



November 2019

Keep Up With Us



[GSBA Website](#)
[Capitol Watch Online](#)

Upcoming Free Webinar

November 14 | 11:30 am
Topic: Developing Board
Norms & Protocols
[REGISTER HERE](#)

Follow & Engage

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram



The Importance of Developing Board Norms & Protocols

When it comes to board meetings, there is nothing more annoying or disruptive than a board member who arrives late, initiates sidebar conversations, interrupts others, fails to prepare or engages in other behaviors that interfere with the work of the board. Having ground rules or a set of norms encourages behaviors that will help your board conduct more efficient, effective meetings.

Norms can be thought of as the way we behave, the way we interact, the way we treat each other, the way we make decisions and the way we do business. They exist whether or not they are written down. They are part of the culture.

And norms aren't just for meetings. Norms can cover a wide range of areas to help boards stay on track with keeping student achievement at the forefront of its focus. Some examples of other subject areas for norms include roles and responsibilities, strategic planning, school visits, agenda setting, superintendent and self-evaluations, professional development expectations and all things communications - with each other, with parents, with the media, on social media, and with the superintendent and staff - to name a few.

While it is certainly possible to function without formalizing a set of board norms, many districts have developed a set of written "ground rules" for conducting their business. Doing so helps to ensure that everyone is able to participate and be heard. Everyone understands what is expected and is able to function more effectively. Norms help take the guesswork out of how to behave and set consistent expectations for the governance team.

There are two basic ways to develop norms for your board. The first is to write down the norms that already exist. The second is to have your board describe the ideal behaviors they ascribe to achieve. Once this is done, the norms are written, published for the community to see and formally adopted in a board meeting.

Norms must fit the group so simply adopting those of another board is not

always recommended. Each board should engage in a discussion of their expectations and create their own set of norms.

For example, The National Staff Development Council suggests that answering the following questions around the area of board meetings may help you decide whether your group needs to spend time developing norms:

- Does every member join in your group's discussions?
- Does each member listen as the others speak?
- Does any single member dominate the discussions?
- Do all members arrive on time and stay for the entire meeting?
- Is everyone prepared to do their work when they arrive?
- Does each member of the group believe his or her time at the meeting has been well spent?

All members of the group should be engaged and committed to the process. The GSBA staff is available to facilitate the process of developing norms as a service for its members. We believe that written norms enhance board effectiveness and help build collegiality among board members.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING BOARD NORMS & PROTOCOLS WEBINAR ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 11:30 AM

This session is on developing board norms and protocols, and you'll be hearing from GSBA's Director of Member Engagement, Julie Rhame, and Jefferson City School Board Chair and GSBA Treasurer, Ronnie Hopkins. This webinar is open to all board members and superintendents.

The webinar will last 30-45 minutes, click [HERE](#) to register.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

To listen to previously recorded webinars, [click here](#).

Visit [The GSBA HUB](#) under Governance Materials to view previous PowerPoint presentations and additional resources.

We are available if you need/want to talk, **so please don't hesitate to reach out.**

Jeannie (Sis) Henry
Cell 404.312.8345
jhenry@gsba.com

Trudy Sowar
Cell 678.215.5854
tsowar@gsba.com