



# WJC BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

Preface: At the Board-Superintendent Transition Workshop held on July 21, 2005, a consensus was reached as to important protocols [or affirmations] by which the respective parties will abide in the interest of students, staff, and the community-at-large.



# BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

- 1 – The Superintendent will send “*Weekend Notes*” to the Board via fax and/or e-mail according to each Board member’s request. He will copy members of the Superintendent’s Leadership Team (Assistant Superintendent for Academic Services, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, Chief Financial Officer, Director for Human Resources, Director for Student Services), Administrative Assistant to the Board and Superintendent, and any others on a “need-to-know” basis as determined by the Superintendent. [Note: The Division’s Communications Specialist will also participate as a member of the Superintendent’s Leadership Team which meets each Monday morning.]



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

2 – The Board will receive ongoing e-mails from the Superintendent as he attempts to convey important topics of leadership and management related to the operations of the school division. (This is a day-by-day decision by the Superintendent as “real time” communication is the intent rather than waiting for each week to end.)



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

- 3 – As a rule of thumb, Board members will not respond to the Superintendent's daily e-mails, unless it is by phone or personal contact given any questions or concerns.
- 4 – Given an "emergency," the Superintendent will make an immediate phone call to the Board Chair and Vice-Chair followed by calls to all other School Board members. Fax and/or e-mail may follow in addition to the calls.



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

5 – When parents contact School Board members, the member will (a) listen, (b) take notes if so desired, and (c) refer the parent to the “chain of command,” i.e., teacher, principal, Assistant Superintendent for Academic Affairs, and Superintendent. If the matter makes it up the chain of command to the Assistant Superintendent or Superintendent, the results will be reported to the Board-as-a-Whole as an “FYI.”  
[Note: This does *not* preclude the use of *Board Policy, Code KL*. “If the Superintendent or his/her designee cannot reach satisfactory solution, the concern may then be placed on the agenda of a future closed session meeting of the school board.”]



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

6 – In sharing information, the Superintendent will do so with the Board-as-a-Whole as a matter of routine, unless he determines that there are overriding concerns of privacy, legal, ethical, or moral implications that may bring “harm” to an individual or individuals. In such cases, communication may be limited to the Board Chair and/or Vice-Chair.



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

7 – When faculty or staff contact School Board members, the member will (a) refer individual to *WJCC Board Policy File BG* (“...encourages all employees to present their views to the school’s principal or immediate supervisor who will in turn bring them to the attention of the appropriate supervisor and/or the Superintendent.”), (b) listen, (c) take notes if so desired, and (d) ask the employee to utilize the “chain of command” per Board policy. Should the matter make it up the chain of command to the [appropriate] Assistant Superintendent or Superintendent, the results will be reported to the Board-as-a-Whole as an “FYI.”



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

8 – When a Board member desires certain information regarding WJC business, he or she should feel free to contact the appropriate member of the Superintendent’s Leadership Team (Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents, CFO, H.R. Director, Student Services Director, Communications Specialist). The SLT member will contact the Superintendent that day to inform him of such request and conversation. Should information be collected or shared with the inquiring Board member, then all other Board members will and the Superintendent shall receive such information as a matter of “FYI,” especially if there is a “substantive” and potentially important response for the conduct of the Division’s business. (As a matter of courtesy, the requesting Board member *may* want to e-mail or otherwise contact the Superintendent to share his or her request of another SLT member.)



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

9 – When a Board member desires direct contact with an administrator below that of SLT level, the Board member will make such a request through the Superintendent who will, in turn, contact that person to request that he or she contact the Board member. All information gathered by the administrator (paper or otherwise) will be shared with all Board members and the Superintendent, unless of a negative legal or ethical consequence. In all cases, the Superintendent will be apprized of the topic or topics of the contact.



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

10 – Should an administrator feel a need to talk to a Board member regarding some topic related to WJC business, he or she will be instructed by the Superintendent that such is “OK.” However, he or she will also be instructed to share with the Superintendent the content of the conversation both before and after, e.g., “I want to talk to Mr./Ms. Board Member about this,” and “I talked to Mr./Ms. Board member about this and here’s what we said to each other.” (Trust over secrets.) As a matter of courtesy, the Board member *may* want to mention this contact with the administrator to the Superintendent.



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

11 – That the Board seek a recommendation [or counsel] from the Superintendent on all matters [of action] before it. In turn, the Superintendent may offer a recommendation or counsel if he so chooses. (This is consistent with the *VSBA Manual for School Board Members*, p. 25, “....in all of these [deliberations], it [the School Board] should have the professional counsel of the division superintendent of schools.”)



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

12 – It is understood that various Board committees will, from time to time, provide counsel and recommendations to the School Board. However, in these instances, the Superintendent should be asked for his counsel given the committee's recommendations recognizing that these committees often spend weeks upon weeks in study and deliberation. At no time will the Superintendent take such committee work lightly, but he nor the Board is bound to agree.



