BYLAWS

A Publication
Of
Richmond Public Schools

SCHOOL BOARD

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Section I – Bylaws
Table of Contents

Policy

Article I – In General

1-1.1 Authority and Title .......................................................... 4
1-1.2 Corporate Seal .................................................................. 4
1-1.3 Duties and Powers ............................................................ 5
1-1.4 Board Counsel ............................................................... 5
1-1.5 School Board Procedures and Standards of Conduct ............... 6
1-1.6 Board Policy Manual ....................................................... 90

Article II – School Board Members

1-2.1 Composition of the School Board ......................................... 10
1-2.2 Qualifications of School Board Members ............................... 10
1-2.3 Oath .............................................................................. 11
1-2.4 Orientation/In-Service and Professional Development Activities .... 11
1-2.5 Compensation and Expenses ............................................. 12
1-2.6 Removal from Office ........................................................ 14
1-2.7 School Board Member Insurance .......................................... 14

Article III – Officers

1-3.1 School Board Organizational Meeting .................................... 15
1-3.2 School Board Chair and Vice-Chair ....................................... 15
1-3.3 School Board Clerk and Deputy Clerk .................................... 16
1-3.4 School Board Agent and Deputy Agent ................................. 17

Article IV – School Board Members – Duties and Responsibilities

1-4.1 School Board Members Conflict of Interest .......................... 18
1-4.2 School Visitations ............................................................ 19

Article V – Methods of Operation

1-5.1 School Board Committees .................................................. 20
1-5.2 Board-Staff Communications .............................................. 20
1-5.3 Bylaws Adoption, Amendment and Suspension ....................... 21
1-5.4 Policy Adoption, Amendment and Suspension ....................... 22
1-5.5 Formulation and Adoption of Regulations ............................ 23
1-5.6 Joint Schools ................................................................... 23
1-5.7 Constituent Services .......................................................... 23
1-5.8 School Board Travel .......................................................... 28

Article VI – Meetings

1-6.1 School Board Meetings ...................................................... 29
1-6.2 Agenda Preparation and Dissemination........................................................................29
1-6.3 Quorum and Rules of Order.......................................................................................30
1-6.4 Minutes and Recordings of Board Meetings..........................................................30
1-6.5 Voting Method........................................................................................................31
1-6.6 Electronic Participation in Meetings from Remote Locations.............................31
1-6.7 Public Participation at Meetings..............................................................................33
SECTION 1 – BYLAWS

ARTICLE I

POLICY 1-1.1 AUTHORITY AND TITLE

Authority

Article VIII, § 7 of the Constitution of Virginia places the responsibility for providing an efficient system of free public schools with the General Assembly of Virginia, and further directs the establishment of local school boards to operate, maintain and supervise local schools. The School Board of the City of Richmond (the “School Board”) derives its authority from the Constitution of Virginia, the Code of Virginia, and the regulations of the Virginia Board of Education. The School Board is the policy-making body for Richmond Public Schools and serves within the framework provided by law, the will of the local citizenry, and the ethics of professional personnel.

The School Board is a body corporate, and in its corporate capacity, is vested with all the powers and charged with all the duties, obligations, and responsibilities imposed upon school boards by law. School Board members are officers of the Commonwealth of Virginia. School Board members shall have no authority or duties except such as may be assigned to them by the School Board as a whole. School Board members shall have authority only when acting as a board regularly in session. The School Board shall not be bound in any way by any statement or action of any individual School Board member or employee except when such statement or action is pursuant to specific instructions or rules of the School Board.

Title

The School Board is a corporate body whose official title shall be “The School Board of the City of Richmond.”

LEGAL REFERENCE: Constitution of Virginia, Article VIII, Section 7; Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-1, 22.1-2, 22.1-28, 22.1-71

Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010

POLICY 1-1.2 CORPORATE SEAL

Richmond Public Schools may, by a majority vote of the School Board, adopt a corporate seal for use in the division. The seal shall have engraved thereon the official title of the division and such other inscription as the School Board may direct. The School Board shall serve as custodian of the seal.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-71

Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010
POLICY 1-1.3  DUTIES AND POWERS

Recognizing the definitions of its duties as prescribed by the Constitution and statutes of the Commonwealth of Virginia, by the regulations of the Virginia Board of Education, and by the charter and ordinances of the City of Richmond, the School Board considers its major responsibilities to be as follows:

1. To select a division superintendent of schools;

2. To determine the studies to be pursued, the government to be employed in the schools, and the length of the school term;

3. To provide suitable school buildings with proper furniture and appliances, and to care for, manage, and control the school property of the city;

4. To provide for the preparation and adoption of the annual budgets;

5. To consider and act upon the recommendations of the division superintendent in all matters of policy, appointment, or dismissal of employees, salary schedules, or other personnel regulations, courses of study and other matters pertaining to the welfare of schools;

6. To receive reports by the division superintendent concerning the condition, efficiency, and needs of the schools;

7. To appraise the effectiveness with which the schools are achieving the educational purposes of the board;

8. To inform the public concerning the progress and needs of the schools and to weigh public opinion as it affects the schools;

9. To provide transportation of pupils; and

10. To adopt bylaws and regulations consistent with state statutes and regulations of the Virginia Board of Education for the management of official business and for the supervision of the school division.

LEGAL REFERENCE:  Constitution of Virginia, 1950, as amended, Article VIII, Section 7; Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-78, 22.1-79

Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010

POLICY 1-1.4  BOARD COUNSEL

It is the policy of the School Board to employ its own attorney either as a permanent employee or on retainer. The School Board may employ additional special counsel and use the Office of the City Attorney when appropriate.
POLICY 1-1.5   SCHOOL BOARD PROCEDURES AND STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Recognizing that persons holding a position of public trust are under constant observation by the media and interested city residents, and recognizing that maintaining the integrity and dignity of the public office is essential for maintaining high levels of public confidence in institutions of government, every member of the School Board of the City of Richmond shall adhere to the following procedures and standards of conduct.

1. While attending meetings and otherwise conducting the business of the School Board, every member shall conduct himself/herself in a professional and courteous manner and encourage community involvement, to include:
   a. Working to create a positive environment in public meetings where citizens feel comfortable in their roles as observers or participants;
   b. Avoiding, during public meetings and during the performance of public duties, the use of abusive, threatening or intimidating language or gestures directed at colleagues, citizens or personnel;
   c. Maintaining an attitude of courtesy and consideration toward all colleagues;
   d. Being tolerant, by allowing citizens, employees or colleagues sufficient opportunity to present their views; and
   e. Being respectful and attentive, and avoiding comments, body language or distracting activity that conveys a message of disrespect during presentations from citizens, personnel or colleagues.

