



# San Dieguito Union High School District

## Governance Handbook 2020

### Board of Trustees

---

	Term	Area
Beth Hergesheimer, President	2020	2
Maureen "Mo" Muir, Vice-President	2022	1
Joyce Dalessandro, Trustee	2020	4
Kristin Gibson, Clerk	2022	5
Melisse Mossy, Trustee	2022	3

### Superintendent

---

Robert A. Haley, Ed.D.

*\*This handbook reflects the governance team's work on creation of a framework for effective governance. This involves ongoing discussions about unity of purpose, roles, commitment to norms, protocols and coming to agreement on formal structures that will enable the governance team to perform its responsibilities in a way that best benefits all students.*

## Unity of Purpose

---

*Unity of Purpose is a common focus, overarching goals, and the values and beliefs governance team members share about students, the district and public education that help them transcend their individual differences to fulfill a greater purpose.*

### Vision

---

All Students Are Entitled to a Successful Education  
 We are a Team  
 Engaged, Inspired, Prepared

### Mission

---

To provide a world-class education for all students through quality programs that engage students, inspire achievement and service to others; prepare them to be lifelong learners and responsible members of society.

*Engaged, Inspired, Prepared*

## Core Values

---

- We are committed to the safety and wellness of our students
- We are committed to the safety and wellness of our staff
- We will make decisions based on what is best for students
- We will focus on the positive aspects of our district
- We will work together to meet our challenges
- We will model the type of behavior we expect in our district

## Effective Governance

---

*School district governance is the process of reaching agreements that balance and reflect community values, beliefs and priorities in policies that focus and align all district efforts to enhance student achievement.*

There are three dimensions to the effective governance of any organization: the actions of an individual, a group coming together to govern and the performance of the governance responsibilities by the group.

In San Dieguito Union High School District, the Board and Superintendent work together as a governance team. We will:

1. Maintain unity of purpose,
2. Agree on and govern with appropriate roles,
3. Create and sustain a positive governance culture, and
4. Create a supportive structure for effective governance.

## Governance Responsibilities

---

**We are responsible for setting the direction for the community's schools.** Of all the roles and responsibilities of governing boards, none is more central to the purpose of local public school governance than ensuring that a long-term vision is established for the school system. The vision reflects the consensus of the community, the board and the district staff as to what students need in order to achieve their highest potential. The vision should set a direction for the school district, driving every aspect of the district's program.

**We are responsible for establishing an effective and efficient structure for the school district.** The board is responsible for establishing and maintaining an organizational structure that supports the district's vision and empowers the professional staff. Although the board does not implement policies or programs, board members are responsible for:

- employing the superintendent and setting policy for hiring of other personnel;
- overseeing the development of and adopting policies;
- setting a direction for and adopting curriculum;
- establishing budget priorities, adopting the budget and overseeing facilities issues; and
- providing direction for and accepting collective bargaining agreements.

**We are responsible for providing support.** After establishing the structure, boards through their behavior and actions, have a responsibility to support the superintendent and staff as they carry out the direction of the board. This involves:

- 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 district policies the board has approved;
- ensuring a positive personnel climate exists; and
- being knowledgeable enough about district efforts to explain them to the public.

**We are responsible for ensuring accountability to the public.** As community representatives, boards are accountable to the public for the performance of the community’s schools. Boards establish systems and processes to monitor results, evaluate the school system’s progress toward accomplishing the district’s vision and communicate that progress to the local community. In order to ensure personnel, program and fiscal accountability, boards are responsible for:

- evaluating the superintendent and setting policy for the evaluation of other personnel;
- 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; and
- monitoring the collective bargaining process.

**We are responsible for acting as community leaders.** Board members have a responsibility to involve the community in meaningful ways in setting a direction for the district and to communicate clear information about district policies, educational programs, fiscal condition and progress on goals adopted to achieve the vision. As the only locally elected officials chosen solely to represent the interests of students, board members also have a responsibility to speak out on behalf of those students. Boards are advocates for students, the school district’s educational programs and public education. Board members build support for public education in the local community and at the state and national levels.

**Individual Trustee Standards:**

- Keeps learning and achievement for all students as the primary focus.
- Values, supports and advocates for public education.
- Recognizes and respects differences of perspective and style on the board and among staff, students, parents and the community.
- Acts with dignity, and understands the implications of demeanor and behavior.
- Keeps confidential matters confidential.
- Participates in professional development and commits the time and energy necessary to be an informed and effective leader.

- Understands the distinctions between board and staff roles, and refrains from performing management functions that are the responsibility of the superintendent and staff.
- Understands that authority rests with the board as a whole and not with individuals.

