The Board of Directors Handbook

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Welcome

The Board of Education and staff of the Montrose County School District appreciate your interest in the Montrose and Olathe public schools. Public participation and open lines of communication are vital to the educational success of our students.

The Board can better represent its constituents when you and others take the time and effort to observe the Board in action, to express opinions and to raise questions. We invite your attendance at Board meetings and in school district activities.

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Board of Education consists of seven Board members elected to serve without compensation; three directors are elected in a biennial election representing respectively, director districts B, D, and F; in the subsequent biennial election, four members are elected from director districts A, C, E, and G. While candidates run from specific places, they do not represent specific geographical areas; rather, each represents Montrose County School District RE-1J at large. Following the elections, the Board elects a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer.
Avenues of Communication

Constructive criticism motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the educational program or to equip the schools to do their tasks more effectively is welcomed by the Board of Education.

The Board believes that complaints and grievances are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible. Therefore, the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline or learning materials will be as follows:

1. Teacher
2. Principal
3. District Office
4. Superintendent
5. Board of Education

Any complaint about school personnel shall always be referred back through proper administrative channels before it is presented to the Board for consideration and action.
DUTIES

Duties of the Board
Operating within the legal parameters of the state and federal constitutions, statutes, court and administrative agencies, the Board is charged with the responsibility of providing the finest educational opportunities possible for the students in the district.

The Board of Education makes all final decisions regarding school district priorities and policies, and it may share in decisions regarding personnel, curriculum and materials, expenditures, and growth. The Board adopts a budget, which is necessary to maintain and operate the schools, and submits bond issues to the citizens of the district to finance construction projects.

Superintendent
Mr. Stephen Schiell

The Superintendent of Schools is appointed by the School Board as the chief administrator and executive officer. With the assistance of his staff, the superintendent directs, guides and coordinates the total educational and administrative program in accordance with Board policies and the rules and regulations of the Colorado Department of Education. He attends all Board meetings and brings recommendations to the Board for action in carrying out the business of the school district.
THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

President—Tom West
District D
67510 Liberty Road
Montrose, CO  81401
Home—209-4591
District.D@mcsd.org

Vice-President—Gayle Johnson
District C
62149 Hwy 90
Montrose, CO  81403
Home 240-9081
District.C@mcsd.org

Director—Jeff Bachman
District A
2188 5965 Lane
Olathe, CO  81425
Home - 497-0832
District.A@mcsd.org

Director—Jacob Suppes
District B
60274 David Road
Olathe, CO  81425
Contact—417-9945
District.B@mcsd.org

Secretary/Treasurer
Phoebe Benziger
District F
647 North 3rd Street
Montrose, CO  81401
Home—249-4978
District.F@mcsd.org

Sarah Fishering
District E
2682 Stellar Ct.
Montrose, CO  81401
Contact—275-1213
District.E@mcsd.org
AGENDA PREPARATION

- The agenda for regular Board meetings consists of the business of the school district and may include a wide variety of matters.
- The agenda for School Board meetings shall be prepared by the superintendent in consultation with members of the Board.
- The Board members will receive with their Board packets and adequate supporting data for all agenda items to be considered for action.
- Agenda and materials shall be delivered to Board members no later than 72 hours prior to the meeting. (Policy BEDB)
COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE BOARD

• Effective communication requires openness, timely response, and a focus on current and long-term educational goals.

• Effective communication requires honesty, constructive feedback, and sensitivity.

• Effective communication requires validation of what was said, objectivity in understanding what was meant, and respect for the diversity among Board members.

• Effective communication expects questions to be asked, helpful comments to be written from time to time, and information to be shared in a professional manner with appropriate persons.

• Effective communication keeps the process simple by bringing common sense to all Board interactions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To have Board action clarified or for more information about the school district, citizens are asked to call the Central Office at (970) 249-7726.

