



MARYSVILLE JOINT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Governance Handbook 2024-2025

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The Marysville Joint Unified School District Governance Handbook, initially developed in 2009, outlines practices and understandings that build and sustain a positive Board-Superintendent relationship and defines a culture of quality, equity, and respect. The Board of Trustees and Superintendent review the Governance Handbook annually.



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I. UNITY OF PURPOSE

The foundation of effective governance is the common focus, core values, and beliefs that governance team members share about children, the district, and public education.

MJUSD Mission:

The Marysville Joint Unified School District, in partnership with our staff, students, their families, and the community, will provide each student with the most appropriate educational opportunities in a safe environment.

MJUSD: Our Vision for the Education of Children:

- All students have the opportunity to experience success within our district and community through alignment and development of programs, facilities, and other resources.
- All students have the opportunity to meet and/or exceed the outcomes established in Board Policy for graduation requirements and grade level promotion/retention standards.
- All students will have multiple ways of learning and demonstrating that they have learned those things required by district graduation requirements and grade level promotion/retention standards.
- Student success is a self-fulfilling process; the more we believe that all students can be successful and the more students experience success, the more success will happen.

MJUSD Core Values:

Student Centered

- Each child in our community deserves a quality education.
- We are investing our time and resources in activities that bring measurable results and value to our students and the communities we serve.

Fiscal Accountability

- We are fiscally accountable with clear expectations and monitoring.

Diversity

- We build strength through diversity. We value the collective backgrounds of all our students and strive to create a receptive environment where students can thrive, contribute, and prosper.

Respect

- We treat all students, their families, and all staff members with fairness, respect, and understanding.

Social Responsibility

- We provide an environment that fosters social responsibility and positive character development.

Shared Commitment to Public Education

- We work together as partners while respecting individual roles in providing the best education to our students.
- Our schools are community centers – we value a connected learning community.



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- All students have the opportunity to access a well-rounded course of studies including programs that prepare them for college and career.

MJUSD Governance Team Priorities:

- Technologically Proficient Students and Staff.
- Successful Implementation of California State Standards.
- Establish and grow strong Career and College Ready Programs.
- Establish and grow strong communication internally and externally with our stakeholders.
- Maintain districtwide Visual and Performing Arts Programs.
- Identify funding sources to maintain and improve our facilities and prepare for future student enrollment increases.

II. ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Governance – A Definition

School district governance is the act of bringing the beliefs, values, and priorities of the community to the Board and incorporating them into the district vision and policies.

There are four components that are essential to effective governance of any organization. Effective governance tenets encompass the basic characteristics and behaviors that enable governance team members to effectively create a climate for excellence in our school district and maintain focus on improved student learning and achievement. The governance responsibilities of the Marysville Joint Unified School District are organized into four elements.

The Four Elements are:

1. Governing as a unified team with a common vision.
2. Governing within the role and responsibilities of the governance team members.
3. Creating and sustaining a positive governance culture.
4. Establishing protocols and procedures to facilitate governance leadership.

III. EFFECTIVE TRUSTEES

Four Essential Conditions of an Effective Trustee:

Mindfulness

- Represent **all** of the students.
- Be respectful, open, and considerate of other people's viewpoints.
- Seek common ground.
- One person on a body that has collective authority.

Focus

- Students are the priority.
- Maintain attention on the agreed upon district core values, vision, and goals.



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Preparation

- Review all background information, do our homework.
- When there are questions, contact the Superintendent prior to the Board meeting to allow time to research the answer.

Manner

- Treat everyone with courtesy and respect.
- Be considerate of staff and fellow Board members' time.

IV. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT

The governance team established the role and responsibilities of the Board and Superintendent based on the following Board bylaws and policies:

BB 9000 – Role of the Board (see page 6)

BB 9200 – Limits of Board Member Authority (see page 7)

BP 2000 – Concepts and Roles Administration (see page 8)

BP 2110 – Duties and Responsibilities of the Superintendent (see page 9)

The Role and Responsibilities of the MJUSD Board:

The Board, as the unit of authority over the district, acts as a whole to provide leadership and citizen oversight of the school district and to employ, evaluate, and provide support to the Superintendent. The Board is charged with setting direction for the district in order to provide a high quality education to every student, seeing to the development and adoption of policies, maintaining safe and adequate facilities, and ensuring that the district is financially responsible.

The Role and Responsibilities of the MJUSD Superintendent:

The Superintendent, as the only direct employee of the Board, works with the Board to provide leadership to the district and supports the Board's ability to govern responsibly. The Superintendent sees that Board Policy and Board direction is implemented, manages the instructional and non-instructional operations of the district, makes decisions based in law and Board Policy, develops a responsible administrative structure, and works with staff to develop action plans that will achieve the district vision and goals for student success.



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Marysville Joint USD Board Bylaw 9000 Role of The Board

Board Bylaws

BB 9000

The Board of Trustees has been elected by the community to provide leadership and citizen oversight of the district. The Board shall ensure that the district is responsive to the values, beliefs, and priorities of the community.

The Board shall work with the Superintendent to fulfill its major responsibilities, which include:

1. Setting the direction for the district through a process that involves the community, parents/guardians, students, and staff and is focused on student learning and achievement
2. Establishing an effective and efficient organizational structure for the district by:
 - a. Employing the Superintendent and setting policy for hiring of other personnel.
 - b. Overseeing the development and adoption of policies.
 - c. Establishing academic expectations and adopting the curriculum and instructional materials.
 - d. Establishing budget priorities and adopting the budget.
 - e. Providing safe, adequate facilities that support the district's instructional program.
 - f. Setting parameters for negotiations with employee organizations and ratifying collective bargaining agreements.
3. Providing support to the Superintendent and staff as they carry out the Board's direction by:
 - a. Establishing and adhering to standards of responsible governance.
 - b. Making decisions and providing resources that support district priorities and goals.
 - c. Upholding board policies.
 - d. Being knowledgeable about district programs and efforts in order to serve as effective spokespersons.
4. Ensuring accountability to the public for the performance of the district's schools by:
 - a. Evaluating the Superintendent and setting policy for the evaluation of other personnel.
 - b. Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of policies.
 - c. Serving as a judicial (hearing) and appeals body in accordance with law, Board policies, and negotiated agreements.
 - d. Monitoring student achievement and program effectiveness and requiring program changes as necessary.
 - e. Monitoring and adjusting district finances.
 - f. Monitoring the collective bargaining process.



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5. Providing community leadership and advocacy on behalf of students, the district's educational program, and public education in order to build support within the local community and at the state and national levels

The Board is authorized to establish and finance any program or activity that is not in conflict with, inconsistent with, or preempted by law. (Education Code 35160)

Marysville Joint USD Board Bylaw 9200 Limits Of Board Member Authority

Board Bylaws

BB 9200

The Board of Trustees recognizes that the Board is the unit of authority over the district and that a Board member has no individual authority. Board members shall hold the education of students above any partisan principle, group interest, or personal interest.

Unless agreed to by the Board as a whole, individual members of the Board shall not exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools or command the services of any school employee. Individual Board members shall submit requests for information to the Superintendent. Board members shall refer Board-related correspondence to the Superintendent for forwarding to the Board or for placement on the Board's agenda, as appropriate.

Individual Board members do not have the authority to resolve complaints. Any Board member approached directly by a person with a complaint should refer the complainant to the Superintendent or designee so that the problem may receive proper consideration and be handled through the appropriate district process.

A Board member whose child is attending a district school should be aware of his/her role as a Board member when interacting with district employees about his/her child. Because his/her position as a Board member may inhibit the performance of school personnel, the Board member should inform the Superintendent or designee before volunteering in his/her child's classroom.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide a copy of the state's open meeting laws (Brown Act) to each Board member and to anyone who is elected to the Board but has not yet assumed office.

