BOARD MEMBERS

Limits of Board Members Authority

The School Board has broad but clearly limited powers. The exercise of its authority is restricted to the functions required or permitted by law, and then only when it acts in a legally constituted meeting. Board members have authority only in regularly called meetings of the Board, or when delegated specific tasks by Board action. Individual Board members shall submit requests for research or administrative studies to the entire Board for consideration.

(cf. 6162.8 – Research)
(cf. 9322 – Agenda/Meeting Materials)

The Board is the unit of authority. The Board member is a part of the governing body which represents and acts for the community as a whole. Apart from the normal function as part of the unit, the Board member has no individual authority. No individual member of the Board, by virtue of holding office, shall exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools; nor, as an individual, command the services of any school employee. Individually, the Board member may not commit the district to any policy, act or expenditure. The board will appoint building and home school liaisons. The purpose of being a liaison is to provide communication opportunities with a school board member for students, staff, and the community. Some possible actions would be to make regular school visits and attend PAC meetings. The liaisons will report relevant information from school visits to the Board. When acting as school liaisons, board members should bring back information for the whole Board to consider and should not commit the Board to any action.

School visits by Board members are encouraged. Principals should receive a courtesy call in advance of a visit. Board members, as with all visitors, must check in with the school office. Board members who visit schools of their own volition have no more authority than any other citizen.

(cf. 1250 – Visits to the Schools)

No members of the Board shall be asked to perform any routine or clerical duties which may be assigned to an employee, nor shall any Board member become an employee of his/her district while serving on the Board.

A Board member should resign from the Board before seeking to secure district employment. In no event shall a final decision for hire be made prior to receiving the Board member’s resignation.

(cf. 9250 – Remuneration, Reimbursement and other Benefits)
(cf. 9270 – Conflict of Interest)
Board members who visit schools of their own volition have no more authority than any other citizen. Board members have authority only in regularly called meetings of the Board, or when delegated specific tasks by Board action.

*(cf. 1250 - Visits to the Schools)*

**Board Member Requests for Information**

Board members should make informed decisions on matters before them for a vote. The Superintendent or designee is responsible for providing the Board with relevant materials to inform the Board on those matters on which it is to act. If Board members desire further information, a request for information shall be directed to the Superintendent, pursuant to the following guidelines:

**Bylaws of the Board**

1. Requests for simple facts. Any Board member may make a request for simple facts to the Superintendent who will forward the request to the appropriate staff member. All responses to requests for simple facts will be provided to the requesting Board member, and copied to the Board President.

2. Some board member requests for information require significant administrative time and explanation in order to provide a response. If the Superintendent deems a board member request for information to be more than a request for simple facts, the requesting board member may ask that the request be put on the agenda for the full board to consider. If the majority of the Board agree to the request, then the request shall be forwarded to the Superintendent for a response. Examples of requests for information that would be beyond a request for simple facts includes but are not limited to reports, research, administrative studies, detailed information, or information relating to a problem or a potential problem in the District.

3. Complaints regarding personnel. Board members may have their own complaints regarding District personnel or may hear such complaints from the community. These concerns should be privately communicated to the Superintendent.

*(cf. 6162.8 - Research)*
*(cf. 9322 - Agenda/Meeting Materials)*

**Obligations of Members**

Members of the Board must endeavor to attend all meetings, study all materials presented with the agenda prior to attending the meeting, participate in the discussion of any items which come before the Board, and vote on all motions and resolutions, abstaining only for compelling reasons.

The President may grant the abstention after receiving no objection from the Board. If an objection is raised by any member of the Board, a majority vote of the membership
is required to grant the abstention. The abstention shall be so recorded and shall not be counted as either an affirmative or a negative vote.

The Board member should not subordinate the education of children and youth to any partisan principle, group interest, or the member’s own personal interest.

The Board member should be prepared and willing to devote a sufficient amount of time to the study of the problems of education in the district, the state, and the nation in order to interpret them to the people of the district.

(cf. 9230 - Meetings)

Legal Reference:
ALASKA STATUTES
14.14.140 Restrictions on employment