Governance Handbook
2014-2015

Adopted by the Lompoc Unified School District Board of Education:
October 28, 2014

Governance Team

Board of Trustees:
- Greg Doyle, Board President
- Bill Christen, Trustee
- Carmela D. Kessler, Trustee
- Henry Gallina, Trustee
- Steve Straight, Trustee

Superintendent:
- Trevor McDonald, Superintendent
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About the Lompoc Unified School District Board of Education:

The Board of Education for the Lompoc USD is a five-member Board of Directors for an $80 million corporation charged with the most important work occurring in the United States today: **educating our youth.**

Board members are elected, (or appointed), to fulfill four-year terms and are responsible to 60,000 “shareholders”, *(citizens, voters, community members)*, within our community.

The Governance Team, *(Board and Superintendent)*, assume responsibility for 9,800 students per year during a 14-year, *(Transitional Kindergarten through twelfth grade)*, education process.

Our students are not required to begin with us in Kindergarten, nor are they required to remain with us through the twelfth grade.

We oversee the education of students who speak more than nine primary languages, *(other than English)*, and who come to us with a wide variety of backgrounds and readiness for school.

The Governance Team is responsible for more than 1,200 classified and certificated employees at 16 different facilities that are all maintained by District staff.

We negotiate annually with two employee unions.

The percentage of managers, *(administrators)*, to other staff is 5%. Our administrators manage four to five times the number of employees that most private sector executives manage.

The District provides before and after school programs for many of our students through the YMCA and ASES, serves over 6,000 meals to students and staff every day, and provides transportation to and from school daily to 1,788 students.
Lompoc USD Governance Team
Discussion about Public Education in the United States:

Public Education:

- Public education is all about the students
- It is the hope for survival and success of our students in a “global” economy and society
- Free and equal for all
- Fiscal responsibility is in the hands of locally elected officials
- Accountability back to the community who pay the bills
- Survival and accountability are connected
- We are willing to follow leaders to places we might now go by ourselves
- The District commits to fulfilling the “promise” behind the principles of public education

Lompoc USD Governance Team Discussion About Effective Governance:

EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE IS ABOUT “TEAMWORK”:

- Everybody has to do his or her part.
- “We should never underestimate the ability of a small group of people to change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.” - Margaret Meade
- We have to value and share everyone’s opinion so we can get a complete vision of the whole.
- It’s important to hear a wide variety of viewpoints in order to make the best, most informed decisions.
The Lompoc USD Board of Education—
General Information

The Board of Education is a group of five elected District residents who set policies under which the District operates and adopt an annual budget. Members serve four-year terms of office; terms are staggered and elections are held every two years. Each year the Board elects its president, vice-president and clerk during the organizational meeting held in December.

The Board, on approval, delegates to the Superintendent authority for all educational, personnel, and business matters related to the District, in accordance with policies adopted by Board, state and federal laws, rules and regulations.

Meetings:

Board meetings are generally held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, (except July, August, November and December) beginning at 5:30 PM in the Education Center Board Room. These are public business meetings, except for closed sessions which are sanctioned by state law for the purpose of discussing matters related to negotiations, personnel, litigation, and other matters specified in Board policy.

Members of the audience have the opportunity to speak on non-agenda items during the "Courtesy to Visitors" section of the agenda, or on agenda items when the item is reached during the meeting and if a "Request to Address the Board" form has been submitted to the executive assistant. Items may be requested to be placed on the meeting’s agenda by contacting the Superintendent’s executive assistant. The agenda is posted 72 hours prior to each regular meeting. Copies of the agenda are available for public review on the website or in the Superintendent’s office on Friday afternoon prior to the regular Tuesday meeting.