2. In responding to questions, School Board members shall:
   a. Realize they are not speaking for the entire School Board;
   b. Realize that any comments they make might be interpreted as an official position of the School Board. Therefore, they should refer to 2(a), above, and emphasize they are not speaking for the entire School Board. School Board members should feel free to clarify their positions on any publicly discussed matter that has come before the School Board. Furthermore, any School Board member should feel free to openly discuss any aspect of programs, policies or procedures of the school division so long as they are not making any commitment on behalf of the School Board or making judgments about personnel whose rights are protected by the law; and
   c. Protect confidential discussions that occur in executive session. Only matters permitted under the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, pursuant to §2.2-3700, et seq., shall be discussed in executive session.

3. The School Board recognizes that discussion of personnel matters is to remain confidential, must be discussed through appropriate channel processes, and that it is the obligation of each School Board member (and the entire School Board) to protect the
privacy of the individual. School Board members should offer criticism of school employees only in private meetings with appropriate individuals or in executive session.

4. The School Board recognizes that its primary role is to make policy and therefore will focus on issues pertaining to programs and operations.

5. The School Board will follow the procedure of communicating directly with the division superintendent and/or the Chair of the School Board regarding all issues including, but not limited to, personnel matters, incidents, problems or general questions. This is especially true in situations where School Board members might conceivably be construed as attempting to supervise, direct, or interfere with school personnel and the performance of their duties.

6. School Board members will seek to find and use the most equitable, efficient, effective and economical means for getting tasks accomplished. School Board members shall be concise when presenting information, and should avoid the practice of taking more time to address an issue before the School Board than is necessary and essential for an adequate consideration of those matters being discussed.

7. School Board members shall recognize that matters discussed in executive session pursuant to §2.2-3700 et seq., of the Code of Virginia, 1950 as amended, are to remain confidential and act accordingly. School Board members will refrain from the use of electronic devices during executive sessions.

8. While serving on the School Board, members shall refrain from discourse and actions, including but not limited to, acts of malfeasance, acts of misfeasance, conflict of interests violations, alleged and confirmed criminal activity, and misappropriations of public funds, which would undermine the integrity and professional standards of the School Board and bring the body into disrepute.

9. The School Board will adopt the School Board Procedures and Standards of Conduct for the current year at its January re-organization meeting.

**Evaluation of School Board Operational Procedures**

The School Board will review its performance annually to ensure its proper discharge of responsibilities to the community. The evaluation will be based on a positive approach, which will indicate the strengths of the School Board and the areas that need improvement.

To help the School Board meet this goal, the following conditions shall apply to the self-evaluation process:

1. School Board members shall be involved in the development of an evaluation instrument and evaluation procedures.

2. The School Board evaluation instrument will be completed by individual School Board members on a confidential basis and submitted to the School Board Chair or his/her designee, for compilation.

3. The School Board shall meet, with all members present, to review and discuss the composite results.
4. Each judgment shall be supported with as much rational and objective evidence as possible. Upon final discussion of the results, the School Board will develop both short and long range goals and objectives to ensure continued proficiency in its areas of excellence, to strengthen weak areas, and to eliminate those activities no longer applicable.

**Procedure for Addressing Violations**

The School Board and its members are committed to faithful compliance with the provisions of the School Board Procedures and Standards of Conduct. The School Board recognizes that failure to address violations of the School Board Procedures and Standards of Conduct jeopardizes the public’s confidence in the School Board, thus decreasing its overall effectiveness. In the event of a violation of the School Board Procedures and Standards of Conduct, the School Board will seek remedy by applying the following procedure:

1. Whenever a member believes that another member has deliberately violated the School Board Procedures and Standards of Conduct, it is incumbent upon him or her to address the concern with the member perceived to be in violation first. Alternatively, the member may refer the concern to the Board Chair. If the Board Chair is suspected of the violation, the concern should be referred to the Board Vice-Chair. The Board Chair or Vice-Chair, if applicable, will bring the concern to the full School Board during a regular meeting to discuss the nature of the suspected violation and to determine the appropriate consequence, if warranted. Consequences for violating the School Board Procedures and Standards of Conduct may include a meeting with the Board Chair or Vice-Chair to review the School Board Procedures and Standards of Conduct or the imposition of sanctions as detailed below.

2. Sanctions for serious or repeated violations of the School Board Procedures and Standards of Conduct may include public admonishment, reprimand, formal censure or removal from committee assignments. The School Board’s vote on sanctions shall require a two-thirds majority of the full School Board and be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

3. In the event a member is removed from committee assignments as described in this policy, the decision to remove will be reviewed by the full School Board during a regular meeting one (1) year after the imposition of the sanction. Upon review, the School Board may vote to reinstate the committee privileges of the member. The School Board’s vote to reinstate a member’s committee privileges under this paragraph shall require a two-thirds majority of the full School Board and be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

No action authorized by this policy shall infringe upon a member’s civil rights and/or liberties.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 2.2-3700 et seq., 22.1-78, 22.1-79

Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010
Revised/Adopted August 19, 2013
Revised/Adopted July 13, 2015
POLICY 1-1.6  BOARD POLICY MANUAL

The School Board of the City of Richmond shall be guided by written policies that are readily accessible to the School Board, division employees, students, parents, and citizens. All division policies will be reviewed at least every five years and revised as needed.

A current copy of division policies, including the Student Code of Conduct, and regulations approved by the School Board will be posted on the division’s website and a shall be available to employees and the public. The School Board will ensure that printed copies of the policies are available as needed to citizens who do not have online access. The division superintendent shall ensure that an annual announcement is made at the beginning of the school year and, for parents of students who enroll later in the academic year, at the time of enrollment, advising the public regarding the availability of the policies.


Adopted July 15, 2013
ARTICLE II

POLICY 1-2.1  COMPOSITION OF THE SCHOOL BOARD

The Richmond City School Board shall be composed of nine (9) members, one from each of the nine election districts of the city, and are elected by the qualified voters of the City of Richmond as authorized by applicable law. Members serve four-year terms. Vacancies occurring in the membership of the School Board shall be filled as provided by law.

Any interested candidate for the position of School Board member must comply with all legal requirements to be a candidate. This includes, but may not be limited to, filing the following documents with the City of Richmond Registrar by the applicable deadline: (1) a declaration of candidacy, (2) a certification of candidacy, and (3) a petition containing the requisite number of signatures of registered voters in the candidate’s district.

School Board elections are non-partisan. Candidates are urged to contact the State Board of Elections to obtain complete information.


Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010

POLICY 1-2.2  QUALIFICATIONS OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Qualifications

At the time of his/her appointment or election to office, each member of the Richmond City School Board must be a qualified voter, a resident of the Richmond City school division (from the district that he/she represents), and meet any other criteria set forth in Virginia law. If a School Board member shall cease to be a resident of the school division or that district which the School Board member represents, the position on the School Board shall be deemed vacant.

Ineligibility for Office

None of the officers listed in the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-30 shall serve as a member of the School Board, unless an exception provided in that section applies. No employee of the School Board shall be eligible to serve on the School Board.


Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010
POLICY 1-2.3  OATH

Prior to participation in the first School Board meeting in the term for which elected, a newly elected School Board member shall take the oath of office as prescribed for officers of the Commonwealth of Virginia in accordance with the Code of Virginia.

The failure of a member of the School Board to take the oath of office as required by the Code of Virginia before attending the first meeting of the School Board held after his or her election shall not be deemed to create a vacancy in the office provided that he or she takes the oath within 30 days after that first meeting.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-31

Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010
Revised/Adopted June 20, 2011

POLICY 1-2.4  ORIENTATION/IN-SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Orientation

Following notification of election or appointment to the School Board and before taking office, each new member shall participate in an orientation program under the direction of the division superintendent. Every new School Board member shall be furnished a copy of the School Board’s bylaws, policies and regulations, the current budget, a copy of Virginia school laws to include the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act, and other such documents deemed essential to the operation of Richmond Public Schools.

In-Service Programs

The School Board places a high priority on the importance of a planned and continuing program of in-service education for its members. The central purpose of the program is to enhance the quality and effectiveness of public school governance in our community. The School Board shall plan specific in-service activities designed to assist School Board members in their efforts to improve their skills as members of a policy-making body; to expand their knowledge about trends, issues, and new ideas affecting the educational activities of the local schools; and, to deepen their insights into the nature of leadership in a modern democratic society.

In accordance with established procedures, School Board members shall participate annually in high-quality professional development activities at the state, local, or national levels on governance, including, but not limited to, personnel, policies and practices, including the evaluation of personnel; curriculum and instruction; use of data in planning and decision making; and current issues in education. The School Board shall retain the authority to approve or disapprove the participation of members in planned activities. School Board members attending professional development trainings and conferences approved by the School Board shall present a report on the information received during such activity no later than the second regular meeting following the conference or training. The public shall be kept
informed about the School Board's continuing in-service educational activities through various methods to include postings on the other activities' link on the School Board's website.

The School Board regards the following as the kinds of activities and services appropriate for implementing this policy:

1. Participation in local, state-wide and national School Board conferences, workshops and conventions.

2. Division-sponsored training sessions for School Board members.

3. Subscriptions to education related publications.


Adopted December 6, 2010
Revised/Revised July 15, 2013
Revised/Revised August 18, 2014
Revised/Revised July 13, 2015

POLICY 1-2.5 COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES

Compensation

The administration shall include in each annual budget a request for sufficient funds, in an amount not to exceed the limits imposed under the law, to compensate members of the School Board.

Expenses

The administration shall include in each annual budget a request for sufficient funds to cover individual School Board members’ expenses for approved professional development activities and constituent services, including, but not limited to, memberships in national, state and/or local education related organizations.

In accordance with Policy 1-2.4, all expenses for professional development activities and constituent services shall be approved by the School Board prior to expending allotted funds for such purpose. Application for reimbursement for approved Board related expenses as defined in this policy shall be submitted to the School Board clerk on the proper form with the appropriate supporting documentation, to include actual receipts, within thirty (30) business days following the date when the expense is incurred. Reimbursement requests that are not submitted in accordance with this policy will not be processed. The School Board clerk will perform the necessary reconciliations based on the actual receipts received.

Any funds allocated in accordance with this policy but not expended by a board member at the end of the fiscal year may, at the discretion of the individual board member: (1) be allocated to a specific program(s) and/or project(s) at any school within the division that is consistent with the goals and objectives of the School Board; (2) be allocated to the Richmond Public Schools Education Foundation for a use consistent with the goals of the School Board; or (3) be returned to the General Fund. In no event shall remaining funds be allocated to an individual.
**Professional Development Expenses**

Each fiscal year, the administration shall allocate funds to individual School Board members to cover expenses incurred for participation in School Board approved professional development activities in accordance with Policy 1-2.4. Approved professional development expenses include, but are not limited to, conference registration, transportation to and from conferences, lodging and meals. Approval for professional development activities is subject to Policy 1-5.8 – School Board Travel.

**Constituent Services Expenses**

Each fiscal year, the administration shall allocate funds to individual School Board members to cover expenses incurred for providing constituent services to the district represented by the individual School Board member. For the purposes of this policy, constituent services shall include district communications, meetings and programs designed to engage parents, students and community stakeholders regarding matters related to the school division that are sponsored by individual School Board members. Approved constituent services expenses, include, but are not limited to, fees for the production and copying of materials for district sponsored activities, advertising fees for district sponsored events, meals for district sponsored events, and applicable staff related expenses for district sponsored events.

School Board members seeking approval to expend allotted funds for constituent services shall complete and submit the appropriate request form detailing the need for the funds to include a description of the activity, the target audience and location of activity if applicable and an estimate of costs. Requests for approval of funds in excess of five hundred dollars ($500.00) must be accompanied by the completed form and proposed invoices or price quotes for the anticipated services or activities. The completed request form and supporting documentation shall be submitted to the School Board clerk at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the anticipated date of the constituent services activity. The School Board will consider approval of the expenditure request during the next regularly scheduled meeting. Expenditure requests that are not submitted in accordance with this policy will not be considered for approval by the School Board.

The School Board is committed to implementing the provisions of the Virginia Public Procurement Act when applicable.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 2.2-2823, 2.2-2825, 22.1-32, 22.1-55, 22.1-78.

Adopted December 6, 2010
Revised/Adopted August 18, 2014
Revised/Adopted March 16, 2015
Revised/Adopted September 28, 2015

**POLICY 1-2.6 REMOVAL FROM OFFICE**

Any School Board member may be removed from office in accordance with the provisions of applicable law, including, but not limited to, §§ 24.2-230 through 24.2-237 of the Code of Virginia.
POLICY 1-2.7  SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER INSURANCE

The School Board shall carry liability insurance to cover negligent acts committed or alleged to be committed while discharging its duties.

LEGAL REFERENCE:  Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-84

Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010
ARTICLE III

POLICY 1-3.1 SCHOOL BOARD ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

The School Board shall organize annually by the election of officers at its first meeting in January. The division superintendent shall call the meeting to order. The first order of business shall be the election of the School Board Chair. The new Chair shall then assume office and preside over the remainder of the meeting. During this meeting, the School Board will also elect a Vice-Chair.

At its annual organizational meeting, the School Board shall appoint a clerk and other agents as it deems necessary to the proper functioning of the School Board. The agenda for the organizational meeting shall include setting times, places and dates of regular School Board meetings and other items of annual business as appropriate.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-72, 22.1-76

Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010

POLICY 1-3.2 SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Election

A School Board Chair and Vice-Chair of the School Board shall be elected by roll call vote for one year terms at the School Board’s organizational meeting in January and shall hold office until their successors are elected and qualified.

