

Pleasanton Unified School District



PLEASANTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Governance Handbook

Board of Trustees

2014

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This handbook reflects the governance team's commitment to effective governance. Effective governance requires ongoing discussions about unity of purpose, roles, commitment to norms, and agreement on protocols and formal structures that will enable the governance team to perform its responsibilities in a way that benefits all children.

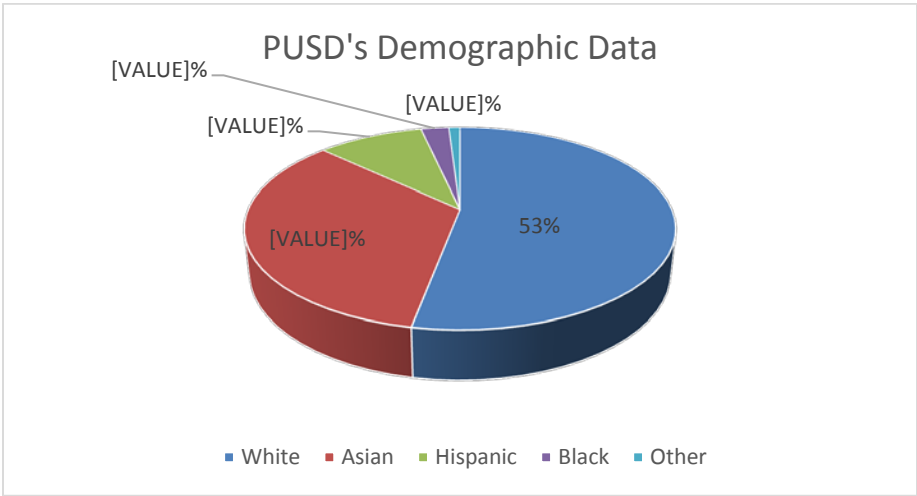
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DISTRICT OVERVIEW

The Pleasanton Unified School District (PUSD) serves approximately 15,000 students. The District consists of nine elementary schools, three middle schools, one continuation high school, and two comprehensive high schools. The Pleasanton Unified School District is a wonderfully diverse community.



Pleasanton’s population is approximately 70,000, and is located in close proximity to both Silicon Valley and San Francisco. The School District enjoys a strong relationship with the City of Pleasanton as well as partnerships with ValleyCare Health System and the Chamber of Commerce. Support for our schools is provided by the Pleasanton Schools Educational Enrichment Foundation (PSEE), Pleasanton Partnerships in Education (PPIE), Pleasanton PTA Council, Booster and parent organizations, parent and community volunteers, and local businesses.

PUSD employs over 1,200 employees, many with significant longevity in the District and graduate level degrees. The District’s approximately 470 classified employees support nearly 900 certificated teachers, counselors, nurses, psychologists, and administrators.

The Pleasanton Unified School District continues to be one of the highest performing districts in California. Our exceptional reputation is based on our continued stellar academic achievement, innovative programs, emphasis on science, technology, engineering and mathematics, award winning visual and performing arts, strong career technical education, competitive athletic programs, focus on character education, involved parents, and community engagement.

Pleasanton Unified School District inspires students to reach their fullest potential because of a committed group of education professionals who genuinely care about students' academic success and well-being as well as strong support from our parents and the community at large. In addition to our phenomenal achievement as measured by State assessments, our students, teachers and schools are recipients of many grants, awards and accolades. They are provided a rigorous and relevant curriculum and a variety of options.

Pleasanton Unified School District: website: pleasantonusd.net

EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Governance – A Definition

School boards ensure success for all students by making decisions that fulfill legal mandates and align district systems and resources to ensure the long term fiscal stability of the district. Boards must act collectively and openly, be guided by community interests, and informed by recommendation of the superintendent and professional staff. Board Members often face conflicting role expectations that arise from the nature of representational governance and the laws pertaining to school governance in California. These differences create three different lenses through which individuals and boards can exercise their duties. These three roles-Representative, Enforcement, and Fiduciary- combined with complexity of the K-12 education, create a framework of the four perspectives within which board govern:

- the community perspective: what stakeholders want the schools to do;
- the legal perspective: what the law says the schools must do;
- the professional perspective: what educators say the schools ought to do; and,
- the fiduciary perspective: what the schools are able to do.

In a school district, the governing board and superintendent work together as a governance team. For a governance team to work together effectively, members need to:

- 1) maintain a unity of purpose,
- 2) agree on and govern within appropriate roles,
- 3) create and sustain a positive governance culture, and
- 4) create a supportive structure for effective governance.

Establishing and agreeing to basic tenets of effective governance enable the governance

team members to create a climate for excellence in a school district and to maintain the focus on improved student learning and achievement.¹

Board Bylaws 9000-9400: <http://goo.gl/q60fCe>

¹CSBA Governance Brief, October 2013

http://csba.org/GovernanceAndPolicyResources/~/_media/CSBA/Files/GovernanceResources/GovernanceBriefs/201310GBDefiningGovernanceIssue1.ashx

PLEASANTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN

WE BELIEVE...

- * With guidance and support all students can reach their greatest potential;
- * All students and staff have the right to a safe and respectful learning environment that fosters positive connections;
- * Public education should focus on the whole child, provide equitable opportunities for all students and create socially responsible individuals with character and integrity;
- * In ensuring a culture and climate that promotes a highly-skilled, dedicated, and passionate educational team;
- * In providing learning that is innovative, irresistible, creative, relevant and rigorous;
- * It is our responsibility to inspire curiosity and a passion for life long learning.

MISSION

**Our students
will make a
better world.**

VISION

**Every student will be
a resourceful, resilient,
responsible and
engaged world citizen.**

CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION	LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	PERSONAL GROWTH	FISCAL STEWARDSHIP
All students, regardless of race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, or gender will be proficient/advanced and college/career ready upon graduation.	All students and staff are provided a high-quality physical environment that facilitates teaching and learning.	Empower all students to develop character, compassion, civility, and community consciousness.	Students will be central to all fiscal decisions.
Optimize student learning by utilizing innovative technologies.	Every student and staff will feel safe, respected, and enjoy positive connections.		Ensure fiscal health through investing in today while planning for tomorrow.

PUSD BOARD OF EDUCATION BOARD UNITY

1. We Believe

- