



# **Governance Compact**

*Penn-Harris-Madison  
School Corporation*

*Board of School Trustees*

**Revised**  
August 25, 2014

*Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation*

**GOVERNANCE COMPACT**

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*This Compact sets forth the intentions of the Board of School Trustees of the Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation to devote its full energies to its unique governance responsibilities and create an environment in which the Superintendent and other employees of the District know what the community expects of them and vigorously pursues those expectations to the very best of their abilities.*

## I. DISTRICT ENDS

### Mission Statement

- Our mission is to provide an educational environment for students to reach their highest academic achievement. We will prepare them to be responsible, healthy, contributing citizens who have acquired the skills to be lifelong learners ready to adapt to a changing world.

### Vision

- Our curriculum is clearly defined, rigorous, integrated with technology, frequently assessed to reach every student, and supported by innovative teaching strategies.
- Our students are lifelong learners who demonstrate creativity, analytical problem-solving, and are engaged in positive social, emotional and healthy life skills.
- Our school climate is the result of communication and collaboration among the administration, parents, teachers, staff and students. A safe and personalized learning environment in our schools nurtures the whole child.
- Our personnel are highly trained individuals who model innovative best practices in all areas of their job assignment. Continuous opportunities for professional development are provided to support their performance at the highest level.
- Our creative and visionary leadership team exhibits responsible fiscal management that is committed to our mission and is accountable to the community.
- Our corporation seeks to collaborate with the greater Penn-Harris-Madison community in support of our mission.

### Values

- We value learning as a priority and challenge all students to excellence through a continuous improvement model.
- We provide a healthy, safe, respectful and nurturing learning environment.
- We support a continuous professional growth of a quality staff.
- We model a collaborative relationship among students, staff, and parents.
- We value community partnerships.
- We respect the uniqueness of each student.
- We demonstrate fiscal responsibility in support of our mission.

### Goals

- Annually, all students will achieve proficiency in core academic areas as measured by state standards through multiple assessments.
- Annually, all students will demonstrate continuous academic progress through multiple assessments.
- All 10<sup>th</sup> grade students will demonstrate mastery of the proficiencies on the Graduation Qualifying Exam.
- Annually, expenditures will not exceed revenues as measured by the certified budget.

## **Student Profile**

### ***Profile of a Graduate - College and Careers Readiness***

A graduate of Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation schools is expected to acquire the knowledge and skill to:

#### **A. Be an effective communicator who:**

- Reads, comprehends, and analyzes material from a variety of sources.
- Communicates thought and ideas through writing, speaking, and performance.
- Applies active listening skills, seeking first to understand.
- Receives and evaluates information sources across a range of mediums.
- Communicates ideas effectively using a variety of media and the latest technology.
- Recognizes the necessity to tailor communication to meet the needs of an audience both locally and globally.
- Collaborates with others.

#### **B. Be a thoughtful problem-solver who:**

- Uses basic and advanced academic, social, and technological skills to solve problems.
- Thinks critically and creatively.
- Collects, analyzes, and assesses source material as an informed thinker.
- Develops, evaluates, chooses and implements solutions to problems.

#### **C. Be an effective contributor and collaborative team member who:**

- Works cooperatively.
- Resolves disputes constructively.
- Works collaboratively towards a common good, a common challenge, which involves the contribution and exchange of ideas, knowledge or resources to achieve the goal.
- Perceives divergent viewpoints and responds with understanding.
- Treats others with dignity and respect.
- Functions responsibly as a member of a family, a social group and the larger global community.

#### **D. Be a lifelong learner and contributing member of a society who:**

- Seeks learning opportunities throughout life.
- Creates a personal vision and sets attainable goals for achievement.
- Assumes personal and social responsibility for actions.
- Continually acquires new skills necessary for success in the 21st century and the global economy.

#### **E. Be a responsible citizen who:**

- Understands the ideals and responsibilities of the American heritage.
- Is dedicated to democratic values and pursues the common good.
- Upholds legal rights and civic duties.
- Safeguards universal human rights and the dignity of all people.

#### **F. Be a healthy individual who:**

- Pursues a variety of healthy interests and maintains balance among them.
- Demonstrates a commitment to physical and emotional well-being.

- Exhibits self-regulating behavior.
- Confidently pursues his/her full potential.
- Expresses emotion constructively.
- Adapts to life changes.
- Exercises both body and mind.

**G. Be a contemporary learner who:**

- Effectively uses information and communications technology (ICT) and information literacy.
- Learns through digital networks.
- Learns through digital means, such as social networking, ICT (information & communications technology) literacy, technological awareness and simulation.
- Functions in social networks and contributes to the development of social and intellectual capital.