#### **Superintendent Standards:**

- Promotes the success of all students and supports the efforts of the board of trustees to keep the district focused on learning and achievement.
- Values, advocates and supports public education and all stake holders.
- Recognizes and respects the differences of perspective and style on the board and among staff, students, parents and the community — and ensures that the diverse range of views inform board decisions.
- Acts with dignity, treats everyone with civility and respect, and understands the implications of demeanor and behavior.
- Serves as a model for the value of lifelong learning and supports the board’s continuous professional development.
- Works with the board as a “governance team” and assures collective responsibility for building a unity of purpose, communicating a common vision and creating a positive organizational culture.
- Recognizes that the board/superintendent governance relationship is supported by the management team.
- Understands the distinctions between board and staff roles, and respects the role of the board as the representative of the community.
- Understands that authority rests with the board as a whole; provides guidance to the board to assist in decision-making; and provides leadership based on the direction of the board as a whole.
- Communicates openly with trust and integrity including providing all members of the board with equal access to information, and recognizing the importance of both responsive and anticipatory communications.
- Accepts leadership responsibility and accountability for implementing the vision, goals and policies of the district.

## **Governance Norms**

---

We agree to:

- Focus on the interest of students
- Be trustworthy and maintain confidentiality
- Participate and interact as a team
- Be courteous to each other and our constituents
- Show respect for each other, staff and the community
- Communicate openly with honesty
- Commit the time necessary to govern effectively
- Be informed and prepared for meetings and duties

*Engaged, Inspired, Prepared*

- Not take disagreements personally
- Not surprise staff or fellow trustees
- Listen openly for understanding
- Share the same information base
- Not make assumptions
- Ask questions for clarification
- Respect the history of the district while focusing on the present and future
- Accept and support the majority
- Request breaks as needed during meetings

## Governance Protocols

---

To effectively meet district priorities, goals and challenges, the board and superintendent must function together as a governance leadership team. The following protocols were developed to support and promote the effectiveness of the governance team and to ensure a positive and productive working relationship among board members, the superintendent, district staff, and the community. The protocols were developed for and by the members of the governance team, and may be modified over time as needed.

Topic	Board Meetings
<b>Rationale</b>	The board meeting is a meeting to conduct board business in public. Well-run efficient meetings model leadership and proactive thinking, promote trust and confidence, and provide opportunities to demonstrate planning for the future and strategically moving the district forward.
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board agendas shall include the district’s vision and goals</li> <li>• Board agenda presentations, reports and items will relate to the district’s vision, mission and goals.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<p><b>Placement of Items on the Agenda</b></p> <p>Any board member or member of the public may request that a matter within the jurisdiction of the board be placed on the board meeting agenda. Clarification of the agenda placement process, appropriate placement of items on the board agenda and sufficient time for gathering information on the issue is critical to effective discussion and deliberation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A section on the agenda at each regular meeting will include an opportunity to request future items. The items can be presentations, reports or action.</li> <li>• Trustees may send requests for agenda items to the superintendent and/or the board president with reasons for the requested items.</li> <li>• The superintendent and the board president will work together to determine the appropriate placement of board requested items.</li> </ul>