All actions of the Board shall be taken only in official Board meetings called, scheduled and conducted according to the by-laws and statutes of the state. Policies will, barring emergencies, be adopted after consideration at two meetings of the Board. The agenda and minutes shall be marked to indicate policy matters. It is understood that the members of the Board have authority only when acting as a Board legally in session.
Unity of Purpose

Lompoc Unified School District

Mission Statement

The Board of Education is committed to District-wide actions which lead students to develop the skills, knowledge and character traits necessary to become responsible, thriving and contributing members of society.

Board of Education Goals:

1. Maximize the academic achievement of all students as evidenced by assessment data corresponding to programs that have been implemented.

2. Develop the capacity of all staff to meet the academic needs of all students.

3. Provide a safe and respectful learning environment for students and staff.

4. Promote effective communication among students, staff, community, and stakeholders
Defining Our Unity of Purpose:

*Items below are some of the many things members of the governance team are proud of and would like to sustain and protect:*

- The dedication of our classified and certificated staff to our students and colleagues
- Hard work of District staff
- Spirit of optimism - “CAN DO!” attitude
- We are a model in many ways for other districts in California and the nation
- The Aquarium at Cabrillo HS – teaching and learning about sea life
- Refocus in District leadership – and the direction of leadership
- We have a sense of rallying around what’s best for kids = “All right – Let’s do it!”
- People who work in Lompoc USD are well-intended and sincerely here to help students.
- There is a collective and unquestionable belief that all students can learn and succeed.
- There is a dedication to improvement of skills of staff – for first year teachers = LATSS
- We are dedicated to educating the whole child – we have very active community members – parents and businesses – who raise money to help us maintain the visual and performing arts.
- Our students and parents are dedicated to our schools and the education system.
- We have cultural support from the community, and representation from all ethnic groups.
- We have a commitment to communication – to reaching all families regardless of language barriers.
What We Want to Accomplish:

- Lompoc USD effectively and truly being a leader in education in California
- **ALL** students graduate from Lompoc USD:
  - Lower drop out rate
  - Eliminate expulsion rate
- Exemplary schools equipped with all that is necessary for students to be successful in the 21st Century
- Lompoc USD as a District with a culture of creativity for students and staff
- Establish 21st learning environments and programs
- Outside organizations become part of the "design" of our schools
Roles and Responsibilities

Citizen oversight of local government is the cornerstone of democracy in the United States. The role of the trustees who sit on locally elected school boards is to ensure school districts are responsive to the values, beliefs and priorities of their communities. Boards fulfill this role by performing five major responsibilities. These are:

1. Setting the direction;
2. Establishing an effective and efficient structure;
3. Creating a supportive environment;
4. Ensuring accountability; and
5. Demonstrating community leadership as advocates for children, the school district and public schools.

These five responsibilities represent core functions that are so fundamental to a school system's accountability to the public that they can only be performed by an elected governing body. Authority is granted to the board as a whole, not to each member individually. Therefore, board members fulfill these responsibilities by working together as a governance team with the superintendent to make decisions that will best serve all the students in the community.

The board carries out these responsibilities in each of the following job areas:

- Setting the District's Direction
- Student Learning and Achievement
- Finance
- Facilities
- Human Resources
- Policy
- Judicial Review
- Collective Bargaining
- Community Relations and Advocacy

The superintendent assists the board in carrying out its responsibilities in each of the job areas, and leads the staff toward the accomplishment of the agreed upon District vision and goals. The following page provides more detail on how the board performs its governance responsibilities in each job area. It's important to remember that boards who inadvertently get involved in staff functions undercut their ability to hold the superintendent accountable for the results of those efforts.

—CSBA
Lompoc USD
Role of the Board

The Governing Board is 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. Involve the community, parents/guardians, students, and staff in developing a common vision for the District that is focused on learning and achievement and responsive to the needs of all students.