*The Mission Statement, Vision, Values, Goals, and Profile of a Graduate were revised from recommendations agreed upon by the 2005-2006 Continuous Improvement Planning Committee adopted by the P-H-M Board of School Trustees on February 13, 2006. The Profile of a Graduate – College and Careers Readiness was revised as a result of updates in 2013-2014. Revisions to the Governance Compact were adopted on August 25, 2014 to reflect these changes.*

## **Board of School Trustees Governance Compact Goals**

**Goal 1 – Learning being the priority of our schools, Penn-Harris-Madison is accountable for the continuous progress of all students as they work to attain the knowledge and skills outlined in the P-H-M Student Profile of a Graduate.**

**Measurements:** Level Testing, ISTEP+, nationally normed tests, CRT data, Writing Assessments and Portfolios, SAT/ACT scores, AP/honors participation, graduation rates, discipline referrals, participation rates in post high school education, satisfaction ratings on student surveys, and vocational success after high school or college.

**Goal 2 – Resources for learning in the form of programs, personnel, time, materials, equipment, facilities, and training will be assigned on the basis of fulfilling the learning mission of continuous progress for each and every student. This goal will be executed within funding limits.**

**Measurements:** To have a balanced budget as determined by the Board of School Trustees per available revenues and expenditures, state allowed fund transfers, and board approved spend-down of available cash reserves. Referendums as needed to determine community’s limit on funding, and a five-year financial forecast updated annually.

**Goal 3 – Foster customer service and positive public relations.**

**Measurements:** To create an inviting climate in our schools, personalize school experiences for our students, and market a positive image of the school corporation.

## **II. BOARD PROCESSES**

### **Governance**

As the corporate entity charged by law with governing the school district, the Board of Education sits in trust for the entire community. In this essential governance capacity, the Board holds the School District accountable for achieving results for all learners at an appropriate cost, and for avoiding unacceptable choices, conditions and activities.

The Board will seek always to:

1. Govern with a focus on the future, on results, and on continuous improvement;
2. Encourage collective decision making and diversity in viewpoints;
3. Respect the distinction between Board and Superintendent roles, and
4. Pursue rigorous and continual improvement of its capability to define values and vision.

### **The Board Convenes the Community**

As trustee for the community, the Board continually defines, re-defines and articulates district ends to answer the recurring question - “What human needs are to be met, for whom, and at what cost.” *John Carver, Boards That Make a Difference (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990), p. 38.* This task requires the Board to maintain an ongoing two-way conversation with the entire community. The purpose of the conversation is to allow the Board to hear and understand the community’s educational aspirations and desires, to advocate effectively for continuous improvement, and to inform the community of the district’s performance. Evidence that this conversation is taking place will include the following:

1. Stakeholder representation on approved committees;
2. Use of surveys for broader community input as needed;
3. Frequent publication of student achievement data;
4. Frequent publication of progress towards improvement goals.

### **Board Job Description**

The Board of Education represents the public interest in maintaining education programs that best serve the aims of the community and the state. The Board is primarily responsible for determining what the community wants from its public schools and what it is willing to pay.

1. The Board is the link between the School District and the community at-large.
2. The Board will maintain written governing policies that clearly define and describe:
  - a. Board Processes: Specifications for how the board develops, implements and monitors its own work.
  - b. Board-Superintendent Relationship: How authority is delegated and its proper use monitored; the Superintendent's role, authority and accountability.
  - c. Limitations on Executive Authority: Constrains the Superintendent's authority by establishing the boundaries of prudence and ethics within which all executive action must take place.
  - d. Ends: "What human needs are to be met, for whom, and at what cost." *John Carver, Boards That Make a Difference (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990), p. 38.*
3. The Board will assess the Superintendent's performance.
4. Board decisions will be based on clear data, including monitoring information.
5. The Board will adopt a district budget with revenue and spending parameters and a system for monitoring financial performance.
6. The Board will assess its own performance.  
*Also see: Board Policy 0121, Board Authority and Board Policy 0122, Board Powers*