Duties

The School Board Chair shall preside at all meetings of the School Board, appoint committees when authorized by the School Board, prepare School Board meeting agendas with the assistance of the division superintendent, sign all legal documents approved by the School Board, and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by law or by action of the School Board. The Vice-Chair shall preside in the absence of the Chair and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the School Board. The Vice-Chair shall serve as Chair in the event of a vacancy in the office of Chair or the inability of the Chair to act.

Vacancies

In the event that the School Board Chair of the School Board should vacate his/her office prior to the expiration of his/her term, the Vice-Chair shall assume the office of Chair and the School Board shall fill the Vice-Chair position by election from its membership at its next regular meeting following the acceptance of notice of the Chair’s vacating the office.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §22.1-76

Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010
POLICY 1-3.3  SCHOOL BOARD CLERK AND DEPUTY CLERK

Election

A Clerk and Deputy Clerk shall be elected by roll call vote for one year terms at the School Board’s organizational meeting in January and shall hold office until their successors are elected and qualified.

Their compensation shall be fixed by the School Board and they shall furnish the School Board a corporate surety bond. The School Board shall fix the amount of such bonds in an amount not less than ten thousand dollars and the premiums shall be paid by the School Board.

Duties

The duties of the Clerk of the School Board shall be:

1. To keep a record of proceedings of all meetings of the School Board;

2. To keep safely all books, papers, and reports pertaining to his/her office and furnish copies of any papers or reports when required for publication or other purpose by the School Board;

3. To cause written or printed notices of all regular and special meetings of the School Board and committees to be sent to each member thereof;

4. To notify the proper state and municipal authorities in writing that School Board members have qualified before all proper authority following their election and also to notify them concerning election of School Board officers and all vacancies in the membership of the School Board;

5. To make and keep a full and accurate description with location, of all real estate and an inventory of all property under the control of the School Board; and

6. To perform such other duties as may be required by law or by resolution of the School Board or by the division superintendent.

Vacancies

A vacancy in the office of Clerk or Deputy Clerk shall be filled in the same manner in which the previous incumbent was originally appointed.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-76, 22.1-77

Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010
POLICY 1-3.4    SCHOOL BOARD AGENT AND DEPUTY AGENT

Election

Upon the recommendation of the division superintendent, an Agent and Deputy Agent shall be elected by roll call vote for one year terms at the School Board’s organizational meeting in January and shall hold office until their successors are elected and qualified.

Salaries and Bond

The salary of the Agent and Deputy Agent shall be fixed by the School Board. The Agent and Deputy Agent shall furnish the School Board a corporate surety bond. The School Board shall fix the amount of such bonds in an amount not less than ten thousand dollars and the premiums shall be paid by the School Board.

Duties

The Agent and Deputy Agent shall perform the duties specified by statute and such other duties as may be prescribed by the School Board.

LEGAL REFERENCE:  Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-122

Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010
ARTICLE IV

POLICY 1-4.1 SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

A. Each School Board member shall comply with all applicable provisions of the “State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act (the Act).” The Clerk of the School Board shall furnish each School Board member with a copy of the Act. Each School Board member shall disclose all conflicts of interest to the School Board and shall refrain from acting in any manner inconsistent with the requirements of the Act.

B. The division superintendent or his/her designee shall ensure that all employees of the School Board are aware of the requirements of the Act and that they are advised that the School Board demands compliance with both the words and intent of the law.

C. Each School Board employee who holds a position at director level or above shall certify, as a condition of assuming such office or employment, and annually on or before January 15, that he or she is in compliance with all applicable provisions of the Act. Such certification shall remain on file in the Department of Human Resources.

D. Each School Board member and all employees who hold a position at director level or above shall attend an orientation held annually in January of each year on the provisions of the Act. Each School Board member shall attend the orientation at least once during his or her term of office. Employees who are required to attend the orientation shall do so upon assuming the position and biennially thereafter or as directed by the division superintendent. The School Board Clerk shall maintain a record of the attendance of each School Board member; records of the attendance of employees required to attend the orientation shall be maintained in the Department of Human Resources.

E. Any School Board member or employee who knowingly violates any provision of the Act shall be guilty of malfeasance in office or employment, and upon conviction thereof is subject to, in addition to any other fine or penalty provided by law, forfeiture of office or employment.

F. A School Board member may request a written advisory opinion from the Commonwealth’s Attorney regarding the provisions of the Act. The request, which shall be in writing, shall set forth a full disclosure of the facts. The opinion of the Commonwealth’s Attorney shall be a public record and shall be released upon request.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 2.2-3100 et seq., 2.2-3100.1, 2.2-3121, 2.2-3122, 2.2-3128, 2.2-3129

Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010
POLICY 1-4.2 SCHOOL VISITATIONS

Each School Board member will attempt to visit various schools throughout the year when invited for regular programs and special events or when the School Board member has time available or has special interest in a particular program.

School Board members acknowledge that they are guests in any school they visit. They will stop first at the principal's office to advise the principal of their presence and determine if there are any special considerations that should be observed while visiting. Principals are encouraged to have School Board members visit the total school when possible rather than attempting to present only selected programs.

As a courtesy, School Board members, when acting in their official capacity, will make an effort to notify the division superintendent prior to visiting a school. School Board members will contact the division superintendent if they have questions or concerns resulting from their visits.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-79

Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010
ARTICLE V

POLICY 1-5.1 SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEES

Committee-of-the-Whole

The School Board of the City of Richmond shall generally operate as a Committee-of-the-Whole on matters relating to governance of the school division. Work sessions will be scheduled for presentations on and discussions of subjects that may be deemed appropriate.

Disciplinary Committee

A Disciplinary Committee composed of at least three School Board members shall preside over all cases involving appeals of long term suspensions and expulsions within Richmond Public Schools. The decision of the Disciplinary Committee shall, if unanimous, be the final decision of the School Board. In non-unanimous decisions, the pupil shall have the right to appeal his or her case to the full School Board. The School Board shall render a final decision in such cases within thirty (30) days.

Standing Committees of the Board

The School Board may establish standing committees to assist the Board in accomplishing its work. The general functions of standing committees are advisory, and they shall not have the power to act for the School Board. All standing committees shall report their findings and recommendations to the board as promptly as practical. No standing committee shall have any executive function or any power to direct the action of the administration or other employees of the board. The standing committees of the School Board shall be authorized by resolution.

Each standing committee shall consist of no more than three board members appointed by the Board Chair. The division superintendent or his/her designee shall be invited to attend all committee meetings but shall not be considered a member of the committee.

A majority of the appointed members of a standing committee shall constitute a quorum. Minutes of action taken at each committee meeting shall be kept and copies shall be distributed to the full board.


Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010

POLICY 1-5.2 BOARD-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

The School Board supports and encourages the concept of two-way communication between the School Board and its employees. The division superintendent is the official representative of the School Board as its chief administrative officer in its relations and communications with employees.