2. Providing a basic organizational structure so that the vision, goals and policies of the District can be implemented by:
   a. Employing the Superintendent and setting policy for hiring of other personnel.
   b. Adopt, evaluate and update policies consistent with the law and the District’s vision and goals.
   c. Establishing academic expectations and adopting the curriculum and instructional materials
   d. Adopt a fiscally responsible budget based on the District vision and goals and regularly monitor the fiscal health of the District
   e. Ensure that a safe and appropriate educational environment is provided to all students.
   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.
Lompoc USD
Role of the Board

1. 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. Convene as a judicial and appeals body and serve as the final decision-maker 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.

2. 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)
Performing Governance Responsibilities

The Lompoc USD Governance Team agrees with the responsibilities of school boards as described below by the California School Boards Association:

Set the direction for the community’s schools
- Focus on student learning
- Assess needs/obtain baseline data
- Generate, review or revise setting direction documents (beliefs, vision, priorities, strategic goals, success indicators)
- 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 and support the superintendent
- Establish a human resources framework that includes policies for hiring and evaluating other personnel
- Oversee the development of and adopt policies
- Set a direction for and adopt the curriculum and require data-producing assessment systems
- Establish budget priorities, adopt the budget and oversee facilities issues
- Provide direction for and vote to accept collective bargaining agreements

Create a supportive environment through our behavior and actions
- Act with professional demeanor that models the District’s beliefs and vision
- Make decisions and provide resources that support mutually agreed upon priorities and goals
- Uphold board-approved District policies and support staff implementation of board direction
- Ensure a positive working climate exists
- Be knowledgeable enough about District efforts to explain them to the public

Ensure accountability to the public
- Evaluate the superintendent
- Monitor, review and revise policies
- Serve as a judicial and appeals body
- Monitor student achievement and program effectiveness and require program changes as indicated
- Monitor and adjust District finances and periodically review facilities issues
- Monitor the collective bargaining process

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 condition of the District
- Educate the community and the media about the issues facing students, the District and public education
- Advocate for children, District programs and public education to the general public, key community members and local, state and national leaders
The Governing Board is the unit of authority over the District. Apart from the normal as part of the unit, a Board member has no individual authority. It has broad, but clearly limited powers. The exercise of its authority is restricted to the functions required or permitted by law, and then only when it acts in a legally constituted meeting. Board members shall hold the education of students above any partisan principle, group interest, or personal interest. A Board member cannot do business with this District, nor should a Board member have an interest of any contract with the school district in general. A board member does not represent any factional segment of the community as a whole.

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. The Superintendent or designee shall perform any necessary research associated with the request and report to the Board. Board members shall refer Board related correspondence to the Superintendent or designee for forwarding to the Board or for placement on the Board’s agenda, as appropriate. 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 complaint process.

Board member should understand their role and the programs offered by the District. They should study all agenda materials before the meeting, participate in the discussion of items which come before the Board, vote on motions and resolutions, and abstain only for compelling reasons.

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)

Bylaw LOMPOC UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
adopted: (12/85 5/00 9/05) 3/07
Agreements To Facilitate Governance Leadership

Governance Team Norms and Protocols

The Board of Education for the Lompoc Unified School District is entrusted by the community to uphold the Constitutions of California and the United States, to protect the public interest in schools, and to ensure that a high quality education is provided to each student.

To effectively meet district challenges, the Board and Superintendent must function together as a governance leadership team. Agreed upon behaviors, (or norms), and operating procedures, (or protocols), support consistent behaviors and actions among team members. The purpose of the Lompoc USD governance team agreements is to ensure a positive and productive working relationship among board members, the superintendent, district staff, students, and the community. The agreements were developed for and by the members of the governance team, and may be modified over time as needed.