### **President's Role and Level of Authority**

1. In addition to the duties and responsibilities imposed upon the office by state law, the President of the Board of School Trustees is empowered by the Board to ensure that Board behavior is consistent with its own rules and those legitimately imposed upon it by law. Specifically, the President will strive to ensure that:
  - a. The Board will deal only with those issues, which according to Board policy, clearly belong to the Board to decide, not those falling within the purview of the Superintendent.
  - b. Deliberations will be fair, open, and thorough, as well as efficient, timely, orderly, and to the point.
2. The authority of the President is limited to making decisions that fall within the topics covered by the Board's policies on Board Process and Board-Superintendent Relationship, except where the Board specifically delegates portions of this authority to others.
  - a. The President is empowered to chair Board meetings within the rules of order adopted by the Board and the commonly accepted duties of that position (e.g., ruling on motions, recognizing speakers).
  - b. In the absence of specific Board directions to the contrary, neither the President nor any other member of the Board has authority to alter Board policy or to supervise or direct the Superintendent.
  - c. The President may represent the Board to outside parties in announcing Board-stated positions, decisions and interpretations.
  - d. The President may delegate this authority, but remains accountable for its use.

### **Committees**

The Board may choose to have committees of the Board.

Board committees are distinguished from committees created under the authority of the Superintendent, regardless of whether Board members sit on the committee. The only Board committees are those which are created by the Board, responsible to the Board and which meet standards set forth below:

1. Board committees will be used sparingly and ordinarily in an ad hoc capacity. Board committees, when used, will be designed to reinforce the wholeness of the Board's job and so as never to interfere with the Superintendent's delegated authority. Unless otherwise provided in Board policy, a committee ceases to exist as soon as its task is complete.
2. Board committees are advisory only and may not make decisions, take or authorize staff action, or substitute for the full Board's deliberative process on any decision or action to come before the Board.

3. Board committees are to help the Board do its job, not to help or advise the staff. Committees ordinarily will assist the Board by preparing policy alternatives and implications for Board deliberation. In keeping with the Board's broader focus, Board committees will normally not have direct dealings with current staff operations.
4. Board committees may not speak or act for the Board except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. Expectations and authority will be carefully stated in order not to conflict with authority delegated to the Superintendent.
5. Board committees cannot exercise authority over staff. Because the Superintendent works for the full Board, he or she will not be required to obtain approval of a Board committee before an executive action.
6. Board committees are to avoid over-identification with organizational parts rather than the whole. Therefore, a Board committee which has helped the Board create a policy will not be used to monitor organizational performance on that policy.

*Also see: Board Policy 0155, Committees*

### **Board Meeting Agendas**

The Board will develop and follow an annual agenda which (a) completes an annual re-exploration of ends policies and (b) continually improves Board performance through continuing education and attention enriched input and deliberation.

The Superintendent and the Board President will construct meeting agendas that provide an orderly method of conducting Board business. All members of the Board are invited to place items of appropriate Board work on the agenda. The Board may vote to remove an item from the agenda that it deems not to be appropriate Board work.

The Board will develop and publicize reasonable rules for members of the public to address the Board.

*Also see: Board Policy 0167.3, Public Participation at Board Meetings*

Every Board policy adopted by the Board shall be promptly included in the written Board policy manual.

*Also see: Board Policy 0166, Agenda*

### **Board Member Code of Ethics**

Each member of the Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation ascribes to the following code of ethics of the ISBA:

A school board member should honor the high responsibility, which his membership demands:

- BY thinking always in terms of "children first."
- BY understanding that the basic function of the school board member is "policy-making" and not "administrative," and by accepting the responsibility of learning to discriminate intelligently between these two functions.
- BY accepting the responsibility along with his fellow board members of seeing that the maximum of facilities and resources is provided for the proper functioning of schools.
- BY refusing to "play politics" in either the traditional partisan, or in any petty sense.
- BY representing at all times the entire school community.
- BY accepting the responsibility of becoming well informed concerning the duties of board members, and the proper functions of public schools.
- BY recognizing responsibility as a State official to seek the improvement of education throughout the State.

A school board member should respect this relationship with other members of the Board:

- BY recognizing that authority rests only with the board in official meetings, and that the individual member has no legal status to bind the board outside of such meetings.
- BY recognizing the integrity of his predecessors and associates and the merit of their work.
- BY refusing to make statements or promises as to how he will vote on any matter which should properly come before the board as a whole.



- BY making decisions only after all facts bearing on a question have been presented and discussed.
- BY respecting the opinion of others and by graciously conforming to the principle of “majority rule.”
- BY refusing to participate in irregular meetings such as “secret” or executive sessions which are not properly announced and which all members have not been properly notified.