All reports and recommendations to the School Board from any officer or employee under the direct supervision of the division superintendent shall be made through the office of the division
superintendent, except when otherwise specifically directed by the School Board. All School Board actions requiring or authorizing the doing of any act by an officer or employee or requiring any report, shall be directed to the division superintendent. Specifically, any request by any School Board member for information from an officer or employee of the Richmond Public Schools shall be made through the division superintendent’s office, with courtesy copies of such requests provided to the School Board Chair. It is the intent of this section that the School Board and its members shall deal only with the division superintendent in respect to all matters for which the division superintendent is responsible.

The School Board desires to develop the best possible working relationship with the employees of the Richmond Public Schools and with representatives of employee organizations. The School Board welcomes the viewpoints of employees during the public information session of its regular meetings in accordance with Policy 1-6.7. The School Board shall not discriminate against any employee by reason of his/her membership in an employee organization or participation in any lawful activities of the organization. The School Board likewise shall not discriminate against any employee for exercising his/her right to speak publicly on matters of public concern.


Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010

POLICY 1-5.3 BYLAWS ADOPTION, AMENDMENT AND SUSPENSION

Adoption and Amendment

Bylaw proposals and suggested amendments to or revisions of existing bylaws shall be adopted by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the School Board at a meeting called for which the proposed additions, amendments, or revisions shall have been described in writing. Bylaw proposals and suggested amendments to or revisions of existing bylaws shall be submitted to all members of the School Board in writing prior to a regularly scheduled School Board meeting in which such proposed bylaws, amendments, or revisions shall be read and discussed. A vote for adoption shall take place at the next succeeding regular meeting of the School Board. The School Board may suspend this rule by two-thirds (2/3) vote and bring the proposed policy up for immediate adoption. A majority vote of the membership of the School Board shall be needed for the adoption of a bylaw.

Suspension

Bylaws of the School Board shall be subject to suspension only upon a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the School Board at a meeting.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-78

Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010
POLICY 1-5.4   POLICY ADOPTION, AMENDMENT AND SUSPENSION

The School Board, representing the people of the division, is the legislative body which determines all questions of general policy to be employed in the conduct of Richmond Public Schools. The School Board shall be guided by written policies that are readily accessible to the School Board, division employees, students, and citizens. All School Board policies shall be reviewed at least every five years and revised as needed. A current copy of the division’s policies will be posted on the division’s website. Because the School Board makes its policies available online, the School Board will ensure that printed copies of the policies are available to citizens who do not have online access. The division superintendent or his/her designee shall ensure that an annual announcement is made at the beginning of the school year and, for parents of students who enroll later in the academic year, at the time of enrollment, advising the public that the policies are available in such places.

Proposals regarding school division policies and operations may originate at any of several sources: a parent, a taxpayer, an employee, a member of the School Board, a clerk, the division superintendent, a consultant, a civic group, etc.

Action on such proposals, whatever their source, is taken finally by the School Board in accord with its bylaws. The School Board should take action after hearing recommendations presented to the School Board by the division superintendent or his/her designee. The recommendations of the division superintendent or his/her designee may be based upon the outcomes of studies and upon the judgment of the staff and study committees.

Adoption and Amendment

The School Board shall, from time to time, adopt policies and cause them to be published. Policy proposals and suggested amendments to or revisions of existing policies shall be submitted to all members of the School Board and to the division superintendent in writing prior to a regularly scheduled School Board meeting in which such proposed policies, amendments, or revisions shall be read and discussed. A vote for adoption shall take place at the next succeeding regular meeting of the School Board. The School Board may suspend this rule by two-thirds (2/3) vote and bring the proposed policy up for immediate adoption. A majority vote of the membership of the School Board shall be needed for the adoption of a policy.

Suspension

Policies of the School Board shall be subject to suspension only upon a majority vote of the School Board at a meeting in the call for which the proposed suspension has been described in writing, or upon a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the School Board when no such written notice has been given.


Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010
POLICY 1-5.5  FORMULATION AND ADOPTION OF REGULATIONS

The School Board hereby delegates to the division superintendent the function of specifying required actions and designing the detailed arrangements under which the schools will be operated. Such rules and detailed arrangements shall constitute the administrative regulations governing the schools. They must be in every respect consistent with the policies adopted by the School Board.

In the absence of applicable policy, the division superintendent is authorized to establish needed regulations subject to later confirmation in policy, should the School Board so wish. The School Board reserves the right to review and veto administrative regulations should they, in the School Board's judgment, be inconsistent with the policies adopted by the School Board.


Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010

POLICY 1-5.6  JOINT SCHOOLS

The School Board Chair will appoint representative(s) and alternates, as appropriate, from its membership to committees or boards governing regional projects or joint schools in accordance with state and federal laws or regulations or joint agreement with other school boards and/or agencies.

LEGAL REFERENCE:  Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-26; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-281-10, 8 VAC 20-281-20

Adopted December 3, 2007
Revised/Adopted December 6, 2010

POLICY 1-5.7  CONSTITUENT SERVICES

As elected officials and trustees acting on behalf of the public, members of the School Board of the City of Richmond have an obligation to be accessible to the public and assist citizens with suggestions, questions, or complaints regarding Richmond Public Schools (RPS). Board members must provide service to constituents but in doing so should not involve themselves in administrative matters or management. It is the intent of the School Board that constituent services be provided through well-defined protocols that facilitate the administration’s ability to resolve problems effectively and identify opportunities for systems improvement.

Purpose and System for Constituent Services

The purpose of this policy is to provide a standardized process by which Board members shall handle requests from constituents. Recognizing the need to provide service to constituents, the need of Board members to be answerable to constituents, and the need to improve division systems, the School Board and Superintendent will work together to put into place a system for constituent services.

The major features of the system will be:
1. a protocol for handling constituent requests for information or assistance;

2. a primary contact person in the Superintendent’s office (the Superintendent’s designee) to whom the Board members will refer constituent service requests they receive;

3. a form for documenting requests;

4. an information management system for storing, tracking, categorizing, and analyzing requests;

5. an expectation that constituents will be updated on the progress/status of their request within a 72-hour time period (or three business days);

6. a feedback process so that Board members know the resolution of requests;

7. oversight of the system by the Superintendent’s designee, who handles priority requests and keeps the Superintendent informed of matters that require his/her attention;

8. periodic reports to the Superintendent and School Board on constituent requests, their resolution, and patterns in requests; and

9. periodic reports on systems improvements made, in whole or part, as a result of constituent service requests.

Details of the system are set forth in the Protocol for Constituent Services which accompanies this policy.

In addition to the System for Constituent Services outlined above (which establishes the protocol for Board members to respond to constituent concerns), the School Board directs the Superintendent to establish protocols for constituent services that will be used throughout the school system for employees to respond to constituent concerns.

**Definitions**

The following definitions are applicable:

1. **Governance**: Governance is the sole responsibility of the elected School Board. Governance involves ensuring the delivery of educational and support services through communication with the Superintendent. Governance is strategically based guidance based upon policy and focused on effecting system improvement.

