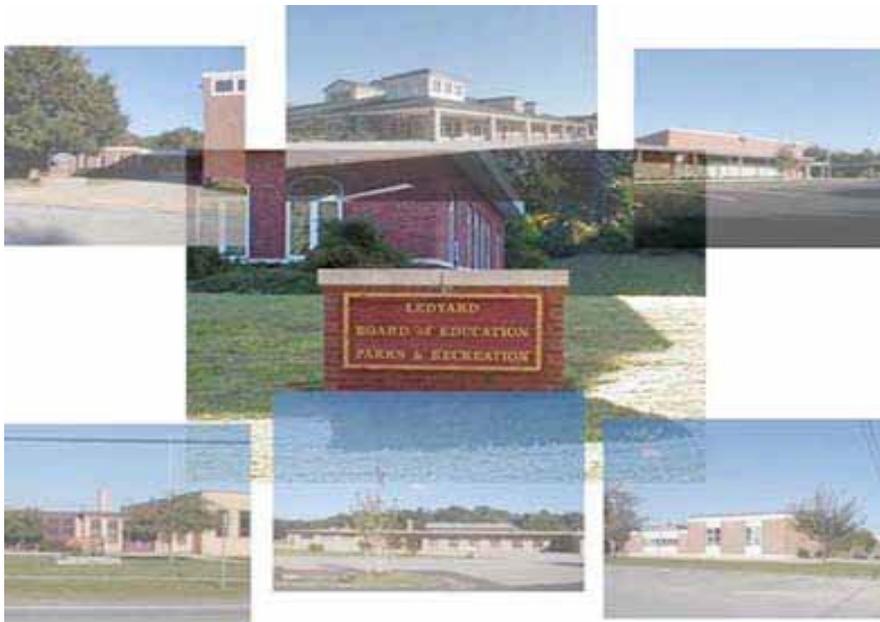


Member Handbook

Attachment A Ledyard Board of Education Communications Plan



September 2016

***Ledyard Public Schools
Board of Education
4 Blonder Boulevard
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339***

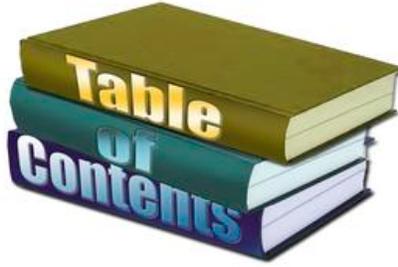


Ledyard Board of Education Vision

Ledyard Public Schools - a community for exemplary learning

Ledyard Board of Education Mission

Ledyard Public Schools facilitates experiences for our community that cultivate a joy for learning, perseverance, independence, and social responsibility through innovative teaching practices



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Purpose

This Board of Education Handbook has been developed to provide guidance for new members of the Ledyard Board of Education as well as the community-at-large regarding the manner by which the Board typically carries out the authority delegated to it by law.

This handbook is intended to serve as a resource for Members of the Board as they assume their office.

This Handbook will be posted on the Board of Education website and updated, as appropriate.

Ledyard Public Schools Overview

Vision and Mission: The Board charges Ledyard Schools to facilitate experiences for our community that cultivate a joy of learning, perseverance, independence and social responsibility through innovative teaching practices. The word community is mentioned in both the vision and mission as it is to be emphasized and meant to be inclusive of all school stakeholders. The joy for learning, the ability to persevere, the ability to be independent and be socially responsible are values of both the Board and the community which it serves.

Goals: The Board of Education, through the Strategic Planning Committee, will develop annual goals aimed at meeting the mission and vision of the Board of Education. These goals will take into account the needs of students, teachers, and the community.

More information can be obtained on the Ledyard Public Schools website:

http://ledyard.ss7.sharpschool.com/board_of_education/strategic_plan

Board of Education Overview

The Ledyard Board of Education consists of nine local citizens elected to serve as volunteers for two-year terms. The members reflect a commitment and dedication to education and to the townspeople of Ledyard. The public is invited to attend all Ledyard Board of Education meetings and to provide comments at the beginning of each meeting.

BoE Purpose and Goals

The Board of Education is the governing body of the school district and derives its power and exists under the Constitution and General Statutes of the State of Connecticut, the regulations of the Connecticut State Board of Education, and the Charter of the Town of Ledyard.

The Ledyard Board of Education represents the citizens of the Town of Ledyard in carrying out the mandates of the Connecticut General Statutes regarding public education.

The Board shall be the legislative body which determines all questions of general policy to be employed in the conduct of the Ledyard Public Schools.

In determining District policy, the Board shall:

- Hear and consider facts and recommendations
- Adopt a plan, policy or course of action
- Authorize the Superintendent of Schools, the Board's Executive Officer, to carry out its legislation and/or policy decisions

The Ledyard Board of Education shall concern itself only with broad questions of policy and not with administrative details.

The Board shall rely upon the Superintendent of Schools to recommend policies for adoption and to administer policies enacted by the Board.

Such policies shall be broad enough to indicate a line of action to be taken by the Superintendent in meeting a number of problems and jobs.

Application of such policies to individual problems and jobs is an administrative function to be performed by the Superintendent.