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

13 – Adhering to *Robert's Rules of Order*, a School Board member may make his or her own motion regarding an agenda item. In doing so, the member will inquire of the Superintendent (as a matter of courtesy) as to his view or views. (Note: The Superintendent recognizes that Board members will sometimes disagree with the administration and, as such, fully recognizes this as a product of the democratic process. As agreed to at the Board-Superintendent Transition Workshop, it is “how” we disagree that will determine what kind of Board-Superintendent relationship there is as well as the extent to which the faculty, staff, and public-at-large see the Board and Superintendent as conscientious and caring public servants worthy of their support.)



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

14 – All committee recommendations go simultaneously to the School Board and Superintendent for review. The Superintendent, naturally, has the option to support the recommendations or not. In any case, the Board Chair (or Board majority) reserves the ability to bring committee recommendations to the Board for action whatever the Superintendent's position.



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

15 – The School Board and Superintendent will follow *WJC Board Policy File: BDDC* until, if ever, altered. Policy now reads: “The Superintendent will be responsible for preparing a written agenda for all regular Board meetings. The agenda for regular Board meetings will be reviewed by the Superintendent with the Chair and/or Vice-Chair of the School Board one week prior to the scheduled meeting. Copies of the agenda will be delivered to each Board member on the Friday preceding the meeting on the first and third Tuesday of each month.” (As noted at the Transition Workshop, the Superintendent is to report policy—herein—on this matter. It was also noted that the future *may* bring agenda items when 2 or more Board members desire such items with the Superintendent placing a synopsis in the Board agenda indicating those Board members making such a request with the topic so noted. It will be clearly understood that such an agenda item is Board-initiated rather than administration-initiated.) The Superintendent will await further word from the Board Chair and/or the Board-as-a-Whole regarding what change, if any, is desired in *WJCC Board Policy File BDDC*.



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

- 16 – Unless specified by the Board Chair and/or Superintendent ahead of time, closed sessions will be limited to the School Board and Superintendent only.
- 17 – The Board Chair and Vice-Chair will work with the Superintendent in identifying a Superintendent evaluation instrument for the Board-as-a-Whole to consider for implementation. Such an instrument will be brought to the School Board for consideration no later than its regular meeting of October of 2005. (Note: As the Superintendent's contract now indicates that "the Board shall evaluate and assess the performance of the Superintendent in August of each year during the term of the contract," it must be noted that it is in conflict with *WJCC Board Policy File AFB* which calls for the Superintendent to be evaluated on or before June 30<sup>th</sup> of each year. As such, the Superintendent will bring an agenda item at the next August Board meeting [Aug. 16, 2005] to rectify this discrepancy in favor of Board Policy, i.e., "on or before June 30 of each year."



## **BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS**

18 – The School Board and Superintendent will conduct long-range or strategic planning according to an agreed-upon cycle through the Office of the Superintendent. Such planning will be within a collaborative environment of citizen volunteers, teachers, support staff, and administration. Data-driven and research-based will characterize this planning.



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

19 – The Superintendent will issue *Superintendent's End-of-Month Notes* to be posted on the Division's web site for the purposes of information, inspiration, reflection, and celebration. Such notes may well constitute a basis for professional dialogue meant to provide "guidance" as we strive for greater academic and other excellence in WJC. The Superintendent will also explore the possibility of writing a monthly or bi-monthly column in local newspapers dedicated to informing the general public of WJCC initiatives, successes, and challenges.



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

20 – When it comes to interviewing with the electronic or print media, the Superintendent will speak for the School Division and administration. In his absence, or with his authority, the Division’s Communications Specialist is also a Division spokesperson. (Note: Other members of the School Division could appear in various media in a respondent’s role as might be appropriate. The “official” spokespersons for the Division are the Superintendent and, as authorized, the Communications Specialist.)



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

21 – When it comes to interviewing with the electronic or print media, the Board Chair and Vice-Chair are considered “official” spokespersons for the School Board-as-a-Whole. Otherwise, Board members are speaking for themselves as individuals and should note this for the media.



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

22 – For 2005-06 school year, the Superintendent, in addition to attending to matters of growth, construction, and budget, will focus his attention on (a) “Look, Listen, and Learn,” (b) implementing the Division’s Strategic Plan, and (c) addressing the findings of the *Efficiency Review: Final Study*.



## BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT AFFIRMATIONS

23 – For 2005-06, the administration will hold a mid-year workshop with the School Board regarding progress on the Strategic Plan and the *Efficiency Review*. (Note: This may also include a “budget component” for 2006-07 whereby budget priorities and parameters are discussed, if not agreed to . . . .)