

HANDBOOK FOR SCHOOL TRUSTEES

The School Board Member in Kern County
2017



Kern County
Superintendent of Schools
Office of Mary C. Barlow ...advocates for children

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A Message To Board Members

Congratulations on your election and decision to serve as a school board member. There is no more critical role at a school district than that of a Trustee / Board Member, and your willingness to be the voice for students and parents is to be commended.

It has been said that education is not a line item on a school board's agenda – it is the only item. Every day schools are faced with new challenges, new situations and new opportunities to help students succeed. The board provides the critical oversight to ensure that the district remains focused on increasing student achievement while being stewards of precious taxpayer dollars. More important than the amount of funding we receive in education is the decision about how to spend those funds to maximize outcomes for students. The board ensures that the district's efforts are focused, coherent, and accountable to the students we serve.

Public education has the power to transform lives and impact generations. Your support and leadership as a board member is absolutely vital to the district's ability to truly make an impact for each unique student it serves. The decisions the board makes about allocating district resources translate into assuring that each student receives the assistance and support needed to succeed.

The information in this handbook is aimed at assisting you as you navigate issues such as the importance of ensuring transparency and accountability through your LCAP, recruiting and hiring the best teachers, mitigating safety hazards, media relations and more. Our office is eager to support you and we have a wide variety of talent and support available to you and your district staff. Please call on us.

I am honored to serve as your Kern County Superintendent of Schools and I stand ready to support you in your role as a board member. On behalf of the students that will benefit from your strong leadership, thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary C. Barlow". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary C. Barlow
Kern County Superintendent of Schools

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Introduction

This handbook provides information in response to three major questions a new school board member may have:

1. What have I gotten myself into?
2. What do I need to know?
3. Where do I go for help?

The handbook is organized into three major sections corresponding to these questions:

- a. The first section describes the public school system within which a school board member operates as local policy maker for a local school district.
- b. The second section provides more detailed information in areas of board responsibilities, such as budget, policies, board/superintendent relations, rules governing board meetings, collective bargaining, etc.
- c. The final section provides information on resources which can assist you in your task.

The Appendix provides an additional resource in the form of a list of publications and glossary of educational terms.



SECTION I

What Have I Gotten Myself Into Now?

A board of trustees makes a significant and distinct contribution to the educational program, to children, and to society. Board decisions influence our future.

If you have taken the time to be elected as a trustee of a local school district, you may also have taken the time to thoroughly research the system. Even so, as your role unfolds, you may well be asking yourself, “What have I gotten myself into now?” This first section of the board member handbook attempts to provide the framework to answer that question.

In this section the legal basis of the public school system is described, followed by the nature of school board work in making policy and culminating in trustee responsibilities and requirements.

The Legal Basis for the School System

The local school board functions as one part of a statewide system of public education. This system includes elementary schools, secondary schools, technical schools, community colleges and state colleges and universities, as well as the state, county, and local agencies which operate and superintend them. It is important that school board members be aware of the scope and limitation of the board's responsibility and of its relationships with other parts of the system.

The people of California adopted a constitution which directed the State Legislature to establish a system of free public schools [California Constitution, Article IX]. Under this direction, the Legislature provided that school districts may be created under prescribed procedures and gave them the powers necessary to establish and operate schools. The Legislature also provided for supervisory and service agencies at both state and county government levels.

The California Constitution places school districts under the control of the Legislature; thus, the authority of the Legislature over them is broad. School districts may be abolished, combined, or continued from year to year as the State Legislature may, at any time, determine what is best. The Legislature may also change the powers and duties of governing boards through general laws applying to all districts similarly situated. The Legislature's control over state and county educational agencies is almost as complete as its control over school districts. While the Constitution authorizes county and state superintendents and boards of education, it is left largely to the Legislature to define the powers and duties. Each agency of the school system,--state, county or district,--has only such powers as have been provided for in the Constitution, by the Legislature, or by the people through initiative or referendum. In California, the Legislature's grants of power have not been in broad terms; rather, they comprise a great mass of specific grants of power and responsibility. The problem of determining just what are the powers and duties of school agencies is a complex problem and increasingly requires the aid of legal counsel. School attorneys may have different interpretations as to what the law actually requires or permits.

Under the State Constitution and basic law, all public schools are established by state authority and controlled by the State Legislature and the voters of the state. In establishing a state system of public schools school districts, governed by local boards of trustees, were established by the state as a necessary and efficient way to operate schools. Our early belief, and continued acceptance, of the principle that schools should be largely administered by local authority has become well established. The Legislature authorized the State Department of Education to promulgate a certain degree of uniformity and minimum standards. The county, or the intermediate unit, composed of the county board of education and the county superintendent of schools, was established to coordinate, supervise, and enforce state standards. Boards of trustees for each district were given the major responsibilities for the operation of local schools.

At the local level, several kinds of school districts exist ---

A single elementary or high school district which has been so since its formation is called a “school district”. A district comprised of two or more previously existing districts of the same kind is called a “union school district”. Districts comprised of areas in more than one county are called “joint districts”. A “unified school district” is one in which the high school and elementary school areas of previously separate districts are now coterminous, and one school board serves as the policy making body. A “city school district” is located wholly or partly in a city.

Elementary school districts maintain grades K[Kindergarten]-8 or K-6. High school districts maintain grades 9-12 or 7-12, and unified districts maintain grades K-12.

The county superintendent of schools provides an intermediate level of authority ---

In Kern County, and almost all other counties in the state, the county superintendent is elected by the entire county electorate. The county board of education members are elected from trustee areas. The county committee on school district organization is elected by boards of trustees, two from each supervisorial district and one member at large.

The role of the Kern County Superintendent of Schools is to:

- Act as intermediary between the state and local districts.
- Perform certain functions and services which can be provided more efficiently over a large area.
- Provide stimulus for school district improvement, stability, and continuity.

The county superintendent’s powers are those designed to provide stability and continuity for school districts. Examples include: [1] calling elections to fill vacancies on school district boards [Education Code Section 5090 et. seq.]; [2] coordinating educational services for school districts; [3] visiting schools and counseling administrators and trustees; [4] examining and approving school district budgets and expenditures; [5] reviewing and providing assistance for Local Control and Accountability Plans; [6] keeping school records; and [7] meeting school emergencies by providing funds, teachers, transportation, emergency schools, or by taking over and operating the schools of the district where the school board fails to act.

Other county level agencies affecting schools are listed below.

1. The **county board of education**, in all counties except “charter” counties, is composed of five or seven members elected by the voters of the area in which each member resides. Kern County Board of Education has seven members. The term of each is four years. Each position on the county board is open only to persons residing in designated “trustee areas”. [Education Code Section 1000 et seq.]. These areas have been drawn to assure a broad geographical distribution of members on the board and to comply with the one-person, one-vote principle.

Duties of the county board of education as presently constituted include:

[1] approving certain county school services to school districts; [2] hearing cases involving the expulsion of pupils and interdistrict attendance appeals [Education Code Sections 48919 and 46601]; and [3] approval of the annual budget of the county superintendent of schools.

2. The **Kern County Committee on School District Organization** consists of 11 members elected by the trustee representatives of each school board at the annual fall school trustees' meeting. Proposed school district reorganizations must be submitted through the County Committee on School District Organization to the State Board of Education. If approved, the changes are submitted to the voters in the area affected. Certain types of reorganization are possible through county committee action alone.
3. The **county auditor** records and accounts for all school district funds and examines and allows each expenditure from school accounts.
4. The **county treasurer** holds and disburses school district monies.
5. The **county tax collector** collects the school district taxes.
6. The **county board of supervisors** levies school taxes as required by law.
7. The **county counsel** will prepare certain legal papers and forms as required and defend the district if sued. In 1976, the Education Code was amended to allow local education agencies to join together to obtain comprehensive legal services from other sources.

Schools Legal Service, a joint powers agency, has been formed to provide comprehensive legal services and collective bargaining services to school districts. **Schools Legal Service** is housed in the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office building.

State agencies which affect education

Agencies of statewide jurisdiction over schools are included in the executive branch of state government. Their funds are provided annually by the Legislature as a part of the Governor's budget, and their operations, personnel practices, and procedures are governed by the same general rules which apply throughout the executive branch of state government. Two major agencies are the State Board of Education and the Office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The policies of the Department of Education are fixed by the State Board of Education whose ten members are appointed for four-year terms by the Governor with the consent of the Senate.

Administration of the policies of the State Board is by the State Superintendent who is elected by the people for a four-year term.

The **California Department of Education** administers California's public education system at the state level. It is responsible for the administration and enforcement of all educational legislation and regulations. Other responsibilities include the apportionment of funds appropriated by the State Legislature and applied by the California Constitution for the support of public schools and distribution of federal program grants; the administration of programs such as compensatory education, school lunch programs, education of children with disabilities or special needs, children's centers and vocational and bilingual education. The Department is responsible for two schools for the deaf, one school for the blind, and three diagnostic centers for neurologically-handicapped pupils.

The **State Department of General Services** oversees the Office of Public School Construction. It does this primarily through the Office of the State Architect, approving plans and the Office of Public Construction approving the inspector employed by the school district. The inspector shall act under the direction of the architect or structural engineer as the board may direct and be responsible to the governing board.

The **State Allocation Board** consists of the State Director of Finance, the Director of General Services, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and two members of the Senate and Assembly who meet with and advise the board. The board controls the allocation of grants or loans to school districts for new construction.

The **State Fire Marshal** establishes minimum standards for fire and emergency safety in school buildings and makes periodic inspections of such conditions.