Code of Ethics

As a guide to performing their duties, Board members should:

1. Be an advocate of high quality free public education for all Connecticut children
2. As an agent of the state, uphold and enforce all laws, rules, regulations and court orders pertaining to public schools, and bring about any needed change only through legal and ethical means
3. Help create public schools which meet the individual educational needs of all children regardless of their ability, race, creed, sex, physical condition or social standing
4. Work to help the community to understand the importance of proper support for public education
5. Become informed about the nature, value and direction of contemporary education and support needed change in the schools
6. Serve as a communications link between the community and the schools, working to ensure that the community is fully and accurately informed about the schools, and that the school staff understands the aspirations and desires of the community
7. Recognize that a Board member's responsibility is not to "run the schools," but to see that they are well-run through effective policies
8. Confine Board action to policymaking, planning, and appraisal, and consult with those who will be affected by the Board's actions
9. Arrive at conclusions after fully discussing the issue at an open meeting, and abide by the principle of majority rule
10. Recognize that authority rests only with the whole Board assembled in a meeting, and make not personal promises nor take any private action that may compromise the Board
11. Never use the position on the Board for personal gain.
12. Hold confidential all matters pertaining to the schools that, if disclosed, might needlessly injure individuals or the schools
13. Ensure that all school business transactions be open and ethical.
14. Ensure that the best personnel available are appointed to all positions in the district
15. Refer all complaints through the proper "chain of command" within the system, and at on such complaints at public meetings only when administrative solutions fail

Conflict of Interest – Bylaw 9270

Members of the Ledyard Board of Education shall adhere to all Connecticut conflict of interest laws applicable to Board members. Additionally, Board members should refrain from engaging in conduct or actions that, although not in violation of Connecticut law, give the appearance of a conflict of interest, embarrass the Board, or personally embarrass the Board member.

For the purposes of this bylaw, a Board member's "**immediate family**" includes a spouse, a domestic partner of a civil union, another person cohabitating with the person in a conjugal relationship that is not a legal marriage, children, an individual who fills or has filled the role of a parent, siblings, immediate in-laws, others considered to be members of the household and living under the same roof, or any person for whom a Board member is the primary caregiver. Apparent or actual conflicts of interest may arise when hiring personnel, purchasing materials or services, or gathering information regarding Board employees. To avoid any such appearances of impropriety, Board members are required to adhere to the following provisions:

1. No member of the Board shall seek or accept employment for compensation by the Board of Education in any position within Ledyard Public Schools. Pursuant to Connecticut General Statute Section 10-232, if a member of the Board does obtain such employment, the Board member shall immediately be considered to have resigned his or her Board membership
2. If a member of a Board member's immediate family, or another person otherwise related by blood or marriage to a Board member, is being considered for employment by the Board, the Board member shall refrain from participating in discussion, voting and otherwise attempting to influence other Board members with regard to that person's employment.
3. No Board member shall use his or her position on the Board to influence a non-Board member in an employment or contractual decision; nor shall a Board member use his or her position on the Board to influence a Board member in employment or contractual decisions other than those routinely made by the Board.
4. No Board member shall have a direct pecuniary interest in a contract with the District. This prohibition includes directly furnishing any labor, services, equipment, or supplies to the District for compensation. This bylaw does not, however, prohibit the District from contracting with corporations or businesses which employ or are associated with a Board member, provided that the Board member declares to the Board his or her employment or association with such business or corporation and refrains from debating, voting, and otherwise attempting to influence Board members regarding the contract.
5. The Board shall not give preferential treatment to any business or corporation that employs a Ledyard Town official or paid Town employee or in which any Town official or paid Town employee has a substantial financial interest.
6. No Board member shall directly or indirectly solicit any gift, or accept or receive any gift, having a value of twenty-five dollars (\$25) or more, whether in the form of money,

services, loan, travel, entertainment, hospitality, thing or promise, or any other form, under circumstances in which it could be reasonably inferred that the gift was intended to influence the Board member in the performance of his/her duties or was intended as a reward for any official action on his/her part.

7. A Board member shall not use any information obtained as a consequence of his or her service as a member of the Ledyard Board of Education for financial or other gain when such information is not available to the general public.
8. No Board member shall solicit information from the public regarding the performance, behavior, or competence of a Board employee. This provision does not, however, prevent a Board member from listening to the public's concerns regarding a particular Board employee.

The above-noted conflict of interest rules are not intended to be a complete list of prohibited conduct or activity by Board members. Board members should be continually aware of any situation that might create actual or apparent conflicts of interest.

Roles and Responsibilities – Bylaw 9000 excerpt

The Ledyard Board of Education is the governing body of the school district and derives its power and exists under the Constitution and General Statutes of the State of Connecticut, the regulations of the Connecticut State Board of Education, and the Charter of the Town of Ledyard. The following guiding principles apply:

1. Understand that the Board's first and greatest concern is the educational welfare of the students, and that all Board decisions must be based on this understanding
2. Provide leadership in order that the goals and objectives of the school system, as set forth by the Board, can be effectively carried out
3. Hire a Superintendent of Schools, and evaluate the Superintendent in accordance with State statute
4. Consider and adopt an annual budget
5. Establish policy for employment, promotion, evaluation and dismissal of personnel in accordance with State statutes
6. Initiate and approve the acquisition and disposition of school sites, and initiate and approve plans for school buildings
7. Consider specific recommendations made by the Superintendent
8. Communicate the educational programs of the District to the citizens of the community
9. Consider and adopt changes in the curriculum
10. Evaluate the Board's performance in relation to its goals, and to establish and clarify policies based upon the results of such evaluation

11. Render all decisions based solely on judgment of the available facts and not surrender that judgment to individuals, special interests, or personal agendas.
12. To take other actions required by law
13. Perform all Board functions and operations in conformity with State, Federal and local laws, rules and regulations

Duties and Responsibilities of Board Members – Bylaw 9000 excerpt

The Ledyard Board of Education shall make every effort to sustain a high level of professionalism in the school system. In order to maintain appropriate standards, it is essential that individual Board members exhibit civility, integrity, and a willingness to apply themselves wholeheartedly to the business of supporting and governing the Ledyard Public Schools system.