A school board member should maintain desirable relations with the superintendent of schools and his staff:

- BY striving to procure, when the vacancy exists, the best professional leader available for the head administrative post.
- BY giving the superintendent full administrative authority for properly discharging his professional duties, and also by holding him responsible for acceptable results.
- BY acting only upon the recommendation of the superintendent in matters of employment or dismissal of school personnel.
- BY having the superintendent present at all meetings of the board except when his contract and salary are under consideration.
- BY referring all complaints to the proper administrative office and by discussing them only at a regular meeting or properly announced executive session after failure of administrative solution.
- BY striving to provide adequate safeguards around the superintendent and other staff members to the end that they can live happily and comfortably in the community and discharge their educational functions on a thoroughly professional basis.
- BY presenting personal criticism of any employee directly to the superintendent.

A school board member should meet his responsibility to his community:

- BY attempting to appraise fairly both the present and future educational needs of the community.
- BY insisting that all school business transactions be on an open, ethical and above-board basis.
- BY vigorously seeking adequate financial support for the schools.
- BY refusing to use his position on a school board in any way whatsoever for personal gain or personal prestige.
- BY refusing to discuss personnel matters or any other confidential business of the board in his home, on the street or in his office.
- BY winning the community’s confidence that all is being done in the best interests of school children.

*Also see: Board Policy 0144.2, Board Member Ethics*

### **Process for Addressing Board Member Violations**

The Board and its individual members are committed to faithful compliance with the provisions of the Board’s policies. In the event of a member’s violation of policy, the Board will seek remedy by the following process:

1. First, conversation in a private setting between the offending member, the Board president, and one other board member. In the event the Board President is the offending member, the Board Vice-President will hold the meeting with one other board member present;
2. Second, discussion in a Board self-evaluation between the offending member and the full Board with a member of the ISBA mutually agreed upon third party.

### **Board Member Development**

Individual Board member development opportunities, which ensure good governance and model life-long learning, will be equally available to all Board members. Board members are encouraged to take advantage of development opportunities. The Board will provide new Board member orientation in addition to those opportunities provided by the Superintendent and outside sources. (Reference *Carver Guides to Policy Governance* and *Key Work of School Board*)

### **Board Self-Evaluation**

The School Board will conduct an annual self-evaluation (no later than May 31 of each year).

### **Emergency Superintendent Succession**

In order to protect the Board in the event of sudden loss of Superintendent services, the Superintendent shall assure that no fewer than one other staff member is familiar with Board and Superintendent issues and processes and is capable of assuming Superintendent responsibilities on an interim basis, should unexpected need arise. This person shall be identified by the Superintendent by July 1 of each year.

## **III. BOARD/STAFF RELATIONSHIP**

### **Board/Superintendent Relationship**

The Board employs one person - the Superintendent - and that person works only for the Board and is held accountable for the performance of the entire district. The Board delegates authority to the Superintendent to pursue district ends. The Board/Superintendent relationship is based on mutual respect for their complementary roles.

Only decisions made by formal Board action are binding on the Superintendent.

1. Decisions or instructions of individual Board members, officers, or committees are not binding on the Superintendent except in rare instances when the Board has specifically authorized such exercise of authority.
2. In the case of Board members or committees requesting information or assistance without Board authorization, the Superintendent may ask for a board review of requests that require, in the Superintendent's opinion, a material amount of staff time or resources or that are disruptive or unreasonable.

*Also see: Board Policy 0156, Board-Staff Communications*

### **Board/Other Staff Relationship/Accountability of the Superintendent**

The Superintendent is the Board's only link to the operational organization of the school district; all authority and accountability of staff, as far as the Board is concerned, is considered to be the responsibility of the Superintendent.

1. The Board will never give instructions to any employee other than the Superintendent.
2. Except as required by law, the Board will refrain from evaluating any staff other than the Superintendent. On all other personnel matters brought before it in compliance with the law, the Board will expect recommendations for action from the Superintendent.
3. The Board will monitor evaluation processes and other personnel practices to ensure compliance with legal requirements and Board policies.

*Also see: Board Policy 0156, Board-Staff Communications*

### **Monitoring Superintendent Performance**

Superintendent job performance will be monitored systematically and rigorously against the Board's specified expectations of the Superintendent — organizational accomplishment of the Board's Ends and organizational operation within the boundaries established in the Board's Limitations on the Superintendent's authority.

The Board will view organizational accomplishment of the Board's Ends policies and compliance with the Board's Limitations on the Superintendent's authority as successful Superintendent performance.