Our Agreements to Facilitate Governance Leadership:

**NORMS:**
- CSBA Governance Standards
- Lompoc USD Meeting Guidelines
- Governing as a Body with Collective Authority
- Maintaining Confidentiality

**PROTOCOLS:**
- Responding to Concerns or Complaints
- Informing the Superintendent
- Asking Questions, Obtaining Additional Information on Agenda Items
- Bringing Up New Ideas or Agenda Items
- Communicating with Staff Other Than the Superintendent
- Executive Summaries on Staff Reports
- Visiting District Sites

We have reviewed and agree to follow the aforementioned governance team norms and protocols in order to support a positive and productive working relationship among the Lompoc USD Board of Education, staff, students and the community. We shall renew this agreement at the annual governance workshop of the Board of Education.

Affirmed on this 28th day of October, 2014

Greg Doyle, President

Carmela D. Kessler, Trustee

Steve Straight, Trustee

Bill Christen, Trustee

Henry Gallina, Trustee

Trevor McDonald, Superintendent
Positive Governance Team Culture – *(norms)*

The Lompoc USD Board of Education has adopted the CSBA Professional Governance Standards as norms for their behavior as individual trustees and as a Board of Education:

CSBA Professional Governance Standards

The California School Boards Association (CSBA), representing nearly 1,000 local school districts and county boards of education, recognizes there are certain fundamental principles involved in governing responsibly and effectively. These principles—or Professional Governance Standards—reflect consensus among hundreds of board members, superintendents and other educational leaders throughout the state.

These professional Governance Standards describe the three components vital to effective school governance:

1. the attributes of an effective individual trustee
2. the attributes of an effective governing board, and
3. the specific jobs the board performs in its governance role.

The intent of these standards is to enhance the public’s understanding about the critical responsibilities of local boards and to support boards in their efforts to govern effectively.

1. The Individual Trustee

In California’s public education system, a trustee is a person elected or appointed to serve on a school district or county board of education. Individual trustees bring unique skills, values, and beliefs to their board. In order to govern effectively, individual trustees must work with each other and the superintendent to ensure that a high quality education is provided to each student.

To be effective an individual trustee:

- Keeps learning and achievement for all students as the primary focus.
- Values, supports and advocates for public education.
- Recognizes and respects differences of perspective and style on the board and among staff, students, parents, and the community.
- Acts with dignity, and understands the implications of demeanor and behavior.
- Keeps confidential matters confidential.
- Participates in professional development and commits the time and energy necessary to be an informed and effective leader.
- Understands the distinctions between board and staff roles and refrains from performing management functions that are the responsibility of the superintendent and staff.
- Understands that authority rests with the board as a whole and not with individuals.
2. The Board
School districts and county offices of education are governed by boards, not by individual trustees. While understanding their separate roles, the board and superintendent work together as a "governance team". This assumes collective responsibility for building unity and creating a positive organizational culture in order to govern effectively.

To operate effectively, the board must have a unity of purpose and:
- Keep the District focused on learning and achievement for all students.
- Communicate a common vision.
- Operate openly, with trust and integrity.
- Govern in a dignified and professional manner, treating everyone with civility and respect.
- Govern within board-adopted policies and procedures.
- Take collective responsibility for the board's performance.
- Periodically evaluate its own effectiveness.
- Ensure opportunities for the diverse range of views in the community to inform board deliberations.

3. The Board’s Jobs:
The primary responsibilities of the board are to set a direction for the District, provide a structure by establishing policies, ensure accountability and provide community leadership on behalf of the District and public education. To fulfill these responsibilities, there are a number of specific jobs that effective boards must carry out.

Effective Boards:
- Involve the community, parents, students, and staff in developing a common vision for the District focused on learning and achievement and responsive to the needs of all students.
- Adopt evaluate and update policies consistent with the law and the District’s vision and goals.
- Maintain accountability for student learning by adopting the District curriculum and monitoring student progress.
- Hire and support the superintendent so that the vision, goals, and policies of the District can be implemented.
- Conduct regular and timely evaluations of the superintendent based on the vision, goals and performance of the District, and ensure that the superintendent holds District personnel accountable.
- Adopt a fiscally responsible budget based on the District’s vision and goals, and regularly monitor the fiscal health of the District.
- Ensure that a safe and appropriate educational environment is provided to all students.
- Establish a framework for the District’s collective bargaining process and adopt responsible agreements.
- Provide community leadership on educational issues and advocate on behalf of students and public education at the local, state and federal levels.
Lompoc USD Meeting Guidelines