<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The board president will follow up with the requesting trustee with information about the request, when the item will be considered, or ask for more information.</li> <li>• If the item is not to be placed on an agenda, the board president will follow up with the trustee and give an explanation as to why.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Board Meeting Management – Public Comment</b></p> <p>The board wants to demonstrate deliberation with professionalism and respect. Trustees want to ensure that multiple voices of the community are heard and that the process for community input is clearly defined.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The board president will introduce the purpose of the meeting and restate the guidelines for public input as listed on the board meeting agenda.</li> <li>• For items not on the agenda, members of the public will be asked, but not required, to submit a comment card with their name and information.</li> <li>• Three minutes are allotted for each speaker and twenty minutes will be allotted for each topic. The board president shall be responsible for enforcing these limits fairly. The board president may ask the vice-president, clerk or staff to assist in timing. The board president has discretion to add more time for a topic, but may choose to add the additional time at the end of the meeting. The board president may shorten the amount of time per speaker. If a speaker does not want his or her time shortened the board president may ask that they wait until the end of the meeting.</li> <li>• For items on the agenda, members of the public will be asked, but not required, to submit a comment card with their name and information.</li> <li>• The board president will call on the member of the public immediately after the item is introduced or, at his or her discretion, after background information has been provided.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<p><b>Board Meeting Management – Action Items</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The board president will introduce the item.</li> <li>• The board president will either have public comment before or after background information is provided. The public is allowed to comment, but not participate in board deliberation.</li> <li>• The board president may ask for a motion and a second prior to receiving staff information or after. Once a motion is on the table the board president will ask if there are further questions or comments from trustees prior to voting.</li> <li>• Trustees may be asked for clarification by a fellow trustee as to why they voted a particular way on an item and, as a courtesy, they are asked to respond.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Protocol</b></p>	<p><b>Board Meeting Management – Consent Items</b></p> <p>The board wants to effectively use time during its meetings. Consent items are routine in nature and often reflect prior decisions. Placement on the consent agenda does not mean the item is not important.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any member of the public, staff or a trustee may request an item be pulled from the consent agenda. An item only needs to be pulled if a separate vote on the item is requested. Without pulling an item, a trustee may ask for clarification or comment on an item.</li> <li>• The board president will ask for a motion, a second, and then ask if there are further questions or comments from trustees prior to voting on the consent agenda.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Protocol</b></p>	<p><b>Board Meeting Management – Closed Session</b></p> <p>The governing board recognizes the importance of maintaining the confidentiality of information acquired as part of a board member's official duties. The responsibility of the board includes being privy to closed sessions or confidential information about district litigation, personnel, negotiations, superintendent evaluation, or other issues permitted under the Brown Act.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pursuant to the Brown Act, the board president will announce closed session and the topics to be discussed.</li> <li>• The board president shall ensure that the discussion in closed session is solely on the topics listed.</li> <li>• Board members will not breach confidentiality. If a board member inadvertently or accidentally violates a confidential issue, he or she will take immediate responsibility for the action by notifying the board president and the superintendent.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Protocol</b></p>	<p><b>Board Meeting Management – Interaction with the Public</b></p> <p>The board meeting is a meeting to conduct board business in public. Board meetings are the opportunity for the board, as a whole, to get information from staff and make decisions consistent with the unity of purpose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The board president is the presiding officer for the meeting and responsible for ensuring compliance with Government Code.</li> <li>• Although the public may comment on items, deliberation is restricted to the board. The board may ask the superintendent questions or ask for recommendations.</li> <li>• During a meeting, the public is entitled to see and hear information used by an individual trustee to make a decision or reach a conclusion.</li> <li>• Trustees are not to have private conversations during meetings.</li> <li>• During a recess, trustees should be careful about how they interact with members of the public so as to ensure the public, and fellow trustees, know about information that may be relevant to a decision.</li> <li>• Trustees shall ensure a quorum does not interact with the public during a recess.</li> </ul>

<b>Protocol</b>	<p><b>Board Study Sessions</b> Study sessions are for specific topics of interest and an opportunity to study issues in depth, discuss the topic and provide direction. They may include action if the item is properly agendaed. The topics are usually those where additional discussion and education is needed to make important decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The board president and superintendent shall ensure the meeting requirements of the Brown Act are met.</li> <li>• Annually, or as needed, the board may identify topics that require a study session.</li> <li>• The superintendent is responsible for providing the board with the necessary information and access to staff.</li> <li>• The board president will ensure the conduct of the meeting allows all trustees to participate.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<p><b>Board Conversation Meetings</b> Conversation meetings are opportunities for the board to have discussions on topics of interest. Conversation meetings can include staff and/or members of the public. Action is not taken at a conversation meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The board president and superintendent shall ensure the meeting requirements of the Brown Act are met.</li> <li>• Annually, or as needed, the board may identify topics that require a conversation meeting.</li> <li>• The superintendent is responsible for providing the board with the necessary information and access to staff.</li> <li>• The board president will ensure the conduct of the meeting allows all trustees to participate.</li> </ul>
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Long-range Planning</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	<p>The board establishes the district vision, multi-year and annual goals to promote clarity of direction, focus and alignment of resources. Important to the work of the board is the ability to track progress over multiple years, especially due to the lag time with data reporting. The board is mindful of resources and the impact of decisions on district and community resources. The governance team wants to demonstrate proactive planning that is synchronized with the budget.</p>
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The board will hold at least annually a session dedicated to long-range planning and goal setting.</li> <li>• The board's goals should take into account the limits of district resources.</li> <li>• The annual goal setting process will be directly linked to the evaluation of the superintendent's performance.</li> </ul>