Board members and persons elected to the Board who have not yet assumed office are responsible for complying with the requirements of the Brown Act. (Government Code 54952.1)



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Marysville Joint USD Board Policy 2000 Concepts And Roles

Administration

BP 2000

The Board of Education recognizes that district administration performs essential roles and functions in support of student learning, including the provision of instructional support and services to schools as well as the responsible management of non instructional operations. The Superintendent or designee may make decisions concerning district operations within the parameters of law and Board policy.

The Superintendent shall provide leadership in developing administrative regulations and organizational structures, decision-making processes, and staff action plans that allow the district to fulfill its vision and goals. The Board also expects the Superintendent to help shape the culture and environment of the district in a manner that focuses district operations on enhancing student achievement, encourages positive relationships within the community, and instills confidence in district schools.

The Board and Superintendent shall work together as a team in the exercise of district governance. The Board and Superintendent shall establish protocols that describe how the governance team will operate, including, but not limited to, agreements regarding Board meeting operations and communications between the Superintendent and the Board.

Because the Superintendent is the only district employee who is directly selected and evaluated by the Board, the Board has a responsibility to ensure that the Superintendent possesses the skills and attributes that best meet the needs of the district.

The Board and Superintendent shall agree upon a system for evaluating the Superintendent, including the evaluation criteria, method, evaluation instrument, process, and timeline.

The Superintendent may delegate to other district staff any duties imposed upon him/her by the Board. This delegation shall not relieve the Superintendent of responsibility for actions taken by his/her designees.



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Marysville Joint USD Board Policy 2110 Superintendent Responsibilities And Duties

Administration

BP 2110

The Board of Education desires to establish a productive working relationship with the Superintendent and to ensure that the work of the Superintendent is focused on student learning and achievement and the attainment of the district's vision and goals. The Board also desires to provide a fair basis for holding the Superintendent accountable. The responsibilities of the Superintendent are detailed in law, in the Superintendent's contract, and throughout Board policies and administrative regulations.

The Board shall clarify expectations and goals for the Superintendent at the beginning of each evaluation year.

As the Chief Executive Officer of the District, the Superintendent shall implement all Board decisions and manage the instructional and non instructional operations of the schools. The Superintendent also serves as a member of the district's governance team and is responsible for supporting Board operations and decision-making.

The Superintendent may delegate any of his/her responsibilities and duties to other district staff, but he/she remains accountable to the Board for all areas of operation under the Superintendent's authority.

V. PERFORMING GOVERNANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Five Responsibilities of School Boards:

Set the direction for the community's schools

- Assess needs and establish multi year goals that focus on student learning.
- Establish the plan through policy and procedures.
- Ensure an appropriate inclusive process is used.
- Ensure these documents are the driving force for all district efforts.

Establish an effective and efficient structure for the school district.

- Employ the Superintendent and set policy for hiring of other personnel.
- Oversee the development of and adopt policies, administrative regulations, and procedures.
- Establish budget priorities, adopt the budget, and oversee facilities issues.

Provide support through our behavior and actions

- Act with professional demeanor.
- Support and model the district's mission and vision.
- Communicate effectively.
- Uphold district policies approved by the Board.

Ensure accountability to the public

- Evaluate the Superintendent.



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- Monitor, review, and revise policies.
- Monitor student achievement and program effectiveness.
- Monitor and review the district goals.

Demonstrate community leadership

- Speak with a common voice about district priorities, goals, and issues.
- Engage and involve the community in district schools and activities.
- Communicate clear information about policies, programs, and fiscal conditions.
- Educate the community about the issues facing the district and public education.
- Advocate for children, district programs, and public education to the general public, community leaders and local, state, and national leaders.