2. **Management**: Management is the responsibility of the Superintendent. Management includes directing staff, allocating resources, administering programs, and providing support services to improve school system effectiveness and to successfully achieve division goals. The Superintendent shall design and implement predetermined processes to facilitate management’s ability to resolve problems effectively and identify opportunities for system improvement.
3. **School Board's Role:** The role of the School Board in constituent service is to facilitate management's ability to resolve problems effectively without becoming involved in problem solving or interfering in the area of management. Appropriate constituent service shall be defined as ensuring that division management takes responsibility for helping citizens receive the services the School Board has chosen to provide. Inappropriate constituent service shall be defined as School Board involvement in any management function, delivery of service or desired result, regardless of the situation.

4. **Urgent Matter:** An urgent matter is an issue that involves a concern associated with the health and safety of people and/or property or a matter that has a defined required timeline for a response that if not acted upon would cause significant harm.

**Standards for Constituent Services**

Each Board member will strive to provide appropriate service to constituents. Board members commit that they will:

1. ensure that the RPS administration takes responsibility for helping citizens receive the services that the Commonwealth of Virginia and School Board intend Richmond Public Schools to provide the public;

2. follow processes designed to facilitate the administration’s ability to resolve problems effectively; and

3. identify opportunities for systems improvement.

In understanding the School Board’s role, each Board member will avoid involvement in management activities or giving direction to staff, even if the problem is serious and/or the Board member’s involvement is minimal. In making this commitment, Board members recognize:

1. that their involvement in management and administrative matters creates confusion among division employees, leads to dysfunctional management systems; undermines the authority of the Superintendent and the administration, and weakens the governance function of the Board by making it impossible to hold the Superintendent responsible for division operations; and

2. their obligation not to confer special advantage on employees, parents, students, vendors, or any other person or entity outside regular management decision making processes established by policy or management directive to guarantee fairness and equity. Such behavior by a Board member is a betrayal of the Board, the division, and the public, and subjects the Board member to reprimand or censure pursuant to Policy 1-1.5, School Board Procedures and Standards of Conduct.

**Process for Referring Constituent Requests**

Requests for information or assistance shall travel through the flowchart that is provided at the conclusion of this policy. Board members shall not be involved in the resolution process of a constituent service request once it enters the flowchart. If employees, parents, students, or other members of the public bring concerns or complaints to an individual Board member, he or she shall refer the individual(s) to the Superintendent or designee, the Constituent Services Coordinator or another appropriate
administrator. Resolution of the concern or complaint will proceed in accordance with the protocol and flowchart set forth below.

**Types of Communication**

The following are types of communications and a description of the manner in which the communication will be addressed:

1. **Informal Communication** may be provided to the Superintendent or designee for information purposes and does not require any action. This type of communication includes personal contact as a result of incidental conversation that occurs during the normal course of a daily schedule, or the relay of a concern that was overheard, or any other matter that does not merit a formal request for action.

2. **Formal communication** shall be relayed through the constituent service policy that has been established and approved by the School Board. Examples of formal communication include a signed letter; an identifiable email, or a telephone call requiring action (information, research, resolution to a problem, etc.).

3. **Anonymous calls or letters** received by Board members may receive School Board input; however, anonymous calls or letters shall not receive School Board attention, discussion, or response, and shall not result in directives to the administration. The contents of anonymous calls or letters may be provided as information.

4. **Concerns Related to the School Board** which directly pertain to the School Board’s own actions or policy, for which there is no administrative remedy, may be placed on the School Board meeting agenda, subject to the process set forth in Policy 1-6.2, Agenda Preparation and Dissemination.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-78

Adopted November 3, 2014

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**Richmond City Public Schools**

**Protocol for Constituent Services**

The attached flowchart outlines the recommended process for constituent services requests.

**Information Request**

This protocol begins with the constituent request to a Board member for information and/or assistance. If the request is for information, the Board member should provide the accurate information (if known) or explain how they can obtain the information. If the information is confidential in nature, the Board member should explain that it is confidential and why and that, as a result, he or she is not able to provide any information. If the information is not known by the Board member or a management function, the Board member should (a) advise the constituent of how to obtain the information and who to contact or (b) connect the constituent to the Superintendent's Office or appropriate designee.
Urgent Request for Assistance/Data/Action

If the request or issue is urgent in nature as defined by the policy, the Board member should obtain the constituent's contact information and nature of request and immediately contact the Superintendent and/or designee for the constituent.

Non-Urgent Request for Assistance/Data/Action

If the constituent request for assistance, data or an administrative action is not urgent, the Board member should (a) clearly explain chain of command in RPS, clarify the difference between governance and management and the School Board's role; (b) advise the constituent of how to obtain a resolution and who to contact; or (c) connect the constituent to the Superintendent's Office or appropriate designee per the Constituent Services flowchart.

Unsatisfied Constituent

If the constituent is not satisfied with the response for assistance or information despite good faith efforts by the administration/management, the constituent will also be advised of the School Board's policy on public comment at a Board meeting to make the entire Board aware of their concern.
POLICY 1-5.8  SCHOOL BOARD TRAVEL

Generally

Pursuant to Policy 1-2.4, members of the School Board of the City of Richmond shall participate annually in high quality professional development activities at the state, local and national levels. This policy serves to provide guidelines on travel related to fulfilling the requirement for professional development as well as the conduct of board related business. All expenses for professional development activities and other board related travel must be approved by the School Board prior to expending allotted funds for such purpose.

Requests for Travel Approval

School Board members seeking to attend local, state or national conferences and board related meetings must complete the appropriate form and submit such form, along with documentation describing the details of the conference or meeting to include the registration costs and summary of program, to the School Board clerk via electronic mail at least twenty-one (21) business days prior to (a) the due date for the conference registration; or (b) the date of the intended travel if a registration fee is not applicable. The date and time of receipt of the request form and any required documentation will be noted by the School Board clerk. The request for travel will be considered by the School Board during the next regularly scheduled meeting.
Requests for travel that are not submitted in accordance with this policy will not be considered as received and will not be forwarded to the School Board for approval.

**Local and In-State Travel**

For the purposes of this policy, local travel is defined as travel within the City of Richmond and its contiguous counties. For the purposes of this policy, in-state travel is defined as travel within the Commonwealth of Virginia with the exception of travel within the City of Richmond and its contiguous counties. Reimbursement for mileage, lodging and incidental expenses based on local travel is prohibited. School Board members may be reimbursed for approved in-state travel in accordance with this policy. The School Board will consider approval of lodging expenses, as detailed below, for in-state travel for no more than two (2) nights for in-state conferences and board related meetings. An exception for lodging expenses may be considered for School Board members who are appointed as delegates to state associations by the School Board. Expenses for meals and incidentals for in-state travel will be approved as detailed below. School Board members may be reimbursed for mileage for approved in-state travel at the same rate authorized by the State Travel Regulations for the Commonwealth of Virginia in effect at the time of travel as based on the current IRS rate for standard travel.

