

I. SCHOOL BOARD'S MISSION STATEMENT

We, the School Board of the Cherokee County School District, are committed to educating the emerging generation through learning environments designed to increase the performance of all students.

II. SCHOOL BOARD'S BELIEF STATEMENTS

- A. All students deserve the opportunity to learn, achieve success and become productive citizens.
- B. Education/learning is a shared responsibility and should take place in the home, at school and in the community.
- C. All students can learn; but they learn in different ways, at different rates and with different preferential learning styles.
- D. Learning is achieved through the use of a variety of effective teaching techniques.
- E. A safe and secure environment is essential for teaching and learning.
- F. All students should be taught by teachers and parents how to learn and how to become lifelong learners.
- G. All students deserve equal access to a quality education.
- H. Quality education requires quality staff, programs, facilities, equipment and technology.
- I. Parent and community participation, support and responsibility are essential to the positive social, emotional, cultural and academic development of every student.
- J. Student achievement is enhanced through partnerships with parents, businesses, community-based organizations and agencies, local institutions of higher learning and other public entities.
- K. All policy, administrative, instructional and educational support decisions should be based on student needs and what is best for students.
- L. Diversity should be promoted so that isolation of racial, ethnic, disabled, and socioeconomic groups is avoided and education is enhanced in a diverse, inclusive setting.
- M. All schools should be accountable for improving student achievement.

- N. All schools should reflect school-based, participatory management.
- O. All students must be prepared to function effectively in a knowledge-based, technologically rich and culturally diverse 21st century.
- P. All staff should have access to results-driven professional development and training which is aligned with the School Board's Major System Priorities and School Improvement Plans. Such professional development and training must be standards-based, job-imbedded, collaborative and build an organizational culture that insures continuous improvement.

III. SCHOOL BOARD'S MAJOR SYSTEM PRIORITIES

- A. Establishing internationally competitive standards for student performance and an accountability system and policy framework designed to insure that all students are challenged individually and collectively to meet more rigorous standards.
- B. In collaboration with technical colleges, other institutions of higher learning and the local business community, insuring that career, technical and agricultural education programs prepare students for a diverse and technologically rich society.
- C. Insuring that all students and staff have a safe and secure environment for teaching and learning.
- D. Attracting, retaining and training the best teachers, principals and support staff.
- E. Utilizing technology both to improve student achievement and to increase the school district's productivity and efficiency as a major business enterprise.
- F. Increasing parental and community involvement through public engagement policies and practices that treat parents, businesses, community-based organizations and agencies, local institutions of higher learning and other public entities as true partners in the educational process.
- G. Addressing continued exploding student population growth, recognizing that there remains a significant gap between the school district's facilities and technology needs and available capital outlay revenue.

IV. SCHOOL BOARD ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND STRUCTURES

A. Responsibilities

1. Employ a professional Superintendent to operate the School District.
2. Adopt an annual budget as recommended by the Superintendent.

3. Review/approve the District Strategic Plan, all School Improvement Plans and all Waiver Requests annually.
4. Monitor schools' progress in addressing the School Board's Major System Priorities and School Improvement Plan (SIP) objectives.
5. Authorize and facilitate school and district partnerships with parents, businesses, community-based organizations and agencies, local institutions of higher learning and other public entities to improve student achievement and increase school effectiveness.

B. Vision/Philosophy/Goals

1. The School Board adopts, focuses and reviews the district's vision for students.
2. The School Board adopts, reviews and revises its mission statement that defines its work and is parallel to the district's mission statement.
3. The School Board, with Superintendent's input, annually adopts board and district goals.
4. The School Board, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, adopts policies and implementation plans to facilitate the accomplishment of stated goals.

C. Systematic Improvement

1. The School Board participates in annual training and professional development that meets or exceeds the requirements of Georgia law.
2. The School Board and Superintendent participate in a team-building activity focused on assessment of previously adopted goals.
3. The School Board and the Superintendent use a retreat/strategic work session environment and process to:
 - a. Assess progress made to update and revise action plans to accomplish district's vision/philosophy/goals.
 - b. Assess the strengths and improvements needed in the school district.
 - c. Consider any compelling problem(s) or emerging issue(s).
 - d. Study and explore trends, opportunities and anticipated challenges.
 - e. Reflect on the leadership team's educational and leadership philosophy and performance.
 - f. Review the Georgia School Boards Association Standards for Local Boards of Education.

- * The School Board and Superintendent function as a team to accomplish these items.
- 4. Conduct a School Board self-evaluation in order to assess working relationships among the School Board and improve superintendent and board relations.

D. Organizational Structure

1. The School Board establishes and, along with the Superintendent, follows federal law, state law, State Department of Education policies and rules, local policies, procedures and ethical standards governing the conduct of the School Board and Superintendent.
2. The officers of the School Board are elected using the procedures defined in state law and board policy and carry out their duties that are clearly delineated in law or policy.
3. The School Board uses the superintendent as its chief executive officer with full authority to administer district affairs.
4. The School Board, organizes and distinguishes its role as a policy-making body from the roles/responsibilities authorized to the Superintendent for the administration of the district.
5. The School Board and Superintendent function as a leadership team, while maintaining careful recognition of appropriate roles and responsibilities.