To these ends, Board members shall:

1. Be aware of the State statutes affecting schools, regulations of the Department of Education, and District policies, rules and regulations.
2. Thoroughly prepare for Board meetings
3. Accept the will of the majority vote of the Board and give support to the resulting policy or action
4. Refer all questions and complaints from constituents to the Superintendent and/or Board, and to abstain from individual counsel and action.
5. Recognize that Board membership vests no individual authority unless expressly authorized by the Board
6. Respect the confidentiality of all matters properly discussed in executive session of the Board, and all matters pertaining to the schools that, if discussed, might needlessly injure individuals or the schools
7. Immediately object to public matters that may be inappropriately brought up during executive sessions of the Board

Limits of Authority – Bylaw 9010

The Ledyard Board of Education holds authority only as a unit. Apart from their function as part of the unit, Board members have no individual authority except at Board meetings or when discharging an assignment made by the Board. Individually the Board member may not commit the district to any policy, act or expenditure. The Board member does not represent a factional segment of the community, but is rather a part of the body which represents and acts for the community as a whole.

No individual member of the Board, by virtue of holding office, shall exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools or as an individual command the services of any school employee.

No member of the Board of Education shall be asked to perform any routine or clerical duties which may be assigned to an employee.

Board Structure and Terms of Office – Bylaw 9110 excerpt

The Ledyard Board of Education will consist of nine members elected biennially in accordance with the Charter of the Town of Ledyard to serve for two-year terms. Newly-elected Board members shall take office at the first regularly scheduled Board meeting in December, the Board's annual organizational meeting. Prior to taking office, newly-elected Board members shall take the oath of office administered by the Town Clerk or his/her assistant.

Election of Officers – Bylaw 9120 excerpt

The Ledyard Board of Education shall elect from its members at its annual organizational meeting in December, a Chairperson and a Secretary, who shall serve for a term of one year. The organizational meeting shall be called to order by the Board's Executive Officer, the Superintendent, who will preside until a Chairperson is elected.

The votes of each Board member shall be reduced to writing and made available for public inspection within forty-eight hours, excluding Saturday, Sunday or legal holidays, and shall also be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. If the Board officers are not chosen after one month because of the inability of any one Board member to receive five affirmative votes for an office, the Ledyard Town Council shall choose such officers from the membership of the board.

Filling Board Member Vacancies – Bylaw 9110 excerpt

A vacancy occurring in the Board of Education will be filled by the remaining members of the Board, who will appoint an individual to fill the position until the next regular Town election.. Such vacancy will be announced at a regularly scheduled Board meeting. The Board will then interview candidates for the vacancy who are registered voters of the same political affiliation as that of the Board member who created the vacancy. The vacancy will be filled at a meeting of the Board by majority vote of the Board members.

Whenever there is a vacancy in the office of Chairperson or Secretary, the Board shall elect a new officer to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term of office.

Resignation/Removal from Office/Censure – Bylaw 9222

If for reasons of health, change in domicile, or any other compelling reason a member does decide to terminate service, the Board requests as early as possible notification of intent to resign so that the Board may plan appropriately.(We should add to policy/bylaws the requirements for the member to submit a letter of resignation to the Town Clerk)

When a member of a Board of Education shall cease to be a bona fide resident of the Town of Ledyard, membership in the Board shall immediately cease.

Removal from Office

Any Board officer may be removed from a position of a Board officer by a two-thirds vote of the membership of the whole Board.

Censure

The Board may vote to censure or reprimand a member by a two-thirds vote of the membership of the whole Board.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Chairperson – Bylaw 9120 excerpt

The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Education and shall perform other duties as directed by law, State Department of Education regulations, and this Board. In carrying out these responsibilities, the Chairperson shall:

1. Sign the instruments, acts, and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Board
2. Consult with the Superintendent in the planning of the Board's agendas
3. Confer with the Superintendent on crucial matters which may occur between Board meetings
4. Appoint Board committees
5. Call special meetings of the Board as necessary
6. Be the public spokesperson for the Board at all times except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others
7. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Board meetings

As the presiding officer at all meetings of the Board, the Chairperson shall:

1. Call the meeting to order at the appointed time
2. Announce the business to come before the Board in its proper order.
3. Enforce the Board's policies relating to the order of business and the conduct of the meetings
4. Recognize persons who desire to speak, and protect the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference
5. Explain what the effect of a motion would be if it is not clear to every member.
6. Restrict discussion to the question at hand when a motion is before the Board
7. Answer all parliamentary inquiries, referring questions of legality to the Board's attorney
8. Put motions to a vote, stating definitely and clearly the vote and the result thereof
9. Declare the meeting adjourned

The Chairperson shall have the right, as other Board members have, to offer resolutions, discuss questions, and to vote.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Secretary

The Secretary of the Board of Education shall:

1. Perform the duties of the Chairperson at Board meetings in the absence of the Chairperson
2. Maintain a record of all Board proceedings as required by state law; one copy shall be maintained in the office of the Superintendent and one copy in the office of the Town Clerk
3. Submit to the Town at its annual meeting a report of the doings of the Board.

Appointments to Town Boards, Committees and/or Commissions – Bylaw 9140

The chairperson shall appoint representatives of the Board of Education to Town Boards, Committees or Commissions. Such appointments shall be for one year or until the discharge of the assigned function of said Board, Committee or Commission.

Board Committees - Bylaw 9132

The Ledyard Board of Education may establish standing and special committees, as necessary, to facilitate the Board's work. Committees can be used to explore and make recommendations on time-consuming and/or complex problems and issues or to accomplish specific projects.

All committees, when formed, shall receive an appropriate written "charge" or charter in order to be sure that the Board's intent and expectations are clear. The charge shall specify the committee's membership and voting rights.

All Board committee meetings are open to the public, except as otherwise may be provided by law. Committee meetings shall be announced to all committee members, Board members and the public through the same process as is used to announce all regular and special Board meetings. All committee reports and minutes of Board committee meetings are public information subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

No committee, or member of a committee, shall have the power to make any commitments or contracts on behalf of the Board or enter into any agreement that involves the expenditure of money, unless such action has been previously authorized by the Board in either a regular or special meeting.