We agree to:

- Keep our focus on the best interest of our students (by law - where our focus should be).
- Wait to speak until someone else is finished speaking.
- Maintain confidentiality on all confidential issues.
- Stay focused on our goals and avoid getting sidetracked.
- Be respectful of differences.
- Be concise and to the point in our remarks.
- Be prepared - and call ahead with questions.

Operating as a Governing Body with Collective Authority:

(ACSBA Sample)

We Agree...

- All board members are equal under the law, and authority rests with the board as a whole, not with individual members of the board.
- Direction is given to the superintendent only at board meetings through formal actions of the board on legally noticed agenda items.
- Individual board members are not "consultants" to either the superintendent or other members of District staff.
- It is important to understand and respect the separate roles of the board and superintendent, yet work together as a "governance team" taking collective responsibility for building unity and creating a positive organizational culture.
- The best possible decisions are likely only when all members of the team have been part of the discussion.
- Everyone can participate productively when team members can trust that everyone is operating within the same parameters.
- We have an obligation to respect staff time and responsibilities. It is important for staff time and effort to be dedicated to moving the District in the direction set by the full board.
- Clarifying our structures and processes for people outside the Governance Team protects individuals, (board members, superintendent, and other staff), and the school district.
Maintaining Confidentiality:
*(CSBA Sample)*

*We agree:*

- The community has placed its trust in the Board of Education to protect the public’s interest in the public schools. Board members are entrusted with information that by law may not be shared because of the potential for harm to people or the school district.

- Breaching confidentiality undercuts our trust in each other, and may lead to a narrowing of the information we receive about important issues.

- Breaching confidentiality may encroach on the personal rights of others, and ultimately divert resources from the education of our students.

- Topics, issues or situations discussed in closed session will not to be shared with anyone who was not in that session.

- We will self-monitor and commit to retaining confidentiality of closed session and other confidential items.
Supportive Structures and Processes (*protocols*)

Responding to Community or Staff Concerns or Complaints:

**PROTOCOL:**
- We will use active listening skills when approached by a member of the community or staff with questions or concerns.
- We will consider our Judicial Review responsibility, staff and student confidentiality rights, and/or due process issues in order to assess whether the issue is appropriate for us to hear at this time.
- We will utilize the 6 R's to ensure that we have actively listened to our constituents:
  - **Receive** – listen to what the person has to say without preparing a response.
  - **Repeat** – paraphrase or ask a question to clarify for understanding. We will ask the person to identify those to whom they have spoken about the matter prior to contacting a board member.
  - **Request** – ask what the person would like the board member to do with the information and/or what they see as a solution to the problem.
  - **Review** – go over the real options available to the person to remedy the situation.
  - **Redirect** – put the person back into the system at the appropriate place – remembering lines of authority and chains of command.
  - **Report** – We will maintain open lines of communication between the board and superintendent and will notify the superintendent of the conversation as soon as possible.
- We will ask the community or staff member to follow-up with us about the issue.

Board Member Communication Processes for Informing the Superintendent About Issues, Concerns or Complaints:

**PROTOCOL:**
- Board members will inform the Superintendent of issues, or concerns brought to their attention by community or staff members.
- Board members may use either email or the telephone to communicate with the superintendent, and will always bear in mind that email might not be an appropriate form of communication based on the sensitivity of the issue or situation.
- The Superintendent will use discretion about how to respond to members of the Board, bearing in mind the sensitivity of the subject matter. Any information provided to one Board member will be provided to all Board members.
Asking Questions of Obtaining Additional Information About Agenda Items:

**PROTOCOL:**

- It is important that all Board members have the same information, and that staff is prepared to answer questions that will be asked at Board Meetings.
- Board members will contact the Superintendent with questions or to obtain additional information about Board Meeting agenda items.
- The Superintendent will determine the best way to provide the answers or additional materials.
- Any information or materials provided to one Board member will be provided to all members.

