

Board Member Orientation

The following list of topics may be used in developing a comprehensive orientation program.

School Community Relationships and General Responsibilities:

1. An explanation of how Board meetings are conducted (notices, agenda items, motions, seconds, petitions, etc.).
2. An explanation of the management structure and responsibilities of the Board, superintendent, administrators and individual Board members.
3. An explanation of Board member development opportunities throughout the year, with financial reimbursement for related costs.
4. An explanation of the district's public relations program, how it is coordinated and what activities regularly take place.
5. An explanation of services, activities of various groups, associations and unions .

School Finance:

6. An explanation of Iowa's School Foundation Plan and what it means in terms of the local district budget.
7. A copy of the district's budget. Explanation of how, when and by whom it is prepared, how educational needs are translated into a dollars and cents plan, where the money comes from, and how the money is spent.
8. A description of the district's student enrollment trends and projections.
9. An explanation of the scope and recent history of local tax levies.
10. A listing of the existing bond indebtedness of the district and when various building debts will expire.
11. An explanation of the funding process for Area Education Agencies.
12. An explanation of curriculum standards required by state law (Section 257.25) and implemented by rules of the Department of Public Instruction, and the role of accreditation institutions, i.e., North Central Association and any recent Evaluations Program.
13. An explanation of the district's overall educational program, needs assessment results, and future plans for program changes.
14. An explanation of the educational organization of the school district including student groupings, shared pupils/teachers, and curriculum articulation.
15. An explanation of student achievement, testing, and the utilization of test results.
16. A statement of the percentages of students who go on to college or other post high school programs and drop out.
17. Documents showing teacher/pupil ratio and median class size district-wide and for appropriate subgroupings.
18. An explanation of the district's program for exceptional children: those with higher or lower than normal mentality, impaired sight or hearing, emotional, neurological and other problems.
19. A statement of the age and condition of textbooks, instructional materials, media holdings, and school equipment.
20. A statement of the Board's philosophy regarding extracurricular activities in the district and a listing of activities, participation levels, and cost factors.
21. An explanation of the services of the Area Education Agency.

Employee Relations:

22. A description of district staff and recruitment procedures.
23. A copy of staff salary schedules, median or mean salary and fringe benefit programs.
24. An explanation of collective bargaining, the hows and whys of negotiations, a copy of any collective bargaining agreement(s), along with a brief history of bargaining in the District.
25. A brief explanation of the Board's role relative to administrator and teacher contract law.

26. An explanation of the district's evaluation criteria and procedures for the administrators, teachers, and support personnel.

School District Facilities/Transportation:

27. A list showing the number, location, boundaries, and condition of schools and other buildings owned or operated by the district.
28. A description of the district's building maintenance program and construction plans.
29. An explanation of the student transportation system.