



# Frequently Asked Questions

## **What is the role of a school board member?**

Board members are locally elected at-large, and are non-salaried, public officials. Honor, respect, and satisfaction are the rewards for helping the school district meet the educational needs of our students and our community.

A school board operates as a corporate body, and its primary role is to set policy for the school district. Individual members acting independently have no legal status or authority and cannot commit or bind the board by their actions. The powers and duties of the board must be exercised by the board as a whole. Both in theory and in practice, they are members of a team.

## **Who are those people sitting around the board table?**

Board members change seats on occasion. Also at the board table is Superintendent of Schools. Each year, the SEP Student Council president participates as a non-voting member of the school board. Board secretary for the school district, sits at the board table, as does the board recorder. A copy of the unofficial minutes is posted on the district website.

## **What is the date, time and location of board meetings?**

A Regular board business meetings begin at 5:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at the Central Education Office. The board reserves the first Thursday of the month for special meetings and work sessions, usually held at the Central Education Office. Meeting information is posted to the website.

## **What are “consent agenda” items identified on the agenda by a double asterisk?**

Consent items may be dealt with by one motion for approval unless the item is reserved by request of a board member or an administrator during consideration of that item.

### **What is a board packet, and how may I see the supporting materials for the meeting agenda?**

Each board member and administrator receives a board packet prior to the meeting. The packet contains explanatory materials and documents for the items outlined in the agenda. A packet is available at the Central Education Office for anyone to view. Members of the public who wish to have copies of the packet materials should contact the Central Education Office at 957-3406 to make their request.

### **Where can I find out what's on the agenda before the meeting?**

The agenda is printed one week before the meeting so the agendas can be included in the board packets and distributed to the media. Agendas are also posted in each school building in the district, as well as at the Central Education Office. Copies of the agenda are placed on the table inside the door at the board meetings and may also be viewed on the district website.

### **When may a citizen speak at a board meeting?**

After a meeting is called to order, roll is taken and the agenda is adopted the board will ask for public comments. This time is reserved for the public to address any agenda item. Time is limited to three minutes per person. Any group wishing to address the Board of Education should elect a spokesperson. That person will be given five minutes to speak to any one issue. Iowa Open Meetings Law does not permit the board to respond to or take action on public comments on items not posted on the agenda.

### **What is the difference between an "action item" and a "discussion item"?**

The board has announced its intention to act or vote on an action item, and normally does not vote on a discussion item. Often, a discussion item moves to the next meeting's agenda as an action item. Sometimes, however, a discussion item is presented as informational only and is not revisited in a future board meeting.