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Bringing up New Ideas or Agenda Items: *(CSBA Sample)*

**PROTOCOL:**

- A Board member's first step will always be to discuss a new topic or idea with the Superintendent to see how it fits into the ongoing work of the District.
- Individual Board members may bring up a new idea or request a future agenda item by explanation during "Future Agenda Items" at the end of the meeting.
  - The Board President will ask the Superintendent for any comments on the suggested new topic or item.
  - Recognizing that new items added to future agendas could have an impact on staff's ability to meet adopted priorities and District goals, it is the Board's preference that a majority of the Board concur before a new item is added to a Board agenda.
- All new ideas or agenda item topics will be weighed against their effect on staff's ability to accomplish the adopted District vision, mission, and goals.
  - Consideration will include:
    - The impact of the new agenda item or topic on agreed upon District priorities, and goals.
    - The shift of staff time, and energy away from their primary responsibilities relative to achieving District goals.
    - The reallocation of District resources away from agreed upon District priorities and goals.
Board Member Communication With District Staff Other Than the Superintendent:

- The Superintendent is the only employee with a direct relationship to the Board of Education.
- All other District employees are responsible to the Superintendent, through District policies, and the lines of authority and chains of command established within the District.
- Individual Board members have no authority to direct District staff, to request information or materials from them, or to assist staff in the resolution of their concerns or complaints.
- Board members will follow the "Responding to Concerns or Complaints" protocol when a staff member brings up a concern or complaint.

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Executive Summaries on Major Reports to the Board: (CSBA Sample)

PROTOCOL:

Major staff reports to the Board of Education, (for example reports on progress toward District goals, or on issues of significance to the District and/or community), will include an executive summary briefly describing the following topics as appropriate:

- Background and history of the topic
- Relevant facts, data and information about the topic
- The process that was followed
- People who were involved in the development of the recommended plan or action
- Stakeholder interests
- Important aspects of the staff action plan:
  - Necessary resources (people, cost, facilities, materials, etc.)
  - Who will be involved in the implementation
  - Timelines - with the end point
  - Intended results / outcomes
- Options/alternatives that were considered
- Recommendation of the superintendent
- Rationale for the recommendation
Visiting District Sites: *(CSBA Sample)*

**PROTOCOL:**

- Visiting schools and other District sites reminds Board members that student success is our primary focus. We can observe programs that are moving us toward the achievement of our goals, and can show appreciation and recognize people for the good work that they are doing.

- Visiting schools and the District office allows board members to receive input from a wide variety of constituents including classified and certificated staff, parents, students, site level administrators and volunteers.

- The Board respects the busy schedule of staff and the anxiety that can be created by well-meaning, but unannounced visits to schools, the District offices and/or committee meetings. It is important to follow a consistent process that is respectful of both staff and Board member time.

- When visiting District sites we will remember that we are "observers" and not "evaluators" of people or programs. We will consider our visits opportunities to obtain a "moment in time snapshot" of how District goals are being met. Board members will use their visits to learn about District programs, and to hear about classroom, and student successes.

**To Schedule A Site Visit:**

- Contact the principal or the site administrator to schedule a visit;

- Accommodate site staff and principals schedules, offering or requesting choices of times to visit;

- Stop at the office to pick-up the board member's visitors pass and to sign-in, and follow each school's procedure for visitors;

- Reduce anxiety by avoiding frequent visits to only one site;

- Board members might ask staff members questions about opportunities they see, challenges they are facing, and the things they are proud of at the school and or about the work they are doing;

- The focus of our discussions will be on progress toward District goals.