Topic	Individual Board Member Roles in Public
<b>Rationale</b>	Trustees are a resource to the community for information about the district’s schools, programs, and pending decisions. The public needs to understand that final authority rests with the entire board. Trustees need to understand the importance and value of being visible and accessible to the community.
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustees will strive to educate the public about their role as elected officials, entrusted with the education of all the students of the community.</li> <li>• Trustees will make visible their dedication and commitment and clarify their authority as one of five in all decisions and actions.</li> <li>• Confidentiality shall be maintained at all times.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<p><b>Individual Board Member Roles in the Public – Concerns or Complaints</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen, being careful not to imply agreement, since only one perspective is being expressed.</li> <li>• Clarify that a board member is one of five and that authority rests with the majority in all board decisions and actions.</li> <li>• Strive to ensure a community member feels heard and empowered with next steps. Provide information and direction to policies or processes or the person in the district (e.g. teacher, principal, superintendent) who can most directly help them with their concern.</li> <li>• Board members will use judgment in responding, being mindful of their role in judicial review.</li> <li>• Trustees will contact the superintendent when they direct a community member to a level above a teacher.</li> <li>• Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.</li> </ul>
Topic	Board Member Roles – Media Relations
<b>Rationale</b>	The board has an obligation to inform the community regarding decisions, positions, and planning. One way this can be accomplished is through the media. Crisis situations may also arise that require providing the media with information or responding to the media.
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The board president is authorized to speak for the board as a whole.</li> <li>• The board president may delegate this authority as needed.</li> <li>• The superintendent speaks for the district.</li> <li>• Individual trustees should be careful in public when communicating their individual positions.</li> <li>• If individual trustees are contacted by the media, they should redirect the request to the board president or the superintendent.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If an individual trustee communicates with the media his or her own position, he or she should notify the board president and the superintendent.</li> <li>• Confidentiality shall be maintained at all times.</li> </ul>
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Board Member Roles – Receiving and Responding to Emails</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	Trustees have an obligation to hear community concern, questions and suggestions. One way in which this occurs is through email.
<b>Protocol</b>	<p><b>Emails sent to all board members</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When appropriate, emails will be forwarded to the superintendent.</li> <li>• Trustees may respond to the sender that the email was forwarded to the superintendent and staff.</li> <li>• If a response is required, it will come from the board president if it is a board policy or governance issue, for all other reasons the superintendent or designated staff.</li> <li>• The superintendent will ensure all trustees are copied on a response.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<p><b>Emails sent to individual board members</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When appropriate, emails will be forwarded to the superintendent.</li> <li>• Trustees may respond to the sender that the email was forwarded to the superintendent and staff.</li> <li>• If a response is required, it will come from the superintendent or designated staff.</li> <li>• The superintendent will ensure that the receiving trustees, or all trustees, are copied on a response.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<p><b>Emails sent requesting opinions or answers directly from board members</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When appropriate, emails will be forwarded to the superintendent.</li> <li>• Trustees may respond that they hear the concern, but opinions are best dealt with through the governance process. Further, trustees may respond that the superintendent or designated staff will answer questions.</li> </ul>
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Board Member Roles – Social Media</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	Trustees use of social media can raise concerns about adherence to the Brown Act.
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustees should make it clear they are communicating as individuals and not representatives of the board.</li> <li>• Trustees should avoid discussions in social media that include a quorum of the board.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trustees should not post content that indicates they have already formed an opinion on a topic before the board for consideration before the deliberative process has taken place.</li> <li>If complaints or concerns about schools are posted on social media, trustees should inform the poster to contact the appropriate staff member.</li> </ul>
--	--

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Board Member Roles – Visiting Schools</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	In order to fulfill the unity of purpose, trustees need to see our classrooms, schools and other facilities. Visits are intended to be informative and coordination is needed so as not to interfere with instruction or the work of the district.
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A series of coordinated school visits will be scheduled throughout the year by the superintendent.</li> <li>The superintendent will ensure visitations are compliant with the provision of Government Code.</li> <li>Trustees may ask the superintendent to arrange other visitations. The superintendent will ensure the visitation does not interfere with instruction or the work of the district.</li> <li>The superintendent may or may not be in attendance for the visitation.</li> <li>Trustees should ensure that during visitations, as they interact, they are only doing so as individuals and not speaking for the board as a whole.</li> <li>Confidentiality shall be maintained at all times.</li> </ul>

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Board/Superintendent Communication</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	Board members should be knowledgeable and equally informed about district programs and issues. There should be open lines of communication between the board and the superintendent and there should be no surprises for either the superintendent or the board.
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The superintendent will prepare a weekly memorandum for the board.</li> <li>The board would like to hear any sensitive information directly from the superintendent or the superintendent's designee when the superintendent is not available.</li> <li>The superintendent will maintain an open door policy and will schedule one-on-one meetings with trustees as needed.</li> <li>The board and the superintendent will strive to inform each other of any important situations.</li> <li>Trustees will meet with the superintendent in advance of board meetings with questions or requests for clarification about information in the board</li> </ul>