VI. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES

To effectively meet district challenges, the Board and Superintendent must function together as a governance leadership team. The governance protocols were developed to support and promote the effectiveness of the governance team and to ensure a positive and productive working relationship among Board members, the Superintendent, district staff, students, and the community. The protocols were developed for and by the members of the governance team and may be modified over time as needed.

Protocols to Facilitate Governance Leadership:

Issue	Values	Protocol
Individual Requests for Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Equal access to information ● Wise use of resources ● Mindful of staff workload ● Respectful of people’s time 	<p>The ability to make informed decisions is critical to Board effectiveness. In order to be responsive to requests, use staff time efficiently and effectively. To determine how best to provide information to all, Board members will direct all requests for information through the Superintendent or the designee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Board must approve requests for information that take more than 30 minutes. ● The district administration will prepare and distribute the requested information to all Trustees. ● Time sensitive information may be the exception to this protocol.
Individual Requests for Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Authority lies with the Board majority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Authority to direct action rests with the Board of Trustees when seated at a regular or special Board meeting. ● Direction to staff must come from the consensus of the Board or majority vote.
Agenda questions answered before a meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wise decisions ● Being prepared ● No surprises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Board packet will be available to all Board members four calendar days before the Board Meeting. ● Board members agree to communicate with the Superintendent. All questions begin at the Superintendent



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		<p>Level and all answers will be shared with the entire Board. Questions or clarification on items in the Board meeting packet are sent to the Superintendent as early as possible prior to the Board meeting (Monday afternoons are preferred). The Superintendent will use judgment as to whether this information will be distributed to all Trustees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To the best of each Board member’s ability, she/he agrees to provide the Superintendent with a ‘heads up’ about questions they plan to ask at a Board meeting.
Issue	Values	Protocol
Attendance at Board Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respectful of Board and staff time Informed decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board members agree to notify the Superintendent in advance if they are unable to attend a Board meeting. When a meeting is missed, Board members will take responsibility to be informed about information shared and decisions made during the missed Board meeting. They will review materials, listen to the Board meeting tape, and seek answers to their questions prior to the next scheduled Board meeting.
Using Meetings as Strategic Leadership Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic leadership Informed discussions 	<p>The manner in which a Board conducts itself influences the way staff, community, media, and others view the effectiveness and integrity of the Board. Well-run efficient meetings are conducive to a feeling of trust and confidence and provide opportunities to demonstrate strategically moving the district forward and making progress on district goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The governance team will seek opportunities to showcase and thank employees and community partners at Board meetings. All staff Board reports will explicitly describe how the strategies, actions, and successes relate to the district goals. Background materials and pre-written materials for staff presentations will be distributed in the Board packet whenever possible. Board members will review all distributed materials prior to the meeting.
Role of the Board President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board President has no more authority than other Trustees 	<p>The Board President:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitates the Board meeting maintaining order and seeking public input as appropriate. Ensures all Board members have an opportunity to participate equally during Board meetings. Facilitates or delegates the compilation of the Superintendent’s annual performance evaluation.
Bringing up New Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain focus on the district plan Growth, innovation, and improvement 	<p>Board members value opportunities to share best practices and innovative strategies for moving the district forward. The governance team agrees to a process that will support bringing forward new ideas while maintaining the focus on district goals.</p>