The **Department of Finance** interacts with the Legislature through various reporting requirements by presenting and defending the Governor's Budget and in analyzing and testifying on legislation being heard in the Legislature.

The Department of Finance interacts with other departments on a daily basis to administer the budget, review fiscal proposals, establish accounting systems, audit department expenditures and communicate the Governor's fiscal policy departments.

The **Office of the Secretary for Education** is responsible for advising and making policy recommendations to the Governor on education issues. The Office of the Secretary also administers three programs: the Academic Volunteer and Mentor Service Program, READ California and the Governor's Reading Award Program.

While these state agencies do affect education, the ultimate authority over school districts is the State Legislature.

Policy Making as the Major Task of a School Board

A school board does not administer a district. A school board makes the policies under which a district is administered. Therefore, policy making is the most important function of a board. A policy is a general statement of intent to act in a particular manner when confronted with a given situation or to achieve a given result at some future point in time. A policy statement represents a guideline to future courses of action to be pursued to ensure consistency and fairness. Policy statements are the means through which a board expresses and maintains control. A policy statement may be specific or broad, cover one or many dimensions of an issue, or simply define limits to be observed in reaching a decision on a given matter.

Policies cannot conflict with the rules and regulations of the State Legislature or the state agencies established by the Legislature. The laws made by the State Legislature which primarily affect education are printed in the State of California Education Code, the Elections Code, Government Code, and Health and Safety Code. Other codes also include many laws which apply to school districts. In addition, schools are subject to the State Board of Education Regulations as reflected in Title V, as well as laws, regulations, and guidelines from the federal level.

The board also adopts rules and regulations which grow out of and should be consistent with policies and law. These rules and regulations are the guidelines for the administrator selected by the board to administer its policies on a day-to-day basis.

Written board policies should include:

- a. Legal status, functions, organization, and ethical conduct of the board of education;
- b. Selection, retention, and duties of the chief executive officer or superintendent of schools;
- c. Attendance requirements, conduct, welfare and safety of pupils;
- d. Scope and quality of the instructional program and school services within the system;
- e. Function and operation of the school food services;
- f. Procedures and other aspects of budgeting, accounting, auditing, and management of school property;
- g. Operation of the pupil-transportation system;
- h. Approval, retention, and other matters related to the certificated personnel;

- i. Approval, retention, and other matters related to the non-certificated personnel;
- j. Admission, promotion, discipline, etc., of pupils; and
- k. Public relations.

It is through the adoption of policies that a school board directs the educational program of the district. Policies reflect the educational values of the board and local stakeholders by setting priorities for the expenditure of resources of the district, both human and monetary.

Legal Requirements and Responsibilities

It is not the purpose of this handbook to duplicate the Education Code and all other laws and regulations affecting school board members. However, this section addresses requirements for holding office and general responsibilities of school board members.

Requirements for Holding Office

1. Qualifications and Residence

Any person who is 18 years of age or older, a citizen of the state, a resident of the school district, a registered voter, and who is not disqualified by the Constitution or laws of the state from holding a civil office, is eligible to be elected a member of a governing board of a school district [Education Code Section 35107]. An elected board member cannot also be an employee of the district, nor can a board member hold any other incompatible public office.

2. Terms of Office and Number of Trustees

The general provision of the Education Code is that trustees hold office for four years from the first Friday in December next succeeding their election or until their successor qualifies [Education Code Section 5017]. The terms of office are staggered.

Prior to 1955, most elementary school districts had three trustees. The law was changed in 1955 to provide that all elementary districts of over 300 students in average daily attendance (ADA) shall have five trustees unless the electors vote to maintain a three-member board [Education Code Section 5018].

Most of the school districts under 300 ADA still have only three trustees. Although the Education Code allows some high school and unified districts to have as many as seven members, the most common number is five.

3. Election, Vacancies, and Resignation of Members

An election for school trustees shall be held biennially on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of November of each odd numbered year. This rule applies except where districts have acted with County Board of Supervisors' approval to require its trustee election to be held otherwise [Education Code 5000.5]. Most districts in Kern County have taken action to hold trustee elections in each even numbered year.

There are several conditions under which a vacancy occurs on a school board. These conditions include:

- a. Death;
- b. Filing of a letter of resignation with the county superintendent;
- c. Moving from the district or trustee area;

- d. An act that causes disqualification under the Constitution or laws of the state;
- e. Election to an incompatible public office; and
- f. Finding by the board that a vacancy exists due to a board member's failure to attend meetings of the board for three months.

A vacancy resulting from resignation occurs when the written resignation is filed with the county superintendent of schools having jurisdiction over the district except where a deferred effective date is specified in the resignation. If a deferred effective date is specified, the date cannot be more than 60 days after the date of filing with the county superintendent of schools. A resignation is not effective until it is received by the county superintendent. A written resignation, whether specifying a deferred effective date or otherwise, shall, upon being filed with the county superintendent, be irrevocable [Education Code Section 5090-5091].

4. Vacancies – How They May be filled

Whenever a vacancy occurs, the remaining members of the board shall either call an election or, within 60 days, appoint a replacement during which time the voters of the district may petition for a special election. A provisional appointment confers all powers and duties of a governing board member immediately. If a valid petition is filed, the appointment is terminated, and a special election must be called at the expense of the district. An appointed member serves only until the next regular trustee election.

5. Recall Elections (Election Code starting at Section 11000)

After 90 days of service into their current term, a school board member is subject to recall election procedures. Recall proceedings cannot be commenced if a trustee's term ends in less than six months or if a recall election has been determined in his/her favor within the last six months.

6. Attendance at Meetings

When taking office, board members have made a commitment to the school district that they serve. Board meetings are held regularly at least once a month and sometimes twice a month.

Occasionally, special meetings will be called. It is of the greatest importance that the members of the board be present at every meeting so that they will be able to act accordingly on matters that arise.

The Government Code provides that an office becomes vacant when the incumbent ceases to discharge the duties of the office for three consecutive months except when prevented by sickness or when absent from the state with the permission required by law.

7. Conflict of Interest

Each board member must file an annual statement of economic interests no later than April 1 [or the date set by local district-adopted policy]. This statement is commonly referred to as “Form 700”. New trustees must file within 30 days of taking office but must also file another disclosure statement by April 1. Trustees filing late may be assessed a penalty pursuant to Government Code Section 91013.

A basic rule governing the conduct of public officials is that they may not place themselves in positions where they might be tempted by their own private interests to disregard the best interests of the public. This so-called common law conflict of interest doctrine is the foundation of the many statutes enacted not only by the Legislature but also by the people of California through the initiative process.

The purpose of these statutes is to ensure that public servants perform their duties in an impartial manner free from bias caused by their own financial interests. To achieve this purpose, California’s conflict of interest laws establish an objective standard intended to strike, not only at actual impropriety, but also, at the mere appearance of impropriety.

Generally, these laws prohibit four types of activities on the part of district officers and employees:

- a. Being financially interested in any contract made by them in their official capacity;
- b. Participating in or attempting to influence government decisions in which they have a financial interest;
- c. Engaging in any employment or activity for compensation which is inconsistent or incompatible with their duties with the district or which would subject them to the supervision or control of another district employee; or
- d. Failing to disclose interests reportable under state law and district regulation.

General Responsibilities of the School Board Members ---

As a school trustee, you are a member of the body legally responsible for the education of all students residing in your district. The process of identifying problems and seeking solutions is up to you as a board.

A board member must take reasonable steps to inform himself/herself of the management and condition of the schools and the safety and welfare of the pupils. You must bring to the attention of the board any matters in need of correction. Failure to do these things might invite a charge of negligence in the event of an injury to a pupil or other person.

Liabilities ---

California is one of the states in which its school districts may be sued and may pay damages for the wrongful acts, including negligence, of district officers and employees. Thus, the district is made liable for acts which in other states might become a personal liability of the board members. While board members are not held liable for the acts or omissions of their districts, they can be held personally liable for their own wrongful conduct in certain circumstances. School districts are required to insure against the personal liability for board members for death, personal injury or property damage caused by their negligent acts or omissions when acting within the scope of their office.

Duties and Powers ---

There are many duties and powers which the board must perform. Traditionally, the board delegates the responsibility for implementation of these tasks to the district superintendent and administrative staff subject to formal board action. These duties include:

- Approval of personnel, approval of salary schedules, and confirming assignment of duties;
- Approval of the annual budget and authorization of expenditures in conformity therewith;
- Enactment of adoption of rules and regulations governing administration and operation of the district;
- Adoption of regulations for control of personnel [employees and pupils];
- Adoption of regulations for control of property and facilities;
- Establishment and regulation of purchasing procedures;
- All matters of general policy;
- Evaluation of any or all parts of the educational program and determination of corrective procedures; and
- Approval of all contractual obligations of the district including any collective bargaining agreement.

In performing these duties and powers, the board does not do the work but rather relies on the chief administrator (superintendent) to recommend personnel; assign duties; prepare the budget; recommend rules and regulations; implement procedures to effectively run the district; and evaluate programs, etc.

Before making decisions, all data pertaining to a problem should be assembled, and the board should hear those concerned and listen to recommendations of executive staff. Trustees must reserve the right to accept or reject these recommendations and make the final decisions. To evaluate services, the board should require regular reports from the superintendent and consider information from other sources available to trustees through community contacts and by firsthand observation, where appropriate.



SECTION II

What Do I Need To Know?

This section provides an overview of the kind of information you need to be an effective board member. Publications that can provide more detail are listed in the Appendix. Your district staff can also assist you in locating additional information.