A simple majority of the voting members of a committee shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting committee business.

Each committee may make a report through its chairperson or a committee member at each regular meeting of the Board and otherwise as may be required by the committee's charter.

Advisory (non-voting) members of a committee may present, in writing, a report to the Board whenever they disagree with recommendations made by the committee to the Board.

Committee Members

The Superintendent shall be an ex-officio member of all Board committees but shall not vote or be counted in determining a quorum, unless otherwise specified in the committee's charter.

In addition to the specified voting members of a committee, the committee membership may include advisory (non-voting) members whose particular knowledge or perspective can

significantly aid or improve the committee's operation so that the Board's overall decision-making process is enhanced. Such members shall be appointed by the Board Chairperson in consultation with the Superintendent.

Committee members' normal term shall be for the same term as the Board Chairperson or until the committee is dissolved, whichever period of time is shorter.

Vacancies in committee membership, for both voting and advisory positions, shall be filled by the Board Chairperson in consultation with the Superintendent and the committee's chairperson, as appropriate. Committee members who are unable to continue serving on a committee shall promptly notify the committee and Board chairpersons so that a replacement may be provided in order to expeditiously carry out the committee's business.

An individual's appointment to a committee may be terminated at any time at the Board Chairperson's discretion in consultation with the Superintendent and the committee chairperson.

Standing Committees

Standing committees are established to perform a continuing function in order to facilitate the Board's decision-making process in a particular area of operation. They usually remain in existence indefinitely, although the membership of the committee may change.

Standing committees will consist of no less than three and no more than five Board members and other non-Board members as specified in the committee charter. Other Board members may attend committee meetings and participate in the discussion; however only the committee's assigned Board members may participate in any votes.

The Board Chairperson, after considering requests from the other Board members, shall assign Board members to each standing committee and shall appoint one Board member to serve as the committee's chair.

Modifications to the charter for a standing committee may be approved by a majority vote of the Board during a regular or special meeting without requiring a second reading.

There are five (5) standing committees currently chartered:

1. Facilities
2. Finance
3. Negotiations
4. Policy
5. Strategic Planning

Special Committees

Unless otherwise directed by the Board, special committees, also known as ad hoc, temporary or advisory committees, are appointed to perform a specific task in a prescribed amount of time and are discharged when the task is completed. Special committees are fact-finding, deliberative and advisory bodies that submit reports and recommendations to the Board on specific issues. Special committees may also be appointed to oversee the accomplishment of a specific project.

Special committees may include non-Board members, usually people with experience, knowledge or interest in particular issues.

The “charge” or instructions given to a special committee, in order to be sure that the Board’s intent and expectations are clear, shall include the following:

1. The purpose of the committee, the specific issue(s) for study, and/or the scope of the committee’s activity
2. The composition of the committee, including designation of voting and non-voting members, if applicable (the Board should also specify whether the committee chair is to be appointed by the Board Chairperson or selected by the members of the committee)
3. The length of time each member is expected to serve
4. The specific authority granted the committee by the Board (e.g., advisory only, ability to authorize payment of invoices related to a construction project, etc.)
5. The resources the Board will be provided to assist the committee in completing its task
6. The expectations regarding the committee’s relationship with the Board, the Superintendent, District personnel, and other agencies (e.g., Town Council committees, state and/or federal agencies, etc.)
7. The designation of the individual who will be responsible for providing information to the public concerning the committee and its work (i.e. authorized spokesman)
8. The time and place of the first meeting
9. The timeline for specific activities to be accomplished and when progress reports are to be made to the Board and/or other agencies; and
10. The date, and/or completion of a specific task, upon which the Board expects to receive a final report or

Facilities – Bylaw 9132.3

The Facilities and Land Use Committee of the Ledyard Board of Education shall:

- Review the District’s requirements, be cognizant of the District’s facilities and land use needs, consider the maintenance needs, and advise the Board relative to legal requirements, such as handicap access and asbestos abatement in accordance with the requirements of Connecticut General Statutes and state agency regulations.
- Prepare proposals for facility and land use needs for consideration by the Board and/or the Finance Committee (for consideration within the annual budget or for consulting Services) in accordance with the requirements of Connecticut General Statutes and state agency regulations.
- Identify the proposed major facilities and land use projects, and coordinate those projects with the Town Permanent Municipal Building Committee.
- Prepare facilities and land use proposals for projects that may require bonding.

- Have oversight of environmental items; safety; building code requirements; WPCA liaison; facility and land use maintenance; existing and new capital equipment and tangible assets; infrastructure; real property; utilities; athletic facilities; industrial plant equipment; collateral equipment; and care, maintenance, and operation of buildings, land, apparatus and other property used for school purposes in accordance the requirements of Connecticut General Statutes and state agency regulations.

The Facilities and Land Use Committee shall consist of three to five Board members appointed by the Board Chairperson.

The Director of Maintenance shall be a non-voting member.

Finance – Bylaw 9132.2

The Finance Committee of the Ledyard Board of Education shall:

- Prepare the district's annual budget for approval by the full Board. In so doing, the committee will consider the needs of the students, the district, desires of the entire Board, town needs, and town obligations.
- Review budget transfers proposed by the school administration. Working with the Business Manager, budget transfer outlines will be prepared so that routine items can be reviewed and approved quickly by the entire Board.
- Provide along with the Superintendent of Schools for such a system of bookkeeping in the office of the Superintendent as will furnish the Board with reasonably complete knowledge of all matters pertaining to the finances of the Board of Education. The Chairperson or Secretary of the Board shall draw and sign all checks for the Town Treasurer.