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees may contact the Superintendent with new ideas or present new ideas in the Board comment section at Board meetings. New ideas will generally be held for consideration during the district annual goal setting process.
Issue	Values	Protocol
Allowing majority vote to set the direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> United governance team Listen openly Professional support for the majority Respect for minority opinion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board members have a responsibility to express themselves in a professional manner, whether in agreement or disagreement with the Board majority. Board members agree to respect the Board decision, to remind the public that a Trustee is one of seven, that the majority has voted, and they will move forward together. Board members will not sabotage or undermine the Board decisions.
Annual Goal Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established planning processes Clear expectations and direction Reflective of current needs 	<p>Critical to our governance work is decision-making that promotes clarity of direction, focus, and alignment, and identifies outcomes, and focuses on results.</p> <p>The goal setting workshop will coincide with the evaluation of the Superintendent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May/June - the Board will annually schedule a goal setting workshop/study session to reach an agreement on annual and multiyear district goals. The workshop will include opportunities to incorporate discussion about new initiatives and direction for the district. This discussion is a two-way conversation to review results and to reach agreement on future direction.
Scheduling Study Sessions and Discussion Meetings (open session)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open communication Open discussion and dialogue 	<p>Study sessions and discussion meetings provide time for full Board discussion of district and Board business and to discuss and understand the short and long-term issues and challenges facing the district. The topics are usually those where additional discussion and education is needed to make important decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually, and as needed, the Board will schedule study sessions/discussion meetings linked to the district goals. Study sessions/discussion meetings will focus on one issue to allow for deeper thinking. Study sessions/forums will be scheduled annually or as needed to gather representative opinions and perspectives and expand input on topics key to the educational quality of the school district. Trustees will make every attempt to attend study sessions. When unable to attend the study session, Trustees will review the notes and the tape recording from the sessions.



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Issue	Values	Protocol
Confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust of the community, Board members, and district staff 	<p>The responsibility of the Board includes being privy to confidential information about district litigation, personnel, negotiations, Superintendent evaluation, or other issues permitted under the Brown Act.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will maintain the public’s trust by not breaching confidentiality. We agree that discussions in closed session will stay in closed session. The Board president will remind all Trustees of confidentiality especially related to personnel issues. If we inadvertently or accidentally violate a confidential issue, we will take immediate responsibility for our action.
Visiting Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees are visible Demonstration of Board support No surprises 	<p>Site visits provide Trustees with the opportunity to show appreciation and recognize staff for their work. School site visits are encouraged.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a professional courtesy, Trustees will call ahead to schedule a convenient time with the site principal prior to visiting classrooms during instructional time. Trustees will always sign in at the school site and wear district photo identification before going on campus. Trustees will share any issues or concerns with the Superintendent.
Handling Complaints from Staff and the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible as a resource Open communication and timely resolution of issues Eyes and ears in the community Ambassadors Confidence in the Superintendent and staff 	<p>The Board wishes to be accessible, consistent, and fair in dealings with complaints and concerns from staff and the community. When approached with an issue or concern that is outside of the formal complaint process, Trustees agree to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen openly, being careful to remain neutral. Remind staff and the community that no individual Trustee has the authority to solve the issue. Encourage addressing this with the person who can most directly help them with their concern (e.g., teacher, principal, Superintendent). Trustees will inform the person complaining that the Superintendent has an open door policy. Trustees will notify the Superintendent of the issue or concern, as appropriate. If Trustees hear about something in the community, they will want the information from the Superintendent first in order to be informed and educated in how to respond.



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Issue	Values	Protocol
<p>Orienting New Board Members</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge about roles and responsibility ● Commitment to a cohesive unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Board and Superintendent will schedule an orientation session for newly elected Board members as soon after the election as possible. District staff will be involved in the orientation as appropriate. Items for review and discussion will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Board’s goals and objectives/Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) (available online: www.mjUSD.com) ● Governance Handbook ● Board Bylaws (Series 9000 of the Policy book). ● Board agreements (norms and protocols). ● Superintendent’s Goals. ● The Board President will share responsibility for orienting new members with the Superintendent.
<p>Self-monitoring of Governance Team Effectiveness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strengthening the effectiveness of the governance team 	<p>The Board supports continuous improvement through ongoing evaluation of governance effectiveness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Board will annually schedule a meeting to review governance team agreements and processes and to participate in a self-evaluation process. This meeting will provide time to reflect, evaluate, and focus on strengthening the governance practices. ● The Board may identify one or two annual governance goals focused on strengthening the governance team’s performance.