**Out-of-State Travel**

Lodging, meals and incidental expenses for out-of-state board related travel will be approved as detailed below. Arrangements for transportation for out-of-state travel will be made via commercial airline, unless another mode of transportation is deemed more economical and efficient. For out-of-state travel, when courtesy transportation is provided by a hotel or other service facility, the School Board member is encouraged to use such service. School Board members may be reimbursed for taxi, bus or other forms of public transportation utilized while traveling upon submission of actual receipts as described below.

**Lodging**

Arrangements for lodging for in-state and out-of-state board related travel shall be based on the intended destination and the lodging guidelines set forth in the State Travel Regulations for the Commonwealth of Virginia in effect at the time of the request for travel. (See Appendix A following this policy for Lodging/Meals & Incidental Travel Expenses Guidelines). Approval of lodging expenses is limited to the actual expenses incurred up to the guideline amount, plus hotel taxes, fees, and surcharges. Lodging expenses in excess of the state guidelines will not be approved.

**Meals and Incidental Expenses**

Generally, meals and certain incidental travel expenses will be approved for in-state and out-of-state travel on a per diem basis as set forth in the State Travel Regulations for the Commonwealth of Virginia. (See Appendix A following this policy for Lodging/Meals & Incidental Travel Expenses Guidelines). A School Board member’s allotment for meals and incidentals will be pro-rated based on the time of travel on departure and return days as well as if
meals are provided in conjunction with the travel event. The applicable per diem for meals and incidentals, or the pro-rated amount, is not payable to the School Board member without itemization of expense or receipts. Meal and incidental expenses in excess of the state guidelines will not be approved.

Other Expenses

School Board members may be reimbursed, as further described, for reasonable miscellaneous expenses, including but not limited to the costs for baggage storage and handling, tolls, and parking fees (excluding valet parking for personal convenience), incurred during in-state or out-of-state board approved travel. Actual receipts for such expenses must be submitted with the request for reimbursement.

Travel Reimbursement Requests

Application for reimbursement for expenses related to approved board related in-state or out-of-state travel, shall be submitted to the School Board clerk, on the proper form, with the appropriate supporting documentation, to include the actual receipts where applicable, within thirty (30) days following the return from travel. Reimbursement requests that are not submitted in accordance with this policy will not be processed. The School Board clerk will perform the necessary reconciliations based on the actual receipts and process the reimbursement for the School Board member if appropriate.

Trip Cancellation

With exception to extenuating circumstances, as determined by the School Board, School Board members approved for travel will be personally responsible for repayment of costs incurred, which cannot be recovered, for trips that are cancelled by the School Board Member.


Adopted March 16, 2015
Revised/Adopted September 28, 2015
ARTICLE VI

POLICY 1-6.1 SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

Regular Meetings

The time for holding regular meetings shall be fixed at the annual organizational meeting in January as detailed above in Policy 1-3.1. The date and meeting place of a regular meeting may be changed by the Board Chair, in consultation with the Vice-Chair, provided that every member is notified and due notice is given to the public. Generally, the School Board of the City of Richmond will conduct meetings on the first and third Mondays of each month. The public shall be encouraged through all reasonable media to attend School Board meetings.

The School Board shall give notice of the date, time and location of its regular meetings by placing a notice in a prominent public location at which notices are regularly posted and in the office of the Clerk of the School Board at least three (3) working days prior to the meeting. In addition, the School Board shall publish notice of its meetings by electronic means whenever feasible.

Special Meetings

The School Board may hold special meetings when necessary. Special meetings may be called by the Chair or at the request of any three School Board members. Notice, reasonable under the circumstances, of special or emergency meetings shall be given contemporaneously with the notice provided to members of the School Board.

No business shall be transacted at any special meeting which does not come within the purpose set forth in the call for the meeting unless all members of the School Board are present and unanimously agree to the consideration of the additional item or items.

Open Meetings and Closed Sessions

Meetings of the School Board shall be open to the public except those sessions when the School Board adjourns to a closed session as prescribed by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 2.2-3707, 2.2-3711, 22.1-72

Adopted December 6, 2010
Revised/Adopted July 15, 2013
Revised/Adopted March 17, 2014

POLICY 1-6.2 AGENDA PREPARATION AND DISSEMINATION

Agenda Preparation

The agenda for School Board meetings shall be prepared by the Chair, Vice-Chair and the division superintendent. All School Board members may suggest items for placement on the agenda. All items requested for inclusion on the agenda, including presentations, reports, certificates and
recognitions, shall be presented in writing in the Office of the Clerk to be compiled by the Chair, Vice-Chair and the division superintendent.

No individual member of the School Board shall be listed as patron of any measure. Any recognition of a person or organization shall be made by the Chair on behalf of the full School Board. Full copies of each proposed certificate or recognition need not be distributed to the School Board, but the text of any proclamation or other proposed certificate or recognition shall be summarized and distributed to the School Board and made available upon request.

The School Board may add or delete items from the agenda during a meeting by a motion, properly made, seconded and adopted by a majority vote of the members present.

Agenda Dissemination

The agenda shall be distributed to School Board members at least three (3) days in advance of the regular meeting. A copy of the agenda packet and materials shall be made available for inspection by the public at the same time such documents are furnished to the School Board members unless materials are exempt under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-70, 22.1-79, 2.2-3707

Adopted December 6, 2010
Revised/Adopted March 17, 2014

POLICY 1-6.3 QUORUM AND RULES OF ORDER

Quorum

A majority of the School Board shall constitute a quorum for any School Board meeting.

Rules of Order

The School Board shall observe Robert's Rules of Order, revised, except as otherwise provided by these bylaws or by statute.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-73

Adopted December 6, 2010
Revised/Adopted July 15, 2013
Revised/Adopted March 17, 2014

POLICY 1-6.4 MINUTES AND RECORDINGS OF BOARD MEETINGS

Minutes

Minutes shall be recorded at all open meetings and shall include, but are not limited to, (i) the date, time and location of the meeting; (ii) the members of the School Board recorded as present and
absent, and (iii) a summary of the discussion on matters proposed, deliberated or decided, and a record of any votes taken.

The official minutes of the School Board shall be signed by the Chair and the Clerk, kept in a safe place by the Clerk, distributed to all School Board members as soon as possible, and shall be made available to any citizen desiring to examine them during the hours when the Office of the Clerk is open.

Recordings

Electronic recordings of School Board meetings shall be maintained by the Office of the Clerk for a period of three (3) years following the date of the meeting.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, 22.1-74, 22.1-77, 2.2-3707

Adopted December 6, 2010
Revised/Adopted March 17, 2014

POLICY 1-6.5 VOTING METHOD

The Clerk shall record all matters voted on by the School Board as passed or defeated in the minutes. Voting shall be by voice, yes or no, unless there is a negative or abstaining vote, in which case the Chair may call for a poll of the School Board. A poll of the School Board shall be made at the request of any School Board member. The official vote on all decisions that are unanimous shall be recorded in the official minutes. The minutes of the meeting shall reflect the method and result of all votes. Except as otherwise required by law or School Board policy, all matters shall be passed when they have received the affirmative vote of a majority of the members present. No votes shall be taken by secret or written ballot.