The committee shall consist of three to five Board members; the Business Manager, and Superintendent shall be non-voting members. The Board chair will assign committee members.

Negotiations – Bylaw 9132.1

The Negotiations Committee of the Ledyard Board of Education shall:

- Negotiate in cooperation with the Superintendent and the district legal counsel, and recommend to the board for approval all contracts with Ledyard Public School employee bargaining units
- Provide consultation to the Superintendent regarding non-union employee contracts before those contracts are executed
- Other duties as assigned by the full board.

The committee shall be comprised of three to five board members with voting rights. The Board chair will assign committee members.

Policy – Bylaw 9132.4

The Ledyard Board of Education primarily carries out its governance at the public school system through written policies, regulations, and bylaws.

The Board's Policy Committee is charged with ensuring that the written guidance appropriately expresses the will of the Board, implements (or complies with) state and federal requirements, and supports district goals. In support of the Board's operation, the Policy Committee shall periodically review the policies, regulations, and bylaws in effect with regard to this charge. The Policy Committee shall also review changes in state and federal requirements affecting operation of the District. The committee shall gather such information as is necessary to make an informed decision in recommending new and/or revised policies, regulations, and bylaws to the full Board for action. The Policy Committee shall also carry out other tasks as assigned by the Board.

Voting Membership

Those Board members assigned by the Board Chairperson.

Advisory (Non-Voting) Membership

Advisory members bring various levels and areas of experience and expertise to the committees that are vital for the development and review of Board policy. In addition to the below listed advisory positions, other individuals with appropriate knowledge and experience shall be consulted as the situation warrants:

- Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent
- Administrators' Representative - *(May be assigned on a rotating basis.)*
- Teachers' Representative - *(May be assigned on a rotating basis.)*
- A community member-at-large
- Parent of current Ledyard student

Strategic Planning – Bylaw 9132.5

The Strategic Planning Committee of the Ledyard Board of Education shall provide leadership in the development, implementation, ongoing evaluation and necessary updating of a district wide:

- Strategic Plan that delineates the district's mission and long-term goals and objectives
- Annual Operating Plan that identifies goals and objectives that staff must achieve to advance the district toward achieving its Strategic Plan
- Annual Board Work Plan that identifies goals and objectives that the Board must achieve to advance the district toward achieving its Strategic Plan
- Other duties as assigned by the full Board

The committee shall consist of from three to five Board members with voting rights and up to three non-voting at-large members. The Board Chair will assign committee members.

New Board Member Orientation - Bylaw 9230

Because the Board, as the policy making authority of the Ledyard Public Schools, is responsible to the public for the success of all educational services offered by the school system, and because that success is directly dependent upon each Board member's ability to participate meaningfully in the decision-making process that governs this system, it shall be the policy of the Board to provide, as soon as practicable, for the orientation of new members. The purpose of the orientation is to help new members become quickly acquainted with their Board duties and responsibilities.

Orientation of new Board members will begin at the outset of their candidacy and follow through each step of the election process. Prior to elections, beginning as soon as the individual's candidacy is known, the candidates will receive from the Board, a brief overview of the Ledyard Public School System. The candidates will be placed on a mailing list to receive notices of Board and other meetings and summary reports of Board action. Candidates also will be informed that additional information pertinent to each Board agenda item is available to them through the Central Office.

After the general election in November, and prior to the new members officially assuming the position in December, the new members will be invited to meet with the Superintendent and other administrative personnel to discuss services to be performed for the Board, and to give them the opportunity to request any other information they may deem desirable. Each new member will also receive an orientation packet from the Superintendent's office and will be notified of and given the opportunity to attend sessions of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education or similar new board member orientation.

The packet will include:

- A copy of the Board's policies, rules, and regulations
- A copy of the current school budget and the latest financial statement
- A new Board Member packet from Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE)
- Any other materials relevant to duties and responsibilities as members of the Ledyard Public Schools

Board of Education Operation

Methods of Operation - Bylaw 9300

The Ledyard Board of Education shall concern itself only with broad questions of policy and not with administrative details. The Board shall rely upon the Superintendent of Schools to recommend policies for adoption and to administer policies enacted by the Board.

Such policies shall be broad enough to indicate a line of action to be taken by the Superintendent in meeting a number of problems and jobs. Application of such policies to individual problems and jobs is an administrative function to be performed by the Superintendent.

Policies – Bylaw 9311

Policy proposals and suggested amendments to or revisions of existing policies shall normally be submitted to all members of the Ledyard Board of Education by the Superintendent in writing prior to a regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting in which such proposed policies, amendments, or revisions thereof shall be read and discussed.

Policies will, barring emergencies, be adopted or amended after consideration at two meetings of the Board of Education. The agenda and minutes shall be marked to indicate policy matters.

The formal adoption of policies shall be by majority vote of all members of the Board of Education and the action shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board of Education. Only those written statements so adopted and so recorded shall be regarded as official policy.

Bylaws – Bylaw 9312

Proposed new bylaws and suggested amendments to or revision of existing bylaws may be adopted by a majority vote of all members of the Board of Education. This vote will take place only after the proposed additions, amendments, or revisions have been included in the agenda for any two regularly scheduled Board meetings held four weeks apart.

Regulations – Bylaw 9313

The Board of Education does not adopt administrative regulations unless specifically required to do so by law, or unless requested to do so by the Superintendent. Adoption and amendment of such Board of Education-adopted regulations shall be by the same procedure as that specified for policies in 9311.

The Board of Education reserves the right to review and direct revisions of administrative regulations should they, in the Board of Education's judgment, be inconsistent with the policies adopted by the Board of Education.

Meeting Preparation and Conduct

The Superintendent, in cooperation with the Board Chairperson or the chair of a Board committee, as appropriate, shall prepare an agenda for each regularly scheduled meeting. Each agenda shall specify the time and place for the meeting and the business to be transacted in accordance with this bylaw.

Board members desiring to have an item placed on a meeting agenda must make such request to the Superintendent and the Board Chairperson or committee chair, as appropriate, at least 96

hours prior to the scheduled meeting time. The Board Chairperson or committee chair is not obligated to add a requested agenda item. If the Board Chairperson or committee chair decides not to add the requested agenda item, then he or she shall inform the Board member of the reason for such action.

Order of Business for Regular Board Meetings – Bylaw 9323 excerpt

The agenda for a regularly scheduled Board meeting shall normally include the following items, which may be reordered at the Board Chairperson’s discretion when constructing the agenda:

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Requests from Citizens
4. Town Council Liaison Comments
5. Report of Superintendent of Schools
6. Board of Education Members’ Comments
7. Committee and Liaison Reports
8. Business Manager’s Report
9. Approval of Minutes
10. Communications and Correspondence
11. Information Items
12. Unfinished Business
13. New Business
14. Adjournment

Order of Business for Board Committee Meetings - Bylaw 9323 excerpt

The agenda for a regularly scheduled Board committee meeting shall normally include the following items, which may be reordered at the committee chair’s discretion when constructing the agenda:

1. Call to Order
2. Requests from Citizens
3. Approval of Minutes
4. Business Items
5. Adjournment

Posting of Regular Meeting Agendas – Bylaw 9323

The agenda for a regular meeting of the Board or one of its committees shall be available to the public and shall be filed, not less than twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting time, in the Central Office, each school building, and the Ledyard Town Clerk's office. The meeting agenda shall also be posted on the Board's Internet website.

Notice of and Posting Requirements for Special Meetings

The notice for a special meeting of the Board or one of its committees shall only include: (1) the time and place for the special meeting; and (2) the specific business item(s) to be transacted. The agenda for a special meeting cannot be changed at the meeting, and only the specific business item(s) listed on the notice may be acted upon during a special meeting.

The notice for a special meeting of the Board or one of its committees shall be posted, not less than twenty-four (24) hours before the meeting to which such notice refers, on the Board's Internet web site, at the Central Office and in the Ledyard Town Clerk's office.

The notice of any special meeting of the Board or one of its committees shall be e-mailed to all Board members and to other committee members, as appropriate. Additionally, a written notice of the special meeting shall be delivered to the usual place of abode of each Board member or committee member, as appropriate, so that the notice is received at least twelve (12) hours prior to the time of the special meeting. The requirement of delivery of such written notice may be dispensed with for any Board or committee member who files with the Superintendent a written waiver of delivery of such notice.

Determination of Time for Posting Agendas and Meeting Notices

The agenda for a regular meeting or the notice for special meeting of the Board or one of its committees must be posted not less than twenty-four (24) hours prior to the time of the meeting. In determining the time within which to comply with this requirement, Saturdays, Sundays, legal holidays and any day on which the Board of Education Central Office or the Ledyard Town Clerk's Office is closed shall be excluded.

Quorum – Bylaw 9325.1 Six (6) Board of Education members shall constitute a quorum of the Board, but no resolution or vote, except a vote to adjourn or to fix the time and place of the next meeting, shall be adopted by less than five (5) affirmative votes.

A simple majority of the membership of Board committees shall constitute a quorum. When a quorum is present, committee actions shall be passed based on a simple majority of the members present casting affirmative votes.

Meeting Conduct – Bylaw 9325 excerpt

Meetings of the Board of Education shall be conducted by the chairperson in a manner consistent with the bylaws of the Board. All Board meetings shall commence at the stated time and shall be guided by an agenda which has been prepared and delivered in advance to all Board members and other designated persons.

The conduct of meetings shall, to the fullest possible extent, enable members of the Board to:

1. Consider problems to be solved, weigh evidence related thereto, and make wise decisions intended to solve the problems
2. Receive, consider and take any needed action with respect to reports of accomplishment both as to students and to school system operations.

At all regular meetings of the Board of Education, where persons are in attendance and request to be heard, the Board of Education may permit a sum total of one-half hour to the collective groups before proceeding with the order of the day. In the event that more than one group wishes to be heard, the time shall be divided equitably. Discussion shall be terminated automatically at the end of this period of time (as per Robert's Rules of Order), a call for the order of the day may be asked for during this period and must be put into effect.

Rules of conduct for any individual or group to address the Board concerning any subject that lies within its jurisdiction shall be as follows:

1. No boisterous conduct shall be permitted at any Board of Education meeting. Persistence in boisterous conduct shall be grounds for summary termination, by the chair, of that person's privilege of address. If necessary, the chairperson may clear the room so that Board members may continue the meeting.
2. No oral presentation shall include charges or complaints against any employee of the Board of Education, regardless of whether or not the employee is identified in the presentation by name or by another reference which tends to identify an individual. All charges or complaints against employees shall be submitted to the Board of Education under provision of Board of Education policy.

Actions by the Board – Bylaw 9325 excerpt

No action will be taken unless the subject acted upon was listed in the agenda published for that meeting, except that an item of business not included on the Agenda of a regular meeting may be considered and acted upon after a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting to add such business to the agenda.

The Board of Education shall not adopt resolutions except where such adoption is required by law, or where the intent of the Board is to publish a status position of the board, as in advising the General Assembly of the board's position on a proposed law, or commending staff members or other agencies for work well done.

All actions taken by the Board shall be identified clearly in minutes of the Board meeting as provided in

Public Meetings – Bylaw 9322

All meetings of the Ledyard Board of Education, with the exception of executive sessions as specified below, shall be open to the public.