E. Board Operations: Policy Development

1. The School Board adopts and revises its written policies so that they are clear, up-to-date, and in compliance with the state constitution and state and federal laws.
2. The School Board follows policies and procedures for:
 - a. Policy adoption
 - b. Emergency adoption of policy
 - c. Policy dissemination
 - d. Policy repeal
 - e. The School Board considers the following when it adopts policies:
 - i. The recommendation, usually in writing from the Superintendent
 - ii. An opportunity for public review
 - iii. The policy will be reviewed periodically

F. Board Operations: Board Meetings

1. The School Board develops meeting agendas, posts agendas for public review and conducts its meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law (O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 et seq.)
2. School Board procedures provide an opportunity, prior to board meetings, for members of the School Board to:
 - a. Suggest items to be removed from or placed on the agenda and/or
 - b. Request additional information on an agenda item.
3. The agenda provides a sound order of business, including an opportunity to make adjustments to the agenda, which facilitates productive meetings.
4. The School Board uses a “consent agenda” procedure when appropriate.
5. The approved agenda is followed, and the School Board departs from it only under special circumstances and with concurrence of a majority of its members present.
6. The School Board has procedures in place to facilitate public input.
7. School Board minutes properly record agenda votes/actions of the School Board.

G. Board Operations: Personnel

1. The School Board oversees the management of the district by employing a Superintendent and evaluating his/her performance in providing educational leadership, managing daily operations and performing all duties assigned by the School Board and/or required by law.
2. The School Board authorizes the employment, assignment and dismissal of personnel only on the recommendation of the Superintendent.
3. The Superintendent is accountable to the School Board in developing, following state law, and conducting a fair and equitable evaluation of all personnel in the district.
4. The School Board refrains from applying pressure on the Superintendent to employ persons on the basis of any criteria other than professional and/or occupational qualifications as defined in currently approved job descriptions.
5. The School Board has been trained in the Superintendent evaluation process and follows that process for evaluation.
6. Periodically, but at least once in any 12-month period, the School Board, using the process agreed upon by the School Board and the Superintendent, evaluates the professional performance of the Superintendent.

H. Board Operations: Financial Management

1. The School Board provides guidance to the Superintendent in developing the budget and:
 - a. Conducts pre-budgeting discussions with the Superintendent.
 - b. May establish specific budget parameters where deemed necessary or appropriate.
 - c. Examines allocations as they relate to the board and district goals annually adopted.
2. The School Board receives the draft budget from the Superintendent and after careful study gives tentative budget approval.
3. The School Board publishes the budget and provides opportunity for public review and reaction.
4. The School Board approves the annual budget after consideration of the Superintendent's recommendation.
5. Once a budget that incorporates sound business and fiscal practices is approved, the Superintendent implements and administers the budget.
6. The School Board, by policy, establishes the level of spending beyond the budget for which the Superintendent must seek School Board approval.
7. The School Board receives monthly financial reports on the status of the budget.
8. The School Board's financial records are audited annually.

I. Board/Staff/Community Relations

1. The School Board and individual School Board members maintain an appropriate and professional relationship with the Superintendent, staff and community.
2. The School Board recognizes and protects the concept of chain of command.
3. The School Board works with the Superintendent to provide and follow a process, when it is appropriate, that encourages and seeks the input of staff at all levels of decision-making on significant issues.
4. The School Board periodically receives input from citizens on matters relating to the school district.

5. The School Board working with the Superintendent seeks advice and communicates with the community through:
 - a. Providing leadership, policies and training to school councils.
 - b. Collaboration agreements with local and state agencies.
 - c. Community groups, community forums and media.
 - d. Allowing and considering appropriate public input.

V. ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

Proper administration of the schools is most vital to a successful educational program. The general purpose of the School District's administration will be to coordinate and supervise, under the policies of the School Board, the creation and operation of an environment in which students learn most effectively. Administrative duties and functions will be appraised in terms of the contribution made to improving instruction and learning. The School Board will rely on its chief executive officer, the Superintendent, to provide at the district level the professional administrative leadership demanded by such a far-reaching goal.

The School District's administrative organization will be designed so that all district-level divisions and departments and all schools are part of a single accountability system guided by School Board policies which are implemented through the Superintendent. Principals and district-level administrators are all expected to administer their units in accordance with School Board policy and the Superintendent's rules and procedures. However, the mere execution of directives cannot, by itself, be construed as good administration. Vision, initiative, resourcefulness, and wide leadership – as well as consideration and concern for staff members, students, parents and others – are essential for effective administration.

Within the concept of an effective total system, it will be the policy of the School Board that ways shall be sought to decentralize administration in order to bring administrative decisions closer to, hence more responsible to, specific needs of individual students and the school communities.

The Superintendent, each principal, and all other administrators will have the authority and responsibility necessary for their specific administrative assignment. Each will likewise be accountable for the effectiveness with which the administrative assignment is carried out. The School Board will be responsible for clearly specifying requirements and expectations of the Superintendent accountable by evaluating how well those requirements and expectations have been met. In turn, the Superintendent will be responsible for clearly specifying requirements and expectations for all other administrators, then for holding each accountable by evaluating how well requirements and expectations have been met.

Major goals of administration in the School District shall be:

1. To manage the School District's various departments, units, and programs effectively.

2. To provide professional advice and counsel to the School Board and to advisory groups established by the Superintendent.
3. To implement the management function so as to assure the best and most effective learning programs, through achieving such sub-goals as:
 - (a) providing leadership in keeping abreast of current educational developments;
 - (b) arranging for the staff development necessary to the establishment and operation of learning programs that better meet more learner needs;
 - (c) coordinating cooperative efforts at improvement of learning programs, facilities, equipment, and materials;
 - (d) providing access to the decision-making process for improvement of ideas of staff, students, parents and others.

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Cherokee County Board of Education