

**Lodi Unified School District  
Governance Handbook**

February 20, 2018

Board of Trustees

George Neely, *President*  
Gary Knackstedt, *Vice President*  
Joe Nava, *Clerk*  
Bonnie Cassel, *Trustee*  
Ron Freitas, *Trustee*  
Ron Heberle, *Trustee*  
Dr. Daryl Talken, *Trustee*

Superintendent

Dr. Catherine Nichols-Washer

Date Approved by Board: February 20, 2018

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## UNITY OF PURPOSE

What We Are Most Proud of About this District:

- Our students and their achievements.
- We have good quality, caring people at all levels of our organization who make things happen for our students.
- Regardless of anything that happens, we continue to focus on student achievement.
- We are implementing interventions and programs to meet the needs of our students, close the achievement gap, and enable all students to succeed.
- We are fiscally sound.
- We strive to be the best.

## UNITY OF PURPOSE

What We Want to Accomplish:

- Above all, Student Achievement, Safety, Wellbeing, and Happiness
- To tap into and fully employ the expertise, innovation, and enthusiasm of our entire staff
- Make a significant impact on students in poverty and our low-performing students
- A continued focus on excellence
- To better understand the population that we serve.
- Involve parents in their children's education.
- Helping students develop a positive image of their future and a plan on how to get there.
- To provide hope and support for all Lodi Unified families.

## **Mission Statement**

Lodi Unified School District will ensure the best education for students to be successful in life.

## **Value Statement**

**We Value:**

Every student

High student achievement and accomplishment

Contributions and commitments of teachers and all staff as educators

Parents as partners

Diversity

## **Vision Statement**

### **In Lodi Unified School District:**

- Each student realizes his/her maximum potential.
- There is no achievement gap between groups of students.
- We have a diverse staff that is highly qualified and enjoys its work.
- Schools are inviting and responsive to parents, engaging them as partners in their children's education.
- We provide resources to support quality education and safe, attractive learning environments in all of our schools.
- We have a trusting, working relationship among the Board of Education, the school district, and the community.

## **Goals**

1. Meet our LCAP Goals as all groups of students improve their performance and make progress to eliminate the Achievement Gap.
2. Improve the engagement of parents/guardians as partners in their children's education.
3. Support an environment where diversity is valued.
4. Maximize resources to improve the achievement of students in a safe and positive learning environment.
5. Provide a comprehensive educational program that prepares students to be successful in higher education and the world of work.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **The Role of the Board and Superintendent:**

School board “trustees” are the representatives of the people, elected to ensure the district schools educate the children in consideration of the interests of the local community. The role of the School Board is to govern the school district.

The superintendent is hired by the school board to provide the professional expertise in the day-to-day operations of the district. The role of the Superintendent is:

1. To work with the school board to develop an effective governance leadership team.
2. To serve as the chief administrative officer for the school district.

### **Board Responsibilities:**

#### **We Set the Direction for Lodi Unified Schools by:**

- Focusing on student learning.
- Assessing district needs.
- Generating, reviewing and revising setting direction documents: (beliefs, vision, priorities, strategic goals, success indicators)
- Ensuring an appropriate inclusive process is used to develop these documents.
- Ensuring that these documents are the driving force for all district efforts.

#### **We establish an effective and efficient Structure for the school district by:**

- Employing the superintendent.
- Setting policy for hiring of other personnel.
- Setting policies.
- Setting direction for and adopting the curriculum.
- Establishing budget priorities and adopting the budget.
- Overseeing facilities issues.
- Providing direction for and voting to accept collective bargaining agreements.

#### **We Provide Support through our behavior and actions by:**

- Acting with a professional demeanor that models the district’s beliefs and vision.
- Making decisions and providing resources that support mutually agreed upon priorities and goals.
- Upholding board approved district policies.

- Ensuring a positive personnel climate exists.
- Being knowledgeable about district efforts and able to explain them to the public.

**We Ensure Accountability to the Public by:**

- Evaluating the superintendent
- Monitoring, reviewing and revising policies
- Serving as a judicial and appeals body
- Monitoring student achievement and program effectiveness and requiring program changes as indicated
- Monitoring and adjusting district finances
- Reviewing facilities issues
- Monitoring the collective bargaining process

**We Act as Community Leaders by:**

- Speaking with a common voice about district priorities, goals and issues.
- Engaging and involving the community in district schools and activities.
- Communicating clear information about policies, programs and fiscal conditions of the district.
- Educating the community and the media about issues facing the district and public education.
- Advocating for children, district programs and public education to the general public, community, and local, state and national leaders.