Executive Sessions

“Executive session” means a meeting of the Board at which the public is excluded for one or more of the following reasons:

1. Discussion concerning the appointment, employment, performance, evaluation, health or dismissal of a Board member or employee, provided that such individual may require that discussions be held at an open meeting
2. Strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims or pending litigation to which the Board or a member thereof, because of the member’s conduct as a member of the Board, is a party until such litigation or claim has been finally adjudicated or otherwise settled
3. Matters concerning security strategy or the deployment of security personnel, or devices affecting public security
4. Discussion of the selection of a site or the lease, sale or purchase of real estate by the Board or the Town of Ledyard when publicity regarding such site, lease, sale, purchase or construction would cause a likelihood of increased price until such time as all of the property has been acquired or all proceedings or transactions concerning same have been terminated or abandoned
5. Discussion of any matter which would result in the disclosure of public records or the information contained therein described in subsection (b) of section 1-210 of the Connecticut State Statutes

The Board may hold an executive session upon an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Board members present and voting at a public meeting. The motion to enter an executive session shall state the reason(s) for the executive session and the individuals invited to attend the executive session.

Minutes – Bylaw 9326

Complete and accurate minutes shall be maintained for all meetings of the Ledyard Board of Education. The minutes for each meeting will include the following as a minimum:

1. The date, place and type of meeting (regular, special, adjourned or emergency);
2. Board members present by name;
3. For committee meetings, the names of all committee members present;
4. Notation of other school staff present, including the Superintendent;
5. The call to order, identification of the person presiding including his/her office and the opening ceremony;
6. The late arrival and early departure of members by name;
7. Approval or amended approval of the minutes of preceding meetings;
8. A recorded summary of public comments made at the meeting;
9. A recorded summary of all business identified in the agenda as well as any item appropriately placed on the agenda in accordance with state law and these bylaws;

10. The exact wording of each motion, the names of the individuals making and seconding the motion, and the disposition of the motion including the vote of each Board member present (the minutes will specify by name those Board members who voted against the motion or abstained); and
11. The time of adjournment.

The Secretary of the Board is responsible for maintaining the minutes for meetings of the entire Board. In his/her absence, the minutes will be maintained by the Board member presiding over the meeting. For committee meetings, the committee chairperson is responsible for maintaining the minutes.

A draft copy of the meeting minutes will be posted at the Central Office for public viewing within 7 days after the meeting was adjourned (excluding weekends, legal holidays and any other day for which the Central Office is closed). The exception is for votes to be posted within 48 hours as required by Section 1-225 of the Freedom of Information. The draft copy of the meeting minutes will also be posted on the District website within seven days after the meeting.

The draft minutes will be included on the agenda for approval at the next Board or committee meeting. The approved minutes will be retained at the Central Office as a permanent record of the Board's activities and will be posted on the District website.

Communications – Policy 1110

The Ledyard Board of Education believes it is important to inform the public about school curriculum, programs, and activities so citizens can participate in these programs.

Concurrently, the school staff, administration, and the Board should be aware of the community's goals and concerns for its children so that they may be given consideration in curriculum, program, and activity revisions.

To this end, the Board supports and encourages various means such as publications, the District's website, press releases, open houses, and other public events to disseminate school district information and to hear from the community.

News of Board of Education Meetings and Activities

The scheduling of regular and special Board meetings and Board committee meetings shall be announced per the guidance in Policy 9321 – Time, Place and Notification of Meetings.

Minutes of Board meetings, including the minutes of Board committee meetings, shall be available in unapproved form within 7 days after the conclusion of the meeting. A written record of all Board votes shall be available within 48 hours after a Board meeting. These time requirements shall exclude Saturdays, Sundays, legal holidays, and any other day on which the Central Office is closed. The minutes and voting records shall be posted in the Central Office.

It should be made clear to anyone wishing to review the meeting minutes that they are unofficial until formally approved by the Board or committee, as appropriate.

Responsibilities of Board Members and School Personnel

Staff members shall be kept informed of community relations efforts, and staff support and participation in such efforts shall be sought.

Communications with the public will be a concurrent responsibility of the Board and the Superintendent. The Superintendent will work with the members of the Board to conduct an active and comprehensive program throughout the school district and community for the prompt dissemination of information about decisions made at all Board meetings. Releases to the news media and brief summaries of Board meeting actions prepared for distribution to staff members and parents/guardians are regarded as appropriate methods of disseminating information.

The Board believes in the widest possible dissemination of news concerning the school and shall cooperate fully with members of the news media to ensure that news coverage is complete, balanced, and accurate.

Releases of information to the news media relative to Board action shall only be made with the approval of the Board Chairperson or the delegated agent of the Board.

It is the responsibility of each Board member, as well as each employee of the District, to exercise care when answering questions about the public schools. Individuals should answer questions only when they have full and complete understanding of the point about which they have been asked. If the employee or Board member is not prepared to answer accurately and fully, he/she should refer the inquirer to a staff member who would have the appropriate information.

All school personnel and Board members are encouraged to be informed on Board of Education policy and school policies and programs in order that they may better advance public understanding of the schools.

Electronic Mail – Bylaw 9327

The use of electronic mail (“e-mail”) is an efficient and convenient way for members of the Ledyard Board of Education to communicate with other Board members, District employees, parents, and citizens of the community. Board member communications sent via e-mail shall conform to the same standards and requirements as other forms of communication, such as written communications, as directed by the *Freedom of Information Act*.

Guidelines for Board E-Mail Usage – Bylaw 9327 excerpt

The *Freedom of Information Act* mandates that all meetings of public agencies, such as school Boards, be open to the public. It is the policy of the Ledyard Board of Education that e-mail shall not be used in such a manner as to deprive the public of the rights given to it under the *Freedom of Information Act*.