1. Monitoring will assess the degree to which Board policies and goals are being carried out. Information that does not contribute to this purpose is not considered monitoring data.
2. The Board will acquire monitoring data on Ends and Means Limitations policies by one or more of three methods:
  - a. By internal report, through which the Superintendent reports compliance and accomplishments to the Board
  - b. By external review through which a party selected by the Board assesses compliance and accomplishments with Board policies and goals

- c. By direct Board inspection, through which the Board assesses compliance with the appropriate policy criteria and goal attainment.
3. The standard for compliance shall be whether the Superintendent has made a reasonable interpretation of the Board policy and goals being monitored. The Board will make the final determination as to whether a Superintendent interpretation is reasonable.
4. All policies and goals, which instruct the Superintendent, will be monitored at a frequency and by a method chosen by the Board. The Board may monitor any policy at any time by any method, but ordinarily will depend on a schedule and method as adopted by the Board.

The Board appointed Policy Liaison representative will meet with the Superintendent to review sections of the policy manual according to a Board adopted schedule. Recommended changes will be brought to the Board for review and amendments.

In conjunction with the conclusion of the Board's annual planning cycle, the Board will conduct a formal summative evaluation of the Superintendent. The summative evaluation will be based upon data derived during the year from monitoring Board policies and goals on Ends and Means Limitations. A written composite evaluation document will be prepared by the Board. The Superintendent will have the opportunity to review the document before meetings with the Board in executive session. The report will be signed by the Superintendent and the Board President.

The evaluation document will consist of:

- a. A summary of the data derived throughout the year from monitoring the Board's policies and goals on Ends and Means Limitations
- b. Conclusions relative to whether each end has been achieved or whether reasonable progress has been made toward its achievement
- c. Conclusions relative to whether the Superintendent has properly operated within the boundaries established in the Means policies
- d. When necessary, an improvement plan addressing any insufficient progress toward meeting the ends
- e. When necessary, an improvement plan addressing any deficiencies in operation within the boundaries of the Means Limitations policies
- f. A summary of the Superintendent's strengths and weaknesses relative to achievement of the Ends policies and operation within the boundaries established in the Means Limitations policies

All employment decisions regarding the Superintendent remain within the sole and continuing discretion of the Board.

## **IV. MEANS LIMITATIONS**

### **Adherence to Values**

All actions of the Superintendent and his/her staff are expected to be made with respect to articulated School District values (adopted from the February 2006 Continuous Improvement Planning Committee):

- We value learning as a priority and challenge all students to excellence through a continuous improvement model.
- We provide a healthy, safe, respectful and nurturing learning environment.
- We support a continuous professional growth of a quality staff.
- We model a collaborative relationship among students, staff, and parents.
- We value community partnerships.
- We respect the uniqueness of each student.
- We demonstrate fiscal responsibility in support of our mission.

### **Limitations on the Superintendent's Discretion**

The Superintendent shall not cause or knowingly condone any practice, activity, decision or organizational circumstance which is either imprudent, illegal, or in violation of commonly accepted business and professional ethics.

1. With respect to interactions with students, parents, and community members, the Superintendent shall not cause or knowingly condone conditions, procedures, or decisions which are unsafe, disrespectful, undignified, unnecessarily intrusive, or which fail to provide appropriate confidentiality and privacy.
2. Budgeting any fiscal period or the remaining part of any fiscal period shall not deviate materially or compromise from Board Ends priorities, risk fiscal jeopardy or fail to be derived from a multi-year plan.
3. The Board will not be uninformed. Information and advice to the Board will have no significant gaps in either timeliness, completeness or accuracy.
4. Assets, including facilities, may not be unprotected, inadequately maintained or unnecessarily risked.
5. No compensation and benefits for employees, consultants, contract workers, and volunteers shall be established which are not internally consistent and externally comparable.

#### **Treatment of Staff**

With respect to treatment of staff, the Superintendent shall not operate without written personnel procedures which clarify personnel rules, comply with applicable laws and provide for effective handling of grievances, as appropriate or as required by law or contract.

#### **Educational Equity**

Equal educational opportunities shall be available for all students without regard to race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, ethnicity, language barrier, religious beliefs, physical and mental handicap or disability, economic and social conditions, or actual or potential marital or parental status.

#### **Communication and Counsel to the Board**

The Superintendent shall not fail to give the Board as much information as is necessary to allow Board members to be adequately informed.

This Compact was adopted by the Penn-Harris-Madison Board of School Trustees on the 26th day of June, 2000. It was revised in August 2002 and July 2005, updated in May 2006 as a result of the work of the 2005-2006 Continuous Improvement Planning Committee recommendations, which was board approved on February 13, 2006, and revised again on August 10, 2009 and August 25, 2014.