In any case in which there shall be a tie vote of the School Board when all members are not present, the question shall be passed by until the next meeting when it shall again be voted upon even if all members are not present. In complying with this procedure, or in any case in which there is a tie vote when all the members of the School Board are present, the Clerk shall record the vote and immediately notify the tie breaker, if any, to vote as provided by Section 22.1-75 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended. If no tiebreaker has been appointed as authorized by state law, any tie vote shall defeat the motion, resolution or issue voted upon.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-44, 22.1-75, 2.2-3707, 2.2-3710

Adopted December 6, 2010
Revised/Adopted March 17, 2014

POLICY 1-6.6 ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS FROM REMOTE LOCATIONS

Except as provided hereafter, the School Board shall not conduct any meeting wherein the public business is discussed or transacted through telephonic, video, electronic, or other communication means where the members are not physically assembled.
**Quorum Physically Assembled**

A School Board member may participate in a meeting through electronic communication means from a remote location that is not open to the public if:

1. on the day of a meeting, the School Board member notifies the Chair of the School Board that he or she is unable to attend the meeting due to an emergency or personal matter and identifies with specificity the nature of the emergency or personal matter, and the School Board:
   a. approves the member's participation by a majority vote of the members present; and
   b. records in its minutes the specific nature of the emergency or personal matter and the remote location from which the member participated.

In deciding whether or not to approve a Board member’s request to participate from a remote location, the Board shall not consider the identity of the member making the request or the matters that will be considered or voted on at the meeting.

If a Board member’s participation from a remote location is disapproved, such disapproval will be recorded in the minutes with specificity.

Such participation by a School Board member shall be limited each calendar year to two (2) meetings or 25 percent of the meetings of the School Board, whichever is fewer; or

2. a School Board member notifies the School Board Chair that he or she is unable to attend a meeting due to a temporary or permanent disability or other medical condition that prevents the member's physical attendance and the School Board records this fact and the remote location from which the member participated in its minutes.

A School Board member may participate in a meeting by electronic means pursuant to this section only when (1) a quorum of the School Board is physically assembled at the primary or central meeting location; and (2) the School Board makes arrangements for the voice of the remote participant to be heard by all persons at the primary or central meeting location.

**Quorum Not Physically Assembled**

The School Board may meet by electronic communication means without a quorum physically assembled at one location when the Governor has declared a state of emergency in accordance with Va. Code § 44-146.17, provided: (1) the catastrophic nature of the declared emergency makes it impracticable or unsafe to assemble a quorum in a single location, and (2) the purpose of the meeting is to address the emergency.

If a meeting is held pursuant to this section, the School Board shall:

1. give public notice using the best available method given the nature of the emergency contemporaneously with the notice provided members of the School Board;
2. make arrangements for public access to the meeting;
make available to the public, at the time of the meeting, agenda packets and all materials, unless exempt, that will be distributed to members of the School Board and that have been made available to the School Board’s staff in sufficient time for duplication and forwarding to all locations at which public access will be provided;

4. record minutes of the meeting in accordance with Policy 1-6.4; and

5. record in the minutes votes taken by name in roll-call fashion.

The nature of the emergency and the fact that the meeting was held by electronic communication means and the type of electronic communication means by which the meeting was held shall be stated in the minutes of the meeting.

**Reporting**

If the School Board meets by electronic means, it shall make a written report of the following to the Virginia Freedom of Information Advisory Council and the Joint Commission on Technology and Science by December 15 of each year:

1. the total number of electronic communication meetings held that year;
2. the dates and purposes of the meetings;
3. a copy of the agenda for each meeting;
4. the number of sites for each meeting;
5. the types of electronic communication means by which the meetings were held;
6. the number of participants, including members of the public, at each meeting location;
7. the identity of the members of the School Board recorded as absent and those recorded as present at each meeting location;
8. a summary of any public comment received about the electronic communication meetings; and
9. a summary of the School Board’s experience using electronic communication meetings, including its logistical and technical experience.

At any meeting at which any member of the School Board participates electronically, the School Board will make copies of the public comment form prepared by the Virginia Freedom of Information Advisory Council available to the public.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 2.2-3708; 2.2-3708.1.

Adopted December 6, 2010
Revised/Adopted March 17, 2014
Revised/Adopted June 16, 2014

**POLICY 1-6.7 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS**

Public Information Period

The School Board is responsible by law for the development, review, revision and adoption of division-wide policies to guide the operation of Richmond Public Schools. The School Board believes that public awareness of the policy making process is highly desirable and that consideration should be
given to the views of teachers, parents and other concerned citizens in the development and implementation of school division policies.

The School Board welcomes citizen input and participation in matters concerning the operation of the school division. The "public information" segment of the agenda at regular meetings, not to exceed thirty (30) minutes, is allotted for the hearing of citizens concerning the services, policies and affairs of the Richmond Public Schools. Each citizen desiring to comment on any matter concerning such services, policies and affairs shall be allotted such time within the thirty (30) minute period as determined and allotted by the presiding officer. Each citizen will receive up to three (3) minutes to speak. The Chair may allow up to five (5) minutes for citizens representing organizations.

Every citizen desiring to comment on matters before the School Board as herein specified shall, no later than 12:00 noon on the last business day before the meeting at which such citizen desires to be heard, request the School Board Clerk for an allotment of time. In the event that time remains during the public information session, the School Board may allow citizens who have not made a request an opportunity to be heard.

Conduct of Speakers

Speakers shall state their full legal name prior to addressing the School Board. Speakers will address the School Board as a whole, rather than individual School Board members, the division superintendent, School Board attorney, Clerk, or any other staff member. The School Board will listen to comments but will not respond during the public information period.

Speakers must supply the Clerk, when requesting time, with a description of their topic and they must confine their comments to that subject only.

Persons appearing before the School Board will not be allowed to:

1. Engage in personal attacks of any individual;
2. Campaign for public office;
3. Promote private business ventures; or
4. Use profanity or vulgar language.

Testimony regarding individual students or that criticizes staff members by name will not be permitted in order to protect the confidentiality and legal rights of those involved. If a citizen’s comments during the public information session relate to school-based issues, the Chair may refer that individual to Richmond Public Schools’ administration for one-on-one consultation and follow-up.

It is important that all citizens who wish to participate in the public information period abide by the guidelines set forth in this policy. Refusal to abide by the policy will result in the forfeiture of the remaining time that has been allotted to the speaker.

Citizens may express their views in writing in lieu of any oral presentation.


Adopted December 6, 2010
Revised/Adopted March 17, 2014
Appendix A