For this purpose, the following guidelines shall apply to the use of e-mail by Board members when communicating with other Board members:

1. E-mail, like other written forms of communication relating to the conduct of the public business, is subject to the *Freedom of Information Act* and is subject to disclosure.
2. Board members shall not use e-mail as a substitute for deliberations at public

Board meetings, and/or shall not discuss policy matters or vote informally on any Issues

3. E-mail should be used to pass along factual information.
4. Board members should refrain from sending e-mail concerning personnel issues and other sensitive subjects. The confidentiality of employee data, student data, and other sensitive subjects must always be maintained.

Public Interactions—Policy 1120

The regular and special meetings of the Ledyard Board of Education are open to the public and representatives of the press except that a part of any meeting may be designated an executive session as provided by law.

The Board welcomes participation of interested organizations and individuals. Advance announcement of all regular and special meetings of the Board is made through posting the agenda, through notices to newspapers, and directly to citizens and community and professional organizations who specifically request such notification.

A reasonable charge may be made for those persons or organizations requesting advance announcements of meetings and agenda backup materials. Board meetings are meetings held in public and are not open hearings. Any citizen may appear before the Board to express his/her opinion concerning the educational program of the District. The Board agenda provides opportunities for comments and questions from persons attending the meeting. Persons wishing to address the Board should state their names and addresses and will normally be limited to three (3) minutes unless allowed otherwise by the Chairperson.

The public is advised that any discussion of specific Board employees will not be allowed at meetings and should be addressed to that employee's immediate supervisor. The Chairperson may, at his/her discretion, curtail public discussion at any time.

Board Relations with Community Organizations – Policy 1120

It is the intention of the Board to cooperate fully with appropriate officials, Boards, committees, or other agencies of the Town, and with organized groups of interested citizens of the Town. Any such individual or group requesting a meeting with the Board should present its request, in writing, to the Chairperson of the Board, or the Superintendent, in ample time to allow for proper preparation of agenda items, notification of Board members, and establishment of a mutually agreeable meeting time and place.

Annual Budget Preparation - Policy 3110

By November 1 of each year, the Superintendent shall develop a realistic financial picture and overview of District needs for the next fiscal year. Bargaining unit contracts shall be summarized along with long term capital needs (equipment and facilities) and other long-term District obligations.

This overview of the District's financial requirements shall be presented to the Finance Committee and subsequently to the entire Board. Based upon this needs assessment and in consideration of proposed and/or on-going educational initiatives and capital projects, the Finance Committee may direct the Superintendent to make additional recommendations regarding the proposed budget.

During the month of December, the Board shall hold a joint meeting with the Town Council to review the Superintendent's proposed budget.

By the second Monday in January, the Superintendent shall submit a budget to the Finance Committee in such format as specified by the Town Council. The Superintendent's proposed budget shall be posted on the District website. The Finance Committee and the Superintendent shall work to fully explain educational program needs and identify the major cost drivers contained in the proposed budget. After a careful review of the Superintendent's proposed budget, and taking into consideration the District's educational goals and objectives and assessed needs, the Finance Committee may recommend modifications for consideration by the full Board.

Prior to forwarding the Superintendent's proposed budget and any recommended modifications to the Board for consideration, the Finance Committee shall hold a special meeting to present the proposed budget, along with any recommended modifications, to the public for review and comment. The budget presentation shall allow time for questions and answers. Based on the public response at the presentation, the Finance Committee may make further recommendations before forwarding the proposed budget for consideration by the full Board.

After review and consideration of the proposed budget and any modifications recommended by the Finance Committee, the Board shall approve a budget for the ensuing fiscal year no later than the Friday immediately preceding the fourth Monday in February. The approved budget shall be submitted to the Town Council via the Mayor no later than the fourth Monday in February and shall be posted on the District's website.

The Town Council may, not later than ten (10) days after the Mayor has forwarded the Board of Education budget, make spending recommendations and suggestions as to how the Board may consolidate non-educational services and realize financial efficiencies. The Board may accept or reject the Town Council's suggestions and shall provide a written response explaining the reason for any rejection.

If the Town Council votes to reduce the amount of the Board's proposed budget for the forthcoming fiscal year, the Board shall take action to revise the proposed budget to meet the directed reduction no later than the Wednesday before the first Monday in May.

Adoption of the Budget

Following Town approval of a budget for the operation of Ledyard Public Schools, either through referendum or action by the Town Council, the Board of Education shall make any modifications required as a result of a difference between the Board's most recent proposed budget as submitted to the Town Council and the final approved budget amount. Any required modifications shall be approved by the Board no later than 30 June, and the resulting budget shall be posted on the District website.

Glossary

Bylaw- Bylaws serve as the blueprint for how the governing body will operate, and will usually contain a reference to important functioning elements of the school.

CABE - The Connecticut Association of Boards of Education serves local and regional boards of education in Connecticut and is dedicated to improving the quality of education throughout the state and the nation. CABE's membership includes 151 school districts representing 90% of the state's public school population. CABE is a leading advocate for public education at the state capitol and in Washington, DC, and offers many types of support services to local boards of education including the Board Member Academy, a continuing education program for local board of education members.

Freedom of Information - The **Connecticut Freedom of Information Act** is a series of laws designed to guarantee that the public has access to public records of governmental bodies in Connecticut. The law was first enacted in 1975.

Policy – Policies are built by the board, superintendent, and administrative team to ensure consistency in governance.

References

- Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE)
<http://www.cabe.org/>
- Freedom Of Information (FOI)
<http://www.ct.gov/foi/cwp>
- Connecticut Department of Education
<http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/site/default.asp>
- Ledyard Public Schools
www.ledyard.net/
- Robert's Rules of Order
<http://www.rulesonline.com/index.html>

(Robert's Rules provides common rules and procedures for deliberation and debate in order to place the whole membership on the same footing and speaking the same language to enable fair and orderly meetings.)