The Authority of an Individual Board Member

Perhaps the most important thing to know and remember is that you are a member of a board and have no power or authority as an individual. No one person is a board. Outside of official meetings, a board member has no authority over school policies or employees, and no individual member may make a decision on behalf of the group.

It is the board member's responsibility to present his or her point of view as effectively as possible and listen closely to the point of view of others. Board members should assist one another in learning the facts of a situation. When differences of opinion arise, members should respect each other's viewpoint and support the majority vote.

If staff and community members direct questions to you, redirect these questions to the appropriate school official or the board as a whole. It is not appropriate for a board member to promise or attempt to solve the problem personally. Remind the questioner that individual board members have no authority to act except as a board.

This limitation upon a board member's power as an individual explains why the single most important task of a school board is the selection of a superintendent or chief administrative officer who speaks for the board and implements its policies. This also explains why it is important to work to maintain a good working relationship between the board and the superintendent.

The Board/Superintendent Relationship

An effective working relationship between the board and superintendent is essential if the school district is to maximize the educational opportunities available to students.

Selecting and Supporting the Superintendent

The first step in establishing this relationship may be the selection of a superintendent. In selecting a superintendent, it is important that the board seek the most competent individual to serve the educational needs of the community.

The board must keep in mind that the employment of a superintendent means more than hiring the services of a professionally qualified person. It also means that the district is acquiring that person's values, philosophy, ethics, practices, and approach to public education. For this reason, boards should be willing to invest much time and energy in the quest for a quality educational leader. This chosen leader will have great impact upon employees, community, and especially the students of the district.

If a board is faced with the task of selecting a new superintendent, all members should be prepared to devote considerable time to the process. The Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office is available to assist for a small fee to districts. The California School Boards Association and private consultants are also available on a contract basis to perform this service.

Once selected, the superintendent deserves the support of the board and the board deserves the support of their superintendent. Two general rules are offered: First, board members and superintendent should constantly strive for a clear differentiation between policy making and administrative roles. Without that distinction, conflict can arise because of (a) board members becoming involved in the operation and administration or (b) administrators attempting to make policy decisions for the board.

The second general rule is that there should be no surprises. This means the superintendent keeps the board informed of situations which may cause concern to the board member and presents all reports as clearly and thoroughly as possible. It also means the board clearly communicates its concerns to the superintendent and provides an opportunity to gather the information needed to respond to the concerns expressed. For instance, if a board member has a question about an agenda item, the superintendent should be informed before the board meeting so information can be gathered prior to the meeting while the information is readily obtainable.

Ideally, a climate of mutual respect and trust should exist between a superintendent and board. Effective communication is the keystone of good relationships between a board and superintendent. Effective communication lends support to a superintendent. A process should be in place in the event that the superintendent no longer has the support of the board [see section on superintendent evaluation].

Handling Complaints

Occasionally, complaints or criticism will come before the board. Some will be justified, some will be based on a lack of information [or misinformation], and some will be “grandstanding.”

Criticism cannot be settled by being ignored. The effective board member will ensure that the board has an official policy for handling complaints.

Complaints and criticism should almost always be referred to the superintendent to be handled under District Complaint policies many of which are required by law. [The exception would be a complaint against the superintendent, which is presented to the board.] An individual board member has no legal right to promise action or correction. Rather than conduct his or her own investigation of a complaint, a board member should refer the matter to the superintendent for staff investigation and recommended action.

Board members often receive complaints directly from parents or staff members regarding incidents or conditions at individual schools. Complainants should be asked to start with contacting the principal of the school if they have not done so. If for some reason that is not appropriate, the person should be referred to the superintendent or relevant District Office administrator. Often the problem can be handled at the school level without becoming a district or board problem.

Complaints involving employees are often the subject of procedures contained in a collective bargaining agreement. Failure to follow these procedures may result in a breach of that contract and can invalidate any effort to deal with the problem.

Individual board members should inform the superintendent of complaints and criticism even though no action is requested. In turn, the superintendent should keep the board informed of such criticisms so that pressure does not erupt in the community before board members have knowledge of the facts in the matter.

Superintendent Responsibilities

New school board members should understand that management of the program and direction of the staff are the responsibility of the superintendent who is, in turn, responsible to the board for carrying out duties. At the same time, superintendents must be careful to leave policy decisions to the board. Conflict may occur if the roles are confused.

The responsibilities of a superintendent can be generally summarized as follows:

1. Assume role of chief executive officer of the district;
2. Execute policies of the board;
3. Recommend policies for the board to consider to meet the educational needs of the pupils and community as well as to meet legal requirements;
4. Nominate all employees [certificated or classified] for employment;

5. Recommend for dismissal, within the limits of law or board policy, any employee rendering unsatisfactory service;
6. Assign, direct, and supervise the work of all employees;
7. With staff, approve and recommend to the board textbooks and other instructional guides and equipment;
8. Decide the general methods of instruction to be used;
9. Provide for continuous revision of the course of study to meet changing programmatic, legal, and societal conditions;
10. Prepare and interpret the annual budget for the board;
11. Administer the budget in a responsible manner after it is adopted;
12. Make periodic and proper financial reports to the board;
13. Provide for the planning of all educational features of new buildings and reconstruction;
14. Administer all classes established by board action;
15. Coordinate a Public Information program for the district; and
16. Keep board members informed with adequate background material necessary for making sound policy decisions.

The above is a list of general responsibilities; many of these duties may be delegated to other staff members.

Superintendent Evaluation

The evaluation of your superintendent is one of the most important board functions. An evaluation allows the board to know more about the superintendent to help him/her work effectively and to maintain a harmonious working relationship. The evaluation should be based upon the view and expectations of the board as expressed in the district's goals and objectives and the superintendent's job description. Evaluation is not only a valuable tool in carrying out the goals of any operation but is legally required.

Evaluation has many positive purposes among which are the following:

1. To establish standards for continuing employment;
2. To review the responsibilities of the superintendent;
3. To improve performance by reviewing areas which may be strengthened;
4. To review the impact of the superintendent on scholastic achievement;

5. To give encouragement and commendation for a job well done as well as to voice any dissatisfaction about the superintendent's performance;
6. To offer a guide for a self-appraisal of the superintendent's skills; and
7. To maintain good working relationships between the board and superintendent.
Your superintendent should work with you in adopting an evaluation form. There are many types available. A regular schedule for evaluation should be adopted. Specific provisions concerning evaluations and their consequences may be included in the superintendent's contract.

When the evaluation is negative, it is time for honest and candid discussions between the two parties. These talks should be seen as a step towards correcting the problem. In some cases, the board may find the performance of the superintendent unsatisfactory or the problem unable to be corrected. If this is the case, the superintendent should be informed and his/her resignation requested. It is essential to seek legal counsel at or before this stage in order that the interests of the district be protected.

A superintendent must be given notice 45-days prior to the end of his/her contract if that person is not to be rehired. Failure to do so will result in the contract being automatically renewed for the same length, terms and conditions, and salary as the contract completed.

A clearly stated policy regarding the retirement of a superintendent should be established in order to provide as much continuity for the district as possible.

School Finance

A major function of any school board is to ensure that the best possible educational system can be offered with the revenues available. A corollary responsibility is that the district finances must be handled so that economic uncertainties or local emergency needs do not make it impossible to continue the educational program without major disruptions.

Due to ongoing changes and historical development of school finance, school finance can appear quite complicated. The basic principle of a successful financial system, however, whether for profit or for public purposes, is the same—income must equal or exceed expenditures. If a district's expenditures exceed its income, the district must use reserves, if available, to balance their budget. A district that does not maintain ample reserves is forced to immediately adjust their budget with every reduction in revenue and/or every increase in expenses in order to maintain fiscal solvency.

The State of California provides for educational funding, and education revenue sources are therefore influenced by the state economic cycle and funding priorities. In the last decade, as economic uncertainty occurred in the state, funding sources for school districts became more volatile and less reliable than in the past. Increased district reserves were necessary to accommodate greater uncertainty. Districts are required by the State to maintain a minimum reserve of between 2 and 5% depending on the size of the district; however, this minimum reserve is severely inadequate. Districts must determine their own unique situation and exposure to funding and expenditure volatility and maintain sufficient reserves to ensure their fiscal solvency.

AB 1200 became law in January 1992. This legislation, in addition to increasing fiscal accountability, requires that school board members must ensure that:

- a. Salary settlements are presented in public hearings prior to approval;
- b. The district will be able to meet multi-year financial commitments;
- c. The budget complies with all state established standards and criteria; and
- d. An actuarial study on self-insured health and welfare benefits is conducted every three years.

Income

The school district receives its income from four main sources: the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), which is composed of state aid and local property taxes; special state revenues; federal revenues and miscellaneous local revenue sources (interest, sales, and rents).

The 2013–14 budget package replaced the previous K–12 finance system with a new Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). The LCFF system, the main source of revenue for most districts, is composed of a per-pupil base grant plus additional funds (supplemental and concentration grants) for students designated as low income, English learner, and foster

youth. The LCFF establishes a funding target based on districts 2007-08 funding level. This funding target is promised to be reached over the course of several years with additional funding being provided each year until the “gap” between current funding and the target funding level is closed.

Additional sources of state revenue include Special Education, Lottery, and Child Nutrition.

Federal income is available for several special programs generally to help low wealth, culturally deprived, and low performing students.

And Local revenue, such as interest, sales, and rents, is entirely dependent on local factors.