Official minutes of Board meetings are on file in the Superintendent’s Office at the Administration Building and may be obtained by following certain procedures. Meeting minutes are also posted on Montrose County School District’s Internet home page:

http://www.mcsd.org/district/minutes.cfm
THE MEETING

- Regular business meetings shall be held the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the boardroom. Work Sessions begin at 5:30 p.m.
- Dates of regular meetings of the Board shall be provided in annual announcements and made available in printed form at the district office located at 930 Colorado Avenue and on the district website for the news media and public. Agendas will be posted at district office as well as on the website no less than 24 hours prior to the meeting.
- The regular Board Meeting is conducted according to the Rules of Conduct as set forth in the Colorado Open Meetings Act and follows Robert’s Rules of Order.
- All regular and special meetings of the Board shall be open to the public, but any person who disturbs good order may be required to leave.
- The Board receives citizen input with respect and expects those who address the Board to observe the same courtesy. A “Speakers Request Form” is available which should be completed and returned to a staff member prior to discussion of the item.
- Citizens are provided a community input session at each meeting to address the Board and comment on specific agenda items at the discretion of the presiding officer of the Board.
- Time for citizen input is limited to no more than three minutes per individual or fifteen minutes on any one topic to ensure that all those interested have an opportunity to speak. To maintain order, the Board President will recognize each speaker. The Board, by a vote, may choose to reduce speaker’s time when a large number of people wish to address an item. Speakers should avoid unduly repetitious or irrelevant comments. The Board may not respond to comments from the floor because of improper notice, but may refer issues to administration or as a properly notified agenda item for future board meetings.
• Citizens making comments regarding individual staff members are encouraged, although not required, to ask the Board for an Executive Session. Please let us know if you would like to speak in executive session so that we can make appropriate arrangements. If you choose instead to address a personnel issue publicly, you are reminded that you assume the risk of legal action by district students and staff members in the event such persons believe that any comments about them violate applicable legal standards. The Board does not support or endorse the comments of any speaker made during the public comment portion of the meeting.

• All meetings of a quorum, a simple majority of those members serving on the Board, of any local public body at which any public business is discussed or at which any formal action may be taken are declared to be public meetings open to the public at all times.

• This does not apply to any chance meeting or social gathering at which discussion of public business is not the central purpose.
BOARD OPERATING PRACTICES

We have established an operating protocol, which will help govern our actions at meetings and in our roles as Board members. We hope that it will help enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Board meetings while maintaining mutual respect and opportunities for polite disagreement.

RESPONSIBILITY
- We will keep focused on the best interests of students.
- We will act as advocates for quality public education.
- We will function as a "body corporate" which means that we take action only as a group at regular or called Board meetings.
- Board members will not act privately on behalf of the Board.
- We will make every attempt to attend all Board functions.

COOPERATION
- We will work cooperatively with other Board members, the superintendent and staff, striving for teamwork.
- We will be respectful of each other and our right to differing opinions.
- We will avoid interrupting fellow Board members.
- We will limit our comments on a specific item to demonstrate respect for all Board members’ and participants’ time.
- We will focus on the issue on the floor.
- We will maintain a sense of humor.
- We will practice the art of consensus to the extent possible.
- We understand that confidentiality is required regarding those issues discussed in executive session.
PREPARATION

- We will be courteous to all participants and request the same courtesy in return.
- We will respect the civil and human rights of all members of the school community.
- We will try to ensure that our body language conveys a professional message.
- We will respect community input.

OBJECTIVITY

- We will listen objectively.
- We will make decisions in the best interests of the students’ education even when the decision may be unpopular for political or other reasons.
- We will be open to new concepts.
PROMISES

- Board members and the Superintendent will praise in public, criticize in private.
- Board members or the Superintendent will not intentionally mislead or misinform each other.
- The Superintendent will provide leadership in identifying issues that need to be addressed.
- The Superintendent will make every reasonable attempt to keep Board members informed on issues. Board members will make every reasonable effort to keep the Superintendent informed on issues. The goal is no surprises.
- The Superintendent will provide timely information, rationale, and recommendations on issues considered by the Board.
- The Board, collectively and individually, and the Superintendent will make every reasonable effort to protect the integrity and promote the positive image of the District and one another.
- The Board, collectively and individually, and the Superintendent will keep confidential information confidential.