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Board/Superintendent Communication</b>
	<p>packet. If they are unable to meet they may call, text or email the superintendent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustees should contact the superintendent, not his staff, for information requests. If the request will take significant staff time, the superintendent may notify the board president and seek direction as to how or if he can comply. When an individual requests information it will be shared, as needed, with all trustees.</li> <li>• Confidentiality shall be maintained at all times.</li> </ul>
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Superintendent Evaluation</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	<p>The superintendent evaluation is an important leadership tool to focus and align all District efforts. The process provides an opportunity for promoting continual and sustained improvement for the district.</p>
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annually the board will conduct a formal evaluation of the superintendent's performance in order to assess his effectiveness in leading the district toward established goals.</li> <li>• The evaluation process shall be led by the board president and conducted in accordance with the superintendent's employment agreement.</li> <li>• The board will schedule a mid-year review of the superintendent to reflect on preliminary results and make any adjustments to the district's direction.</li> <li>• Prior to the evaluation, the superintendent will prepare a report of progress toward district goals, superintendent's self-appraisal of accomplishments and performance, and a review of actions taken to address any board recommendations from the previous evaluation.</li> <li>• Each trustee independently evaluates the superintendent's performance. The board president, or board designee, will summarize and combine the individual evaluations to create a consensus document. The evaluation will be a composite of individual board members' perspectives, but there will be only one final evaluation representing the board's collective judgment. This final evaluation will be provided to the superintendent for his response.</li> <li>• The board will meet in closed session with the superintendent to discuss the evaluation and goals for the following year.</li> </ul>
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Board Governance Self-Assessment</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	<p>Conducting a governance self-evaluation demonstrates accountability to the community and the intention of the governance team to strengthen and improve governance practices.</p>

**Protocol**

- The board supports continuous improvement through an evaluation of governance practices and effectiveness.
- Annually the board will schedule a conversation/study session meeting to reflect on governance practices and participate in a self-evaluation process. During the evaluation, the governance team will discuss what is working well and what can be improved.

## Board Calendar 2020

---

### January

- Governor's Proposed Budget
- Board Services – Independent Auditor's Report
- Board Policy Review 0000 Philosophy, Goals, Objectives and Comprehensive Plans
- Board Policy Review 1000 Community Relations

### February

- Board Policy Review 2000 Administration
- Board Policy Review 3000 Business and Noninstructional Operations

### March

- Personnel Services – Probationary Teacher Nonreelection (may be earlier)
- Business Services – Second Interim Financial Report
- Board Policy Review 4000 Personnel

### April

- Independent Citizens Oversight Committee Prop AA Audit and Report (may be earlier)

### May

- Governor's Proposed Budget May Revision
- Recognition of District Employees of the Year
- Recognition of Volunteers

### June (Two Regular Meetings)

- Board Services – Local Control Accountability Plan Public Hearing and Adoption
- Business Services – Annual Budget Public Hearing and Adoption

- Evaluation of the Superintendent
- Board Policy Review 5000 Students
- Board Policy Review 6000 Instruction

### July

- Special Board Meeting – Community Facilities Districts

### August

- Business Services – Revisions to Budget Based on State Action (if necessary)
- Board Policy Review 7000 Facilities

### September

- Educational Services – Sufficiency of Instructional Materials (Public Hearing)
- Business Services – Unaudited Actuals
- Seating of Student Board Members

### October

- Administrative Services - Enrollment Report

### November

- Notice of Organizational Meeting

### December

- California School Boards Association Annual Education Conference
- Annual Organizational Meeting
- Business Services – First Interim Financial Report
- Board Policy Review 9000 Board Bylaws
- Special Board Meeting – Governance
- Mid-year Evaluation of the Superintendent

# Governance Agreement 2020


---

The San Dieguito Union High School District Board of Trustees is entrusted by the community to uphold the Constitutions of California and the United States, to protect the public interest in schools and to ensure that a high quality education is provided to each student.

Board and Superintendent function together as a governance leadership team in order to effectively meet district challenges. The Governance Handbook reflects our operational agreements.

*As San Dieguito Union High School District Trustees, we have reviewed, and agree to, the outline of effective governance contained in this handbook.*

Affirmed on this 17<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2019

  
Trustee

  
Trustee

  
Trustee

  
Trustee

  
Trustee

  
Superintendent

***\*Portions of this document are taken from language found in the California School Boards Association governance documents.***