Expenditures

Expenditure sources are divided into seven large categories: [1] certificated salaries, [2] classified salaries, [3] employee benefits, [4] books and supplies, [5] services and other operating expenses, [6] capital outlay, and [7] other outgo. Because an educational system is labor intensive, there are few dollars left after salaries and benefits are budgeted. School districts budgets typically commit over 85% of their expenditures for employee compensation [salary and benefits].

The Education Code limits school district expenditures to the amounts appropriated for the major expenditure classes by the board of trustees through the adoption, approval, and revision of the district budget.

The Budget Process

It is the legal responsibility of the Board of Trustees to approve and adopt the annual budget. Board members should be part of the budget building process and have enough information available to exercise careful judgment at budget adoption time.

As school districts fiscal calendar runs July 1 through June 30, most districts start gathering data and meeting with personnel in January for the following year's budget. It is recommended that boards adopt budget calendars so that deadlines are met and responsibilities established.

An important and necessary component of the LCFF and budget approval process is the development of a Local Control and Accountability Plan [LCAP]. The LCAP is a three year plan that every district must develop, adopt, and update annually with input from specific stakeholders. The LCAP describes how the district intends to meet annual goals for students with specific activities to address state and local priorities and provide special attention to the high-needs students for which they receive additional funding. The LCAP must be adopted before the district budget can be adopted.

Once the budget has been adopted, the board members should expect reports on the financial condition of the district frequently.

The budget adoption process requires the budget to be adopted by July 1, and only readopted if the County Superintendent disapproves the budget. Districts revise their budget no later than 45 days following a signed State budget and as needed throughout the year.

In addition to budget adoption, Board members must certify as to the fiscal integrity of their budgets twice annually. These certifications are called Interim Reports and will be brought before you in late November or early December [1st Interim] and again in late February or early March [2nd Interim]. Trustees should take note that they certify to the State as to the financial condition of the district. Three varying certifications or conditions are possible:

- 1) Positive certification: district is able to meet its financial obligations for the current fiscal year and subsequent two fiscal years.
- 2) Qualified certification: district may not meet its financial obligations for the current fiscal year and subsequent two fiscal years.
- 3) Negative certification: district will not meet its financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year or the subsequent fiscal year.

Districts that are certified as qualified or negative are subject to increased monitoring and oversight, potentially escalating to the loss of local control. The responsibility of the board to maintain the solvency of the district is clearly represented by the interim report process.

Rules Governing School Board Meetings

All business of a school board must be accomplished through actions taken at school board meetings. If a board is to be effective, it is important to understand the rules under which these meetings can be held.

Types of Meetings

An organizational meeting must be held every year within 15 days of the first Friday in December [Education Code 35143]. At that meeting, officers must be elected and a day and time set for regular meetings to be held during the coming year.

Most boards meet regularly once or twice a month. Special meetings may be called at any time by the presiding officer of the board or by a majority of the members of the board. Emergency meetings may be called only under critical situations, such as work stoppages or crippling disasters [Government Code 54956.5].

Boards can only take action at a properly called meeting. With limited exceptions, no action can be taken at regular or special meetings unless the agenda posting requirements have been met. No action can be taken at any meeting unless a quorum is present (Normally, this means a quorum of the entire board, not just those present). A meeting can be adjourned until a stated time at which a quorum can be expected. This is called an adjourned meeting. No action can be taken as a result of telephone polling of board members.

Agenda Posting Requirements

Meeting agendas must be posted 72 hours prior to a regular meeting and 24 hours before a special meeting. The agenda must be posted in a place available to the general public and employees and posted on the district's internet website if it has one. The agenda is required to have sufficient detail so the public understands what actions are being considered. No action may be taken on items which have not been posted the required amount of time.

The agenda in most districts is developed by the chief administrative officer often with input from the board through the board president.

Public Participation and Access to Materials

Although a school board meeting is held in public, it is not a public meeting. However, Education Code Section 35145.5 requires that members of the public be allowed to place matters pertaining to school district business on the agenda and also provides that "members of the public be able to address the board regarding items on the agenda as such items are taken up". Board policies govern the procedures under which the public may address the board or have items placed on the agenda.

The public must also be provided access to materials to be discussed at open session board meetings. The materials must normally be available for inspection upon request at the time they are made available to board members.

Minutes

State law requires that minutes be kept of every meeting except closed sessions. Minutes should reflect discussion items and presentations as well as any actions taken. The board usually designates the superintendent to be responsible for writing minutes with the help of clerical staff.

Unofficial minutes are usually provided to board members with their agendas for the next meeting. This provides an opportunity for review prior to adoption and signing of the minutes at the next meeting.

Minutes are a permanent record to be kept indefinitely by the district. The importance of minutes accuracy and thoroughness cannot be overstated. Only actions recorded in the minutes can be considered official actions of the board. Minutes are official, legal documents.

Closed Session

The Brown Act requires the governing boards of local agencies to hold their meetings in public except for specified limited circumstances where closed sessions are authorized. The Brown Act authorizes closed sessions only in the following specific circumstances:

1. To discuss with law enforcement officers the security of and access to public facilities;
2. To consider the appointment, employment, dismissal or performance evaluation of a public employee, or to hear complaints or charges brought against an employee, [unless the employee requests a public discussion];
3. To meet with the board's legal counsel to discuss existing or anticipated litigation;
4. To meet with the District's identified labor negotiator to discuss the price to be offered or accepted for property to be bought or sold;
5. To consider student discipline cases and other student matters which may involve discussion of confidential student records [unless student or parents request the discussion to be held in open session];
6. To meet with its bargaining representatives to discuss negotiations; and
7. Discussion of information received in closed session of a Joint Powers Agency in which the district is a member, under specified circumstances.

Questions regarding whether a situation can legally be discussed during a closed session should be referred to the district's legal counsel. Schools Legal Service has prepared a booklet on the Brown Act and so has the Attorney General's Office.

Action may be taken during a closed session. Certain actions must then be reported out in open session. As with open session matters, no vote or abstention of each board member present regarding a closed session matter required to be reported must be disclosed. An

exception to this is student discipline cases. Action on student discipline must be taken in open session even if the discussion was held in closed session.

The Brown Act requires a public announcement of the items to be discussed in any closed session prior to holding the session. Proper justification for closed session is essential. Whenever possible, the recommended closed session agenda descriptions in the Brown Act should be used. It is not sufficient to post a generic agenda item such as “closed session– personnel.”

Board members should periodically review their closed session practices to be certain business is not being conducted illegally. Violation of the Brown Act is a misdemeanor punishable by up to a \$500 fine and/or six months imprisonment.

Parliamentary Procedure Does Not Apply – Presiding Officer Votes

Education Code Section 35164 provides “The governing board shall act by majority vote of all of the membership constituting the governing board”. No board-adopted rule or parliamentary custom or practice may deprive the presiding officer of the board of the right to vote. Furthermore, the presiding officer may, without relinquishing the chair, propose any motion and discuss any matter which is properly before the board. Trustees must abstain from voting when it is determined that a conflict of interest exists between that particular trustee and the item being considered.

Employment of Personnel

The governing board of a school district is responsible for many facets of personnel involving both classified and certificated employees. The program of a school district is only as good as the employees of a district. Thus, it is important that a board member not be afraid to accept the responsibility for the district's employees while at the same time exercising caution to ensure that the employees' rights are not violated.

The board reviews and approves job descriptions; adopts policies regarding dismissal and recruitment; approves or rejects dismissal recommendations; adopts salary and benefit schedules; and adopts all other policies relating to evaluation procedures and personnel in general.

Through the collective bargaining process, contracts will emerge that contain language directly related to personnel. It is the responsibility of the board to adhere to the contract already ratified by their own action.

In addition, the board should be aware that there are many state and federal laws and regulations governing the employment of personnel, a few of which are discussed below.

Classified Personnel

The classified staff members are a very important segment of the total school program. These employees keep the school in operation by performing clerical, custodial, maintenance, instructional and business management assistance.

Classified employees have the right to be represented by an exclusive representative in collective bargaining with boards. The agreement negotiated is reduced to writing and becomes the contract for classified employees. This contract governs operation of the classified service along with district policy and the Education Code.

The Education Code requires the board to:

- a. fix and prescribe duties to be performed by employees in the classified service [a job description] [Education Code Section 45109];
- b. adopt rules and regulations governing the classified personnel management system [Education Code Section 45103]; and
- c. give employees a prescribed period of probation before acquiring permanent status and dismiss or discipline employees for cause pursuant to board rules and regulations [Education Code Section 45113].

There are many facets to classified personnel management, and a board member should refer to his/her district superintendent for an in-depth study of this and of other requirements.

Board members should become familiar with the classified personnel by visiting school plant operations. This can also provide opportunities to visit teachers and other certificated staff as well according to board protocols.

Certificated Personnel

The selection and employment of staff is a legal right of the board. However, state law requires certain standards to be met for employees in “positions requiring certification qualifications.”

In general, positions requiring certification are administrators, [such as superintendents, assistant superintendents, principals, or vice-principals], teachers, and other non-administrative employees [such as librarians, psychologists, nurses, and counselors].

In addition to the requirement for certification, state law also requires that teachers be classified into the following categories:

1. Permanent Teachers - Those who are employed in a district having 250 or more ADA and have completed two consecutive school years and are re-employed for a third year. In districts of less than 250 ADA, an employee, after completing three years of service, may be classified as a permanent employee by board action. If this classification is not made, the employee remains probationary;
2. Probationary Teachers - Those that have a contract and are not classified as permanent, substitute, or temporary;
3. Substitute Employees - Persons employed to fill positions of regularly employed teachers absent from service; and
4. Temporary Employees - Persons employed for one semester or more [up to a full year] to temporarily replace a regular certificated teacher who is granted a leave or is experiencing a long-term illness.