PRINCIPLES

Both the Board of Education and the Superintendent agree to the following principles for effective communication:

- Effective communication requires trust.
- Members must be honest with each other and replace rumors with facts.
- Open channels of communication must be constant.
- Members should be generous with employee praise.
- The Board encourages, but does not require, the discussion of all personnel matters to be conducted in executive session.
- If any member has a disagreement with another, the first effort should be to resolve the matter with that person.
- The President of the Board shall act as the official spokesperson for the Board.
School Board Goals

The School Board adopted the following goals for the 2016-2017 school year that placed the focus and priority on Student Achievement and district responsibility:

- Support our Schools, Students, Teachers, and Support Staff
- Percent of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the PARCC ELA & Math assessments will increase by 3%. The percent of students not meeting expectations on the PARCC ELA & Math assessments will decrease by 3%
- Schools will strive to meet 95% participation rate or above on all state standardized assessments.
- Continue to have a balanced budget
- Continue to provide a safe and healthy school environment

The District adopting the 2013-2014 Strategic Plan that includes not only Student Achievement, but Facilities & Maintenance, School Finance, Communication & Culture, and Technology as well. All District decisions, regardless of department, are being made with Student Achievement as the end goal in mind.

We not only expect that our students will score at or above state average, but that they will graduate from our schools with the life skills and knowledge required to enter into the workforce, begin a career, attend college or other post-secondary education opportunities of their choice, without remediation.
Early Childhood Office .................................. 249-5858
(Preschool & Head Start)
Montrose Center ........................................ 249-2548
Olathe Center .......................................... 323-6449
Penny Harris, Director
Cottonwood Elementary ............................... 249-2539
3500 Woodgate Rd.
Sandra Steele, Principal
Johnson Elementary ..................................... 249-2584
13820 6700 Road
Cheryl Gomez, Principal
Sherrie Gallegos, Dean of Students
Northside Elementary .................................. 249-2554
528 No. Uncompahgre
Carrie Clark, Principal
Oak Grove Elementary ................................. 249-6867
62100 Highway 90
Dana Burwell, Principal
Olathe Elementary ...................................... 252-7940
326 North 3rd St.
Joe Brummitt, Principal
Pomona Elementary ..................................... 249-2514
1045 South Cascade
Chris Braaten, Principal
Centennial Middle School ............................ 249-2576
1100 South 5th St.
Joe Simo, Principal
Joe Siennicki, Asst. Principal
Columbine Middle School ............................ 249-2581
600 South 12th St.
Ben Stephenson, Principal
Steve Gaber, Asst. Principal
Montrose High School.......................... 249-6636
  Attendance .................................... 240-8421
  Guidance Office ............................... 249-2429
  600 So. Selig Ave.
  Jim Barnhill, Principal
  Heidi Voehringer, Assistant Principal
  Jim Pavlich, Dean
  Lyle Wright, Assistant Principal/Activities Director

Olathe Middle/High School.................. 252-7950
  410 Highway 50 Business Loop
  Scot Brown, Principal
  Daniel Rosentreater, Assistant Principal
  Joe Archuleta, Athletic Director

Vista Charter School .......................... 249-4470
  932 North Park, Suite A
  Emily MacNiven, Director

Peak Virtual Academy........................ 249-7726
  930 Colorado Ave.
  Thom as Godfrey, Administrator

Administrative Staff
  Mr. Stephen Schiell, 249-7726
  Superintendent

  Ms. Kathy McKie, 249-7726
  Director of Human Resources

  Dr. Jessica Beller, 249-7726
  Director of Curriculum & Instruction

  Ms. Wendy Bolane, 249-7726
  Director of Exceptional Student Services

  Mr. Adam Rogers, 249-7726
  Director of Finance
Montrose County School District RE-1J does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability in hiring or employment practices, admission to its programs, services or activities, in access to them, in treatment of individuals, or in any aspect of their operations. The lack of English language skills shall not be a barrier to admission or participation in the district’s activities and programs.

Questions, complaints, or requests for additional information regarding these laws may be forwarded to the designated compliance officer:

   District Compliance Officer
   930 Colorado Ave., PO Box 10,000, Montrose, CO  81402
   (970) 249-7726

or directly to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Region VIII, Federal Office Building 1244 North Speer Blvd., Suite #310, Denver, CO 80204.