## **LUSD GOVERNANCE TEAM CULTURE**

### **GOVERNANCE AGREEMENTS TO FACILITATE LEADERSHIP**

**Governance Team Norms and Protocols:**

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

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

To this end, we have adopted the following meeting guidelines:

### **Meeting Guidelines**

- We will keep our focus on the best interest of our students.
- We will stay focused on our goals and avoid getting sidetracked.
- When we have a difference of opinion, we will debate the facts of the situation and avoid personalities. We will address process -- not personalities.
- We will all work to ensure that there are no hidden agendas and that all issues and concerns can be dealt with openly by all members.
- We will respect differences, show respect and never dismiss or devalue others.
- Each member will take responsibility for the work of the team. We will each be responsible for the success of the meeting, participate equally and address concerns.
- Everyone's opinions count; we will be open to the ideas of others.
- We will work toward the future – learning from the past.
- We will be supportive rather than judgmental.

### **Protocols – Structure and Process**

Effective governance teams discuss and agree upon the formal structures and processes, or protocols, used by the board and superintendent in their functioning as a team. These structures and processes guide the operation of the governance team and determine how they do business. Protocols are the agreements that ensure that all members of the team are operating within their agreed upon roles.

## Protocols to Facilitate Governance Leadership

TOPIC: PROTOCOL:

<p><b>Responding to Staff or Community Concerns or Complaints</b></p>	<p><b><u>Rationale:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We care about the concerns of our constituents,</li> <li>• But we recognize that individual Board Members do not have the authority to resolve issues and complaints.</li> <li>• Problems should be resolved at the appropriate level within the district.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Therefore, when a Board Member is approached by a community or staff member with an issue or concern, he/she will:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Receive</u></b> – Listen without interruption and without preparing a response to the person’s issues or concerns.</li> <li>• <b><u>Repeat</u></b> – Paraphrase or ask a clarifying question to ensure understanding of what has been said.</li> <li>• <b><u>Request</u></b> – Ask what the person sees as the solution to the problem or concern. Ask what they would have us do with the information they have given us.</li> <li>• <b><u>Review</u></b> – The conversation (and next steps, if any).</li> <li>• <b><u>Redirect</u></b> – Put the person back into the system at the appropriate place.</li> <li>• <b><u>Report</u></b> - Notify the Superintendent of the conversation so that she has the full picture and can follow through as appropriate and/or necessary.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Giving Direction to the Superintendent and Other Staff</b></p>	<p><b><u>Rationale:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In order to best serve our students, we need to show consistency and clarity so that the Superintendent and all staff know what we expect of them.</li> <li>• We need to focus on our Mission and goals</li> <li>• Clear direction is important in order to have a fair evaluation process.</li> <li>• We need to show fairness to other Board Members</li> <li>• We need to follow the law.</li> <li>• This speaks to being honorable.</li> </ul>



	<p><b><u>Therefore, we agree that:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direction is given only at Board Meetings through a majority vote of the Board.</li> <li>• That direction is given to the Superintendent. She will determine how the direction is carried out and by whom.</li> <li>• We will all support majority decisions.</li> <li>• One-on-One meetings are for asking questions and providing information, not for directing or influencing the Superintendent.</li> <li>• Factual information will be shared with all.</li> </ul>
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TOPIC:                      PROTOCOL:

<b>Public Comment</b>	<p><b><u>Rationale:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We wish to have orderly, efficient meetings.</li> <li>• We recognize that the purpose of public comment is to inform Board deliberations</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Therefore, we agree that:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board President will introduce the item.</li> <li>• If there is a staff report, it will be given and Board Members may ask questions of the staff member (s).</li> <li>• Then the Board President will open public comment.</li> <li>• The public will be encouraged to use “Request to Be Heard Cards.”</li> <li>• Once public comment is complete, the Board President will close public comment.</li> <li>• Once public comment is closed, no additional public comments will be taken on that agenda item.</li> <li>• Then the Board will deliberate.</li> </ul>
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TOPIC:

PROTOCOL:

<b>Bringing-up New Agenda Items</b>	<p><b><u>Rationale:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New agenda items should be of interest to a majority of Board Members.</li><li>• Consistency with the District’s Mission and goals and demands on staff time should be a consideration when entertaining new items.</li></ul> <p><b><u>Therefore, we agree that:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At the designated time on the agenda, Board Members may suggest items for future agendas.</li><li>• A majority of the Board must concur in order to place a new item on a future agenda.</li><li>• Consistency with the District’s Mission and goals, and demands on staff time will be considered when determining the appropriateness of new agenda items.</li><li>• The Superintendent and Board President will determine the proper placement of the item on a future agenda.</li><li>• No staff time will be required in preparation for the initial discussion of the item.</li></ul>
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We have reviewed and agree to follow the aforementioned governance team norms and protocols in order to support a positive and productive working relationship among the Lodi Unified School District Board of Education, Superintendent, staff, students and the community. We shall renew this agreement annually.

Affirmed on this 20 day of February 2018



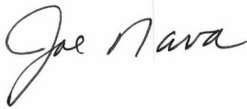
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George Neely, Board President



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Gary Knackstedt, Vice President



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Joe Nava, Clerk



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Bonnie Cassel, Trustee



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Ron Heberle, Trustee



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Dr. Daryl Talken Trustee



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Ron Freitas, Trustee



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Catherine Nichols-Washer