship concepts for experienced members, as well as an opportunity to provide information and counsel to new Board members.

Legal Reference: 1 M.R.S.A. § 412

Cross Reference: BIC – Board Member Freedom of Access Law Training

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