Administrators do not gain tenure as administrators. They may, however, gain tenure as a teacher under the tenure law, either prior to or simultaneously with their administrative assignment.

With the demand for accountability in public education, boards have the responsibility to see that staff are adequately evaluated on a timely basis. The evaluation of all certificated staff [except for the superintendent] is delegated to a certificated administrator trained in evaluation. The board must have a policy which provides for certification of the competence of any teacher evaluator.

Although the word “permanent” is used to describe one legal class of teachers, a teacher may be laid off or dismissed for cause. A lay-off may take place for a decrease in pupil enrollment or the abandoning of a service in which the employee was engaged. Dismissal for cause may include immoral conduct or unprofessional behavior, dishonesty, incompetency, evident unfitness for service, persistent violation of or refusal to obey the school laws of the state or reasonable regulations; conviction of a felony or any crime involving moral turpitude; and alcoholism or drug abuse.

Boards seeking to dismiss or lay off teachers should always obtain the services of Schools Legal Service or other competent legal counsel.

Collective Bargaining

School districts in California are required to negotiate with employee organizations regarding matters related to wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment. The Educational Employment Relations Act (EERA), often referred to as the Rodda Act or SB 160, established the collective bargaining process between districts and the unions that represent school district employees. The EERA is administered by the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB), an agency of the state, which is headquartered in Sacramento.

In the collective bargaining process, school boards and school employees utilize representatives who specialize in employer-employee relations issues and labor negotiations. In Kern County, the vast majority of school boards retain Schools Legal Service to represent their districts. On the employee side, most certificated employees are represented by local affiliates of the California Teachers Association. In the majority of districts, classified employees are represented by chapters of the California School Employees Association [CSEA]. However, the Kern County Public Employees Association, an affiliate of the Service Employees International Union [SEIU], and the Teamsters also represent employees in several districts. In a few districts, independent unaffiliated local unions represent employee bargaining units. Under the provisions of the EERA, a school district's management and confidential employees do not have collective bargaining rights. However, supervisory employees, both certificated and classified, have the right to bargain collectively as long as they are in a bargaining unit that is separate from the unit containing the employees they supervise.

The collective bargaining process itself includes several steps. In the first step, the district is required to "sunshine" the initial proposals of both the union and the district. The sunshine process consists of introducing the union's initial proposal at a meeting of the board of trustees and making the proposal available to the public. The board is required to hold a public hearing at a subsequent board meeting and to take public comment on the union's proposal. Generally, following the hearing on the union's proposal, the district's initial proposal is made public. Negotiations may commence following the introduction of the district's proposal. The second step of the process is the actual bargaining of the contract. If an agreement is reached in negotiations, it is reduced to writing at the request of either party.

In the event that a district and a union are unable to come to an agreement, impasse may be declared by either party and the process moves to a third step. The EERA impasse procedure has two stages. In the first stage, a neutral mediator is appointed by PERB. The mediator's job is to help the parties reach a mutually acceptable agreement. The mediation process is confidential and the mediator does not make a judgment or issue any kind of a decision. If the mediation process does not result in an agreement, the dispute is moved to the next stage of the process, fact-finding. In fact-finding, the district and the union each appoint a representative to a fact-finding panel. The representatives then mutually select a third neutral party from a list supplied by PERB to serve as the Chair of the panel. It is the job of the fact-finding panel to hold a formal hearing, to gather relevant facts as set forth in the EERA, and

to issue an advisory report containing recommendations for settling the dispute. A district's board of trustees is not required to implement the recommendations of the fact-finding panel. If the parties still have no agreement after completion of the fact-finding process, the board may implement its last, best and final offer to the union.

Although the impasse procedures were designed to produce settlements and to avoid strikes by school employees, strikes have occurred in the past. In recent years, there has been minimal strike activity in California schools. In the event of a strike, a board must consider whether its interests, and the interests of the students, are best served by the inevitable disruption to the educational delivery of the district. In any strike situation, the district should consider filing an unfair labor practice charge with PERB along with a request that PERB seek injunctive relief from the courts. Striking employees do not receive pay for any days that they do not work.

The final step of the collective bargaining process is ratification of a proposed agreement between the district and the union by the board of trustees. As a part of the ratification process, the costs of a proposed agreement must be disclosed to the public and a public hearing must be held to allow the public to comment on the agreement. Prior to the board meeting and public hearing, district management is required to file a disclosure document with the office of the Kern County Superintendent of Schools. The document sets forth the costs of the agreement as well as the source or sources of the money to fund the agreement. Following KCSOS certification that the district has the resources to fund the terms of the agreement, the board may hold the public hearing and may vote on ratification of the agreement.

The Role of the Board

Involvement by a board of trustees spans the entire bargaining process from its inception to its ultimate conclusion. In general, the role of the board of trustees is to work with the district's management staff to ensure that the district's overall policies, objectives, priorities, and parameters are defined and maintained.

In matters related to collective bargaining, there are at least two basic goals. The first goal is to successfully cope with the various pressures and tensions that are often caused by the process. The second is to achieve an agreement that the board can support and ratify.

At the end of the bargaining process, the board of trustees makes a final determination as to whether an agreement that has been negotiated with the employee union or unions will be ratified. Among the key considerations in the decision to ratify is the extent to which the proposed agreement adheres to the board's view of the district's overall direction.

Board members sometimes express a desire to be directly involved in negotiations. Experts in the field of negotiations and labor relations (as well as a number of board members who have had direct experience in the bargaining process) advise that board members not be involved in at-the-table negotiations, either as members of the district's bargaining team or as the

person designated to speak for the district. Instead, districts are advised to have professionals who are experienced in negotiations and well-versed in the intricacies of public sector labor law represent the interests and positions of the board and the district at the bargaining table. In most districts, the interests and positions of school employees are represented by full-time union staff members.

Reasons that board members should not be involved in the actual negotiations process include:

- **Expertise:** In order to effectively represent a school district, the individual (whether an outside expert or a district staff person) must possess knowledge, skill, and understanding in several highly specialized areas, including the education code and related regulations; labor, personnel, and employment law; school finance and business practices; district, county, and state education agency relationships; instructional policy and issues; the fine points of drafting contract language; media and public relations; and other related areas.
- **Time:** The day-to-day business of being an active and informed board member consumes a large amount of time and energy. Active participation in the negotiations process also consumes a substantial amount of time and energy. In many cases, time expended in the negotiations process takes away from time that would be available for the performance of other board duties and functions.
- **Risk:** A board member who is involved in negotiations as a member of the district's bargaining team or who is designated to speak for the district risks becoming the focal point of the employees and their unions. Unions are skilled at using personal appeals to board members to ignore the advice and counsel of district management staff in order to achieve the union's bargaining goals. If attempts to drive a wedge between board members and management are successful versus unsuccessful, then board members may be subjected to personal attacks or to economic or political pressures in order to exploit either personal or political vulnerability. Finally, there is a risk that PERB could find that a district has committed an unfair labor practice by "bargaining in bad faith" if the board refuses to ratify a proposed agreement where a board member has been directly involved in the negotiations.

Handling the Board Member's Role in the Process ---

Often the thrust of a union's collective bargaining proposals is to modify a district's basic policies, objectives, priorities, and parameters. Such proposals set the stage for an adversarial situation that most board members find uncomfortable. The following guidelines should assist board members in successfully handling their role in the process.

- **Preparation:** Once the representative of employees has made an Initial Proposal for a Collective Bargaining Agreement or for re-openers to a current Agreement, the Board must be made aware of the issues contained in the proposal. Management's obligation is to inform the Board of operational and fiscal impacts of the union's proposals, to review and discuss policy implications of the union's proposals and to articulate those concepts that management recommends in response to the union's proposals. As a part of the preparation process, the Board should meet with its negotiating representatives in closed session.
- **Coordination:** As the elected representatives of the citizens of the district, the Board of Trustees speaks with one voice and one position with regard to the district's response to union proposals and to the ultimate acceptance or rejection of any potential Agreement. The Board's official positions are communicated to the union by the Board's designated representative. Management's responsibilities in this area include providing a continual flow of information to the Board regarding the at-the-table negotiations, including the issues under discussion and the positions taken by the parties. If a difference of opinion arises among or between Board members in regard to issues at the bargaining table, the Board should attempt to work through those differences and forge a consensus as to the particular issue with the assistance of its representatives in the negotiations process.
- **Communication:** In matters relating to collective bargaining, effective communication is essential to long-term success. In order for communication to be effective, it must be consistent, coherent, and cogent. Districts are most successful in the communications arena when they designate an official spokesperson. Communication at the bargaining table is led by the person who has been designated as the district's chief negotiator. Communication away from the bargaining table is usually handled by another district staff member or by someone else who is assigned to that specific task. That person establishes and maintains contacts with constituents, civic and political leaders, and the media. In order to be effective, that person must be able to speak for the entire board as well as to articulate the district's proposals and positions.

Instruction and the Board Member

The role of the school board is to ensure that school districts are responsive to the values, beliefs and priorities of their communities. Boards fulfill this role by performing five major responsibilities: 1) setting direction; 2) establishing an effective and efficient structure; 3) providing support; 4) ensuring accountability; and 5) providing community leadership as advocates for children, the school district and public schools..

The duties of a board member include being a trustee of the education of the students of your district. The legal authority for this responsibility is cited in the following Education Code [E.C.] provisions:

- 51040 The governing board of every school district shall prepare and shall keep on file for public inspection the courses of study prescribed for the schools under its jurisdiction.
- 51041 The governing board of every school district shall evaluate its educational program and shall make such revisions as it deems necessary. Any revised educational program shall conform to the requirements of this division.
- 51050 The governing board of every school district shall enforce in its schools the courses of study and the use of textbooks and other instructional materials prescribed and adopted by the proper authority.
- 51204 Any course of study adopted pursuant to this division shall be designed to fit the needs of the pupils for which the course of study is prescribed.

It is the responsibility of the governing board to ensure that each pupil in each school in the district has sufficient textbooks or instructional materials, or both, that are aligned to the content standards adopted pursuant to Education Code Section 60605 in each of the following subjects, as appropriate, that are consistent with the content and cycles of the curriculum framework adopted by the state board:

- (i) Mathematics.
- (ii) Science.
- (iii) History-social science.
- (iv) English/language arts, including the English language development component of an adopted program.

Other codes board members may wish to be aware of dealing with instruction include:

- 51202..... Instruction in personal and public health and safety.
- 51203..... Instruction on alcohol, narcotics, and restricted dangerous drugs.
- 51210-51212..... Areas of study in grades 1-6.
- 51220-51228 Areas of study in grades 7-12.
- 51225.3..... Requirements for high school graduation.

- 51880-51881.5 Comprehensive Health Education.
- 52055.600-52055.662 High Priority Schools Grant Program.
- 52055.57 LEA Intervention [NCLB].
- 60119..... Textbooks.
- 60850-60859 High school exit exam requirement.

Public schools are held accountable for increasing the academic achievement of all students. State Academic Performance Index [API] results focus on how much schools are improving in year-to-year academic growth. The API is the cornerstone of the state's academic accountability requirements. Its purpose is to measure the academic performance and growth of schools. Federal Adequate Yearly Progress [AYP] results focus on how well schools and LEAs [districts] are meeting common standards of academic performance.

Open Enrollment

The Open Enrollment Act permits students enrolled in any of California's 1000 lowest performing schools to request a transfer to any other school and remain there until they graduate. Unlike the traditional interdistrict attendance agreement process, the sending school may not decline the transfer request. Although the receiving school may decline the transfer request, it may only do so based upon specifically enumerated criteria.

A District's Curriculum Philosophy

A guiding philosophy of curriculum is the first step in making curricular decisions. A philosophy should be thought through by the board and reflect the needs of the students.

The board also is accountable to the community and parents of the district. Good community relations is a goal all boards seek, and if parents and nonparents are involved in the curriculum process, the board can show accountability and responsiveness to the community and parents of the district.

What Can a Board Member Do to Strengthen the District's Instructional Program?

There are many things a board member can do to strengthen a district's instructional program. The California School Boards Association has devised a summary list which asks the following questions of a board member to act as a guide with discussions with the superintendent and his/her team.

1. Are you providing for regular program presentations on district and school education programs at board meetings?
2. Are you seeking out and reading available material on your district's programs?
3. Are you increasing your knowledge of the curriculum planning process? Teaching methods? Different theories of how children learn?
4. Are you visiting classes in your district? How often?
5. Are you attending workshops and conferences on curriculum?
6. Are you communicating with your superintendent about your specific commitment to curriculum development and your commitment to the educational program in general?
7. Are you willing to cut funds from some budget categories so that enough funds are available for release time to allow teachers to work on curriculum?
8. Are you providing teachers and administrators in your district with the inservice training necessary to strengthen the instructional program?
9. Are you knowledgeable about the instructional methods used in your classrooms?
10. Are you supporting measures in your district to ensure articulation between grade levels and particularly between elementary, middle or junior high, and senior high school?

Other Programs

In addition to the instructional program, the board is responsible for all activities of the district. Some of the activities which support the instructional program are discussed in this section.

Facilities

According to Board protocols, board members should become as familiar as possible with each school site and any other facilities operated by the district. The development of a master plan of school facilities is an excellent means to maximize use of facilities in an organized manner. Board members should be actively involved in new construction, reconstruction, deferred maintenance, leasing, and reorganization of facilities in partnership with the superintendent. Knowledge of these different facets of facility planning is imperative to be an informed trustee of the district.

Cafeterias

The board may establish cafeterias in schools and may provide for housing, equipping, and operating the cafeteria(s) with school funds. The board may establish a cafeteria account and designate an employee or employees to have custody of such an account [Education Code Sections 39890-39894]. “Cafeteria” is synonymous with “food service” [Education Code Sections 39870-39873].

Meals for Needy

The board may provide, without charge, breakfasts or lunches, or both, for pupils who would not otherwise receive proper nourishment [Education Code Section 49500]. In general, every district must provide one nutritionally adequate free or reduced-priced meal to each needy pupil during each school day except for family day care homes which shall be reimbursed for 75 percent of the meals served [Education Code Section 49550]. Needy children are defined by reference to federal eligibility criteria [Education Code Section 49552].

Pupil Transportation

The board may provide for transportation of pupils. The governing board may purchase or rent vehicles, or may contract with common carriers or responsible private parties for transportation. Alternatively, the board may pay to the parents or guardian of a pupil a sum not exceeding the cost of actual and necessary travel incurred [Education Code Sections 39800 and 39806].

Public Relations

The community is not able to see the effective, interesting, and successful instruction taking place inside the walls of schools unless a way is found to show what is happening there. The community also will not know what it can do to help unless asked.

The Superintendent is in Charge ---

A good public relations program improves community support for schools. Board policy should establish a communications program to be implemented by the superintendent.

The scope of the program will depend on the size of the school district but may include many different types of formal and informal communication. In a very small district with a teaching administrator, the effort may be limited to hosting programs to which the community is invited and actively sought as participants. In any size district, one of the most effective tools is a newsletter describing the goals of the district and the successful efforts being made to meet those goals.

Formal modes of communication which may be used include regular news releases, surveys, public service announcements, etc. Public funds may be used to inform the community of district programs and accomplishments. However, public funds may not be used to promote political causes or to urge a position on school district ballot measures. There are many manuals on public relations which you can use to evaluate your district's program; but, in general, your board policy should require a program that will:

- establish a working relationship with the media before problems arise;
- be fair, giving all media the same opportunity for information;
- never mislead or confuse;
- consider the needs and interests of the media when planning your meetings and events;
- communicate the positive, successful events at your schools; and
- try to present your information in a fashion that is useful to the media in meeting its needs.

When the News Reporter Calls You ---

Although the superintendent is the spokesperson for the district and interprets the policies of the board to the public, the board speaks for itself on matters of policy formulation. Plan ahead so you won't be surprised when approached by a representative of the news media. Keep the following pointers in mind:

- Appoint one member of the board as spokesperson and channel all requests for information to that member;
- If you are not the board spokesperson, explain to the reporter that another member has been appointed to speak for the board as a whole;
- If asked for your opinion, don't give it unless or until you are certain your opinion represents the position of the majority of the board;
- If your response has to be "no comment", give some background or legal reason why you can't discuss the issue; and
- In all matters involving pending or threatened litigation, refer the reporter to your superintendent or legal counsel.



SECTION III

Where Do I Go For Help?

The ultimate responsibility is yours. Use common sense. Do your homework and use the many services available to assist you.

The First Resource is Yourself

Homework

It is customary for a “board packet” to be sent to members prior to the board meeting. The effectiveness of the board is greatly enhanced if each member goes through the “packet” and, if necessary, calls the superintendent prior to the board meeting to clarify any items or to request further information. Remember that this packet is simultaneously available to the news media and the public in general.

The members of the board should keep abreast of current issues with the assistance of the superintendent when requested. Every effort should be made to attend all board meetings.

Give the superintendent and district staff your public support. Base your decisions on the available facts and your independent judgment. Refuse to surrender that judgment to individuals or special interest groups. Respect the confidentiality of information that is privileged including all closed session discussions.

Common Sense

An effective school board member is one who:

- brings to the task an open mind and a willingness to learn;
- finds deep satisfaction in this type of community service;
- is an individual thinker but is willing to accept the fact that the task is one requiring team work and wide use of group process;
- clearly differentiates between policy making and administrative roles;
- has high aspirations for the community;
- is capable of conveying these aspirations to the community at large;
- does the homework before board meetings;
- understands the aims and objectives of the school system; is capable of interpreting the school system to the public; does some reading of educational periodicals;
- attends a reasonable number of educational conferences for board members and/or school administrators;
- can absorb the criticism of individuals or community pressure groups without losing a sense of perspective; does not take criticism as a personal issue;
- can keep a sense of humor in good times and bad;

- suspends judgment until the facts are available;
- is willing to accept ideas from others;
- puts aside selfish interests;
- accepts and supports the majority decision of the board;
- identifies self with board policies and actions;
- works tactfully with groups and individuals;
- is willing to take responsibility when necessary to identify problems and determine solutions;
- is willing to take sides in controversies;
- understands the necessity of leaving administrative responsibilities to the superintendent; and
- encourages open communications between the superintendent and the board.

The Second Resource is Your District Superintendent

You spent much time and energy selecting a district superintendent. That person is a trained professional who can assist you with answers or resources for your questions.

The Third Resource is Your County Superintendent of Schools

The County Superintendent of Schools Office is headed by Christine Lizardi Frazier, an elected official. The office supplies services and assistance to school districts in a variety of ways.

Administration and Financial Services

The County Superintendent of Schools Office provides fiscal oversight and support to districts. KCSOS audits all payrolls and accounts payable for the school districts. The office also completes reports to the various retirement systems. The data processing unit supplies a variety of financial reports which help districts keep track of transactions and allow them to gather information useful in budgetary decision making. District Accounting Services also provides direct services for districts as requested.

Fiscal Advisors and Management Consultants are available to assist the district with budget preparation, income projections, and cash flow analysis. They are also available to help in a variety of administrative matters. The consultants are valuable resources on the subjects of: school district organization; student attendance; state waivers, interdistrict attendance; personnel administration; bus replacement; deferred maintenance; and debt management. Administrators also are available, upon district request, to act as interim superintendents when the need arises.

Instructional Services

The Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office [KCSOS] supports local school districts in improving student achievement. Specialists in curriculum, instruction and accountability provide on site support as well as a variety of other professional development opportunities for Pre-K through 12th grade such as Professional Learning Communities, Instructional Technology, English Language Development and all core content areas. Learning support is also provided through a variety of health and safety programs such as Safe Schools Planning, Comprehensive Health Programs, Gang Prevention, Safe and Drug Free Schools and Youth Leadership Training. In addition, the office also operates the Instructional Resource Center and Kern Educational Telecommunications Network [KETN]. The County Superintendent also serves as the administrative agency for Migrant Education Region V and assists districts in identifying and serving migrant children and their families. With the implementation of LCFF, many categorically supported services are no longer funded; however, KCSOS continues to provide support for many of these services on a fee-for-service basis.

Personnel Recruitment

The Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office will assist in personnel recruitment through superintendent searches, teacher job flyers, and by maintaining an extensive file of active job-seeking teachers. A list of possible substitutes is also provided to districts each year.

Legislative Services

Because the Legislature plays such a large part in education now, it is important for educators and board members to keep abreast of new and pending legislation. The Superintendent of Schools Office maintains a legislative advocate in Sacramento.

Regional Services

Regional services described below have been provided through leadership and cooperation of the Kern County Superintendent of Schools. Each of these services has produced substantial cost savings for school districts.

Self-Insured Schools of California (SISC)

SISC is comprised of three separate Joint Power Authorities and each are governed by a board of directors made up of administrators from around the state. The JPAs are administered by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office.

SISC I provides Workers Compensation benefits; SISC II provides property and general liability, student insurance and risk management services; and SISC III provides health and welfare benefits to school districts throughout the state in an efficient and education centric environment.

Kern County Consortium SELPA

In 1977, all school districts and county school offices were mandated to form consortiums in geographical regions of sufficient size and scope to provide for all special education service needs of children residing within the region boundaries. Each region, Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA), developed a local plan describing how it would provide special education services.

SELPAs are dedicated to the belief that all students can learn and that special needs students must be guaranteed equal opportunity to become contributing members of society. SELPAs facilitate high quality educational programs and services for special needs students and training for parents and educators. The SELPA collaborates with county agencies and school districts to develop and maintain healthy and enriching environments in which special needs students and families can live and succeed.

Today, as never before, parents, students and staff work together to make certain that the appropriate services are provided on an individualized basis for every child with a disability. The services are provided through the SELPAs. The Local Plan developed and maintained in each community by the people who live there, is the basis of these improvements and the foundation of services.

The Kern County Consortium SELPA is a Multi-District/County Office SELPA. Currently, 44 school districts, three charter schools and the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office are members of this SELPA which provides special education programs and services to over 10,000 students.

It is the SELPA's responsibility to assure programs are available for all students with disabilities, from birth until age 21. SELPAs also assist in inter-SELPA placements, provide technical assistance to member districts, and provide administrative support in interpreting and implementing special education regulations.

The SELPA responsibility is met through a network of cooperative agreements among districts and agencies. The SELPA Office coordinates this network and provides a focal point for the student/family seeking information and services. The Kern County Consortium SELPA responsibilities include such things as:

- Ensuring programs/services are available for all children with disabilities
- Curriculum/program development
- Support surrogate parent training
- Community Advisory Committee support
- Oversight of special education management information systems
- Transition planning
- Personnel development
- Budget planning and review evaluation
- Interagency coordination
- Program Specialist support
- Community awareness
- Program coordination
- Evaluation of special education programs

Transportation and Vehicle Maintenance ---

Transportation and vehicle maintenance is provided at reasonable costs at the School Service Center of the County Superintendent of Schools facility on Union Avenue in Bakersfield. A comprehensive line of services is provided to assist districts with efficiently meeting their transportation and maintenance needs.

Communications ---

The Kern County Superintendent of Schools Division of Communications is available to assist Kern school districts deal with emergencies, crisis or communication issues that may impact public opinion, involve staff, other agencies or otherwise result in misunderstandings or conflict.

Cooperative Purchasing

The Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office ensures that the lowest possible prices are made available to participating districts for the purchase of school and office supplies.

Alertline

The Web-based Alertline was developed by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office to facilitate communication among districts, the news media, parents and the public in the event of a school delay or closure. A closure may be necessitated by weather, electrical or water system failure, or by events or factors beyond the district's control. School delays and closures are coordinated by the county superintendent's Transportation Services staff who work mostly with a district's Maintenance and Operations staff. The Alertline Web site is www.alertline.kern.org. The Alertline is password protected to ensure it is accessed only by authorized users. For questions, contact Transportation Services at (661) 852-5802.

Schools Legal Service

Schools Legal Service (SLS) is a joint powers entity providing legal and collective bargaining services to education agencies since 1976. SLS provides advice, representation and training in all facets of education law, including labor aid, personnel issues, student and special education matters, governance and conflict of interest, charter school issues, real estate, construction and business.

California Department of Education

The California Department of Education, under the direction of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, is divided into several branches. Currently, these branches include District, School & Innovation; Instruction & Learning Support; Services for Administration, Finance, Technology & Infrastructure; and Student Support & Special Services.

In order to facilitate improvement, the Superintendent of Public Instruction may from time to time restructure the California Department of Education. Branches may be enlarged, decreased, eliminated, or additional branches may be established. The vast divisions that are housed within the Department of Education administer California Department policy and/or serve districts and county offices in virtually every facet of California public education. To a great extent, communication by the California Department with local districts is through the County Superintendent of Schools.

State and National School Boards Association

The California and National School Boards Association have been formed to assist board members in their effort to promote excellence in education.

In its publication *Boardsmanship*, the California School Boards Association (CSBA) lists its goals as follows:

- To promote improvement of educational opportunities for the children of California; To promote and advance public education;
- To provide information to local school boards so that they can react appropriately to local, state, and national education concerns;
- To provide consulting services for local school boards, promote greater efficiency in school districts and provide better understanding of the role of the school board member;
- To inform legislators and others of school district needs in relation to proposed legislative and regulative actions; and
- To secure the concerted effort of local school boards in solving problems affecting school districts.

To promote these ends, the CSBA has an elected Delegate Assembly and Board of Directors with membership from school boards throughout the state.

The National School Boards Association (NSBA) headquartered near Washington, D.C. promotes the advancement of education through state and local school boards.

The NSBA represents interests of school boards to Congress, provides development programs for school board members, offers school district management services, and a variety of other services.

Locally, the Kern County School Boards Association conducts Fall and Spring institutes to keep board members informed of current and emerging educational issues.

Addresses for these associations are found in the Appendix.



APPENDIX

General References

Other Sources on Boardsmanship:

Professional Governance Standards, a document published by CSBA

911: A Manual for Schools, published by CSBA

California Education Code, www.cde.ca.gov

California Administrative Code Title V, Education,
www.cde.ca.gov/ls/fa/sf/title5regs.asp

Addresses:

National School Boards Association [NSBA]
1680 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: [703] 838-6722
Email: info@nsba.org

California School Boards Association [CSBA]
3251 Beacon Blvd. P.O. Box 1660
West Sacramento, CA 95691
Phone: [800] 266-3382

Kern County School Boards Association [KCSBA]
1300 17th Street – City Centre
Bakersfield, CA 93301-4533
Phone: [661] 636-4000

Fiscal Crisis Management Assistance Team [FCMAT]
Website: www.fcmat.org/
Phone: [661] 636-4611

Glossary of Acronyms

AASA.....	American Association of School Administrators
AB.....	Assembly Bill usually seen as AB 6, etc.
ACSA.....	Association of California School Administrators
ACT.....	American College Test
ADA.....	Average Daily Attendance
AFT.....	American Federation of Teachers
SBA.....	American School Boards Association
CBEDS.....	California Basic Educational Data System
CBEST.....	California Basic Educational Skills Test [teacher credential test]
CDE.....	California Department of Education
COLA.....	Cost of Living Adjustment
COP.....	Certificate of Participation
CCSBA.....	California School Boards Association
CCSS.....	Core Curriculum State Standards
CSEA.....	California School Employees Association
CTA.....	California Teachers Association
CTBS.....	California Test of Basic Skills
DOF.....	Department of Finance
ESD.....	Elementary School District
FCMAT.....	Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team
FTE.....	Full-Time Equivalent [personnel determination]
HSD.....	High School District
JPA.....	Joint Powers Agreement; Joint Powers Agency
K-12.....	Educational organizational level, kindergarten through grade 12
K-3.....	Educational organizational level, kindergarten through grade 3
K-8.....	Educational organizational level, kindergarten through grade 8

LCAP Local Control and Accountability Plan
LCFF Local Control Funding Formula
LEA Local Education Agency
LPA Local Plan Area
M & O Maintenance and Operations Department
MOT Maintenance, Operations and Transportation Department
NEA National Education Association
NSBA National School Boards Association
OLA Office of Local Assistance
PERB Public Employment Relations Board
PERS Public Employees Retirement System (Classified)
REA Responsible Education Agency
ROP/C Regional Occupational Program/Center
RSP Resource Specialist Program (Special Education Designation)
SAT Scholastic Aptitude Test
SB Senate Bill usually seen as SB 6, etc.
SDC Special Day Class (Special Education designation)
SELPA Special Education Local Plan Area
SIP School Improvement Program
SRF Special Reserve Fund
STRS State Teachers Retirement System
TRAN Tax Revenue Anticipation Notes
USD Unified School District
VAT Value Added Tax

Glossary of Educational Terms

Academic Performance Index (API): The API was established as a measure of academic performance for the Public Schools Accountability Act (PSAA) implemented in 1999.

Ability Grouping: Grouping students for instructional purposes according to similar levels of ability.

Achievement grouping: Grouping students for instruction based upon levels of past performance.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP): A provision of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) that holds every school and district accountable for achievement results for all students. In order to make AYP, schools and districts must make the rate of growth established by the state. This rate of growth is based on the percentage of students achieving at proficient or above on the standards aligned portion of the state assessments. AYP is determined by a combination of state test scores, test participation rates, the API and graduation rates.

American College Test (ACT): A battery of tests designed to measure achievement and ability.

Apportionment: Money distributed to school districts by the state.

Appropriation for Contingencies: That portion of the current fiscal year's budget that is not appropriated for any specific purpose but may be transferred to other specific appropriations as needed during the fiscal year or remain as part of the ending balance.

Appropriation: An allocation of budgetary funds made by the governing board for specific purposes and limited as to the time when it may be expended.

Appropriations Limitation: See Gann Limit.

Average Daily Attendance (ADA): Total approved days of attendance in the school district divided by the number of days the schools in the district are in session for at least the required minimum day. Important in most districts because the revenue limit based on ADA generates the major portion of district income.

Basic Aid: The minimum guaranteed amount that any district receives annually for state support, currently \$120 per ADA.

Bond Anticipation Note (BAN): Short-term bond issued in advance by a local government agency in anticipation of issuing a long-term bond in the future. Funds from this short-term bond are typically repaid from the proceeds of the sale from the long-term bond.

Budget Document (O1): The instrument used to present a comprehensive financial program. Includes a balanced statement of revenues and expenditures as well as other exhibits to report: [1] the financial condition of the several funds of the district at the end of the completed fiscal period; [2] estimated condition of funds at the end of the fiscal period in progress; and [3] estimated condition of funds at the close of the ensuing fiscal period.

Building Fund: A fund established to control the income and expenditures related to the purchase or construction of school buildings, sites, and equipment.

Cafeteria Account: Receipts and disbursements of the cafeteria function that are processed through a bank.

Cafeteria Fund: Receipts and disbursements of the cafeteria function that are processed through the county treasurer.

Capital Appreciation Bond (CAB): Securities issued by local governmental agencies that pay a compounded interest rate and principal upon maturity instead of through regular payments over time. This method of issuing debt has received more scrutiny after the recession and financial crises.

Capital Assets: Fixed assets.

Capital Outlay: Amounts paid for the acquisition of fixed assets, including land or existing buildings, improvements of grounds, construction of buildings, additions to buildings, or initial and additional equipment.

Certificates of Participation (COP): Debt financing, sold as tax-exempt issues much as general obligation bonds. However, repayment comes from normal district operating capital rather than additional voter-approved taxing authority of the school district.

Class-A-Lunch: School lunch that meets minimum nutritional requirements; government commodities are often supplied free as basic ingredients. Also called “Type-A” lunch.

Compensatory Education: Program that seeks to compensate for environmental and experiential deficits.

Contracted Services: Services rendered under contract by personnel who are not on the payroll of the school system.

Core Curriculum: The Core Curriculum is the basic content in the primary subject areas: English/language arts, mathematics, science and history/social science.

Deferred Maintenance: Repairs of buildings and equipment which have been postponed by school districts.

Economic Impact Aid (EIA): State categorical aid for districts with concentrations of children who are bilingual, transient or from low income families.

Employee Benefits: Amounts paid by the school system on behalf of employees [not included in the gross salary]. Examples are:

1. group health or life insurance payments
2. contributions to employee retirement
3. O.A.S.D.I. [Social Security] taxes
4. worker's compensation payments

First Principal Apportionment (P1): The statutory date [February 20] by which the State Department of Education must first calculate district financial entitlements.

Fiscal Year: A period of one year fixed by statute; in California, the period beginning July 1 and ending June 30.

Fixed Assets: Assets of a permanent character having continuing value; e.g., land, buildings, machinery, furniture, and equipment. The term “capital assets” is sometimes used in the same sense.

Full-time Equivalent (FTE): The ratio of time expended in a position to that of a full-time position. The ratio is derived by dividing the amount of employed time required in the position by the amount of employed time required in a corresponding full-time position.

Fund: A sum of money or other resources set aside for the purpose of carrying on specific activities or attaining certain objectives in accordance with special regulations, restrictions, or limitations. A fund is a distinct financial or fiscal entity.

Gann Limit: [Article XIII B Calif. Const.]: A ceiling on each year’s appropriations of tax dollars by governmental entities. Using base year 1978-79, subsequent years’ limits are adjusted for change in California Consumer Price Index or in per capita personal income, whichever is smaller and for the change in population [ADA for school districts].

General Fund: The fund used to finance the ordinary operations of the school district. It is available for any legally authorized purpose.

Gifted: Students with intellectual ability and mental age well above the norm. Refers to upper one to two percent of all students in terms of their intelligence.

Grade Level: Assigned classification of pupils according to age and progress; e.g., kindergarten, first grade, and so forth.

Grievance: Complaint by an employee that a provision of the collective bargaining agreement under which he is working has been violated.

Highly Qualified Teacher: All teachers must meet standards set by the federal guidelines of NCLB to be considered “highly qualified” or more accurately stated, “NCLB compliant.” These requirements vary depending on the year the teacher was hired and the grade level or content area taught.

Joint Powers Agreement (JPA): An agreement by two or more like agencies to join together to accomplish a purpose that would not be possible as single agencies.

Joint School Districts: School districts with territory in more than one county.

Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP): Three year plan developed with input from stakeholders that explains how the district will provide and improve services to students along state and local priority areas paying special attention to high-needs students.

Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF): California school funding formula based on per pupil base grants with supplemental and concentration funding for low income, English learner and foster youth.

Local Educational Agency Plan (LEA Plan): The NCLB Act mandates local educational agencies (LEAs) to develop an LEA Plan as a requirement for receiving federal funding for NCLB.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB): The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 is the reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of which the major program is Title I.

Prior Years' Taxes: Taxes collected within the current fiscal year for levies in previous fiscal years.

Program Accounting: A system of accounting in which records are maintained to accumulate income and expenditure data by program.

Program Costs: Costs incurred and allocated by programs rather than by organizations. Program costs should be those direct costs that are essential to maintain the program.

Program Improvement (PI): Title I schools that fail to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years enter PI. In the following three-year period, they must make AYP for two consecutive years to exit PI. (Beginning in 2004-05 a district can be placed in Program Improvement.)

Protested Taxes: Tax money paid under protest and held by the county auditor pending settlement.

Purchase Order: A document issued to a vendor which authorizes the delivery of specified merchandise or the performance of certain services and the making of a charge for them.

Register: A listing of transactions of like kind that may be totaled and summarized for convenience in posting; e.g., payroll registers, warrant registers, and attendance registers.

Registered Warrant: A warrant that is registered by the county treasurer for future payment because of present lack of funds and that is to be paid with interest in the order of its registration.

Requisition: A document submitted initiating a purchase order to secure specified articles or services.

Reserve: An amount set aside to provide for estimated future expenditures or losses, for working capital, or for other specified purposes.

Restricted Funds: A sum of money or other resources, the use of which is restricted by legal requirements.

Revenue: Income.

Revolving Cash Fund: A stated amount of money used primarily for emergency or small disbursements. It is reimbursed periodically through properly documented expenditures which are summarized and charged to proper accounting classifications.

Scholastic Aptitude Test (S.A.T.): An instrument used to measure aptitude administered by the College Entrance Examination Board to students in grades 11 or 12; used as a criterion for college and university admission.

School Choice: A district with a school in Program Improvement must offer to all students in the school the option of transferring to a non-PI school in the district.

School Improvement Program (SIP): A state funded program developed by the school site council for the improvement of individual school programs.

School to Career: Organization of the curriculum so that a student will receive information and training about work.

Self-Contained Classroom: A classroom in which a teacher instructs one group of students in a majority of the instructional programs. Self-contained classrooms are usually found at the elementary school level.

Stores: Goods on hand in storerooms subject to requisition.

Student Body Fund: A fund to control the receipts and the disbursements of student association activities.

Supplemental Grants: A special state categorical program designed to provide districts with limited special programs access to equalized categorical funding.

Supplemental Services: Under NCLB, a school that is in Year 2 or 3 of Program Improvement must make available supplemental academic instruction to low-income children who qualify for services.

Tax Revenue Anticipation Notes (TRANS): Instruments issued to secure monies borrowed in expectation of receipt of tax funds.

Warrant: A written order drawn by the governing board or its authorized officer[s] or employee[s], directing the county treasurer to pay a specified amount to a designated payee. It looks like a check.

Work Order: A written authorization for the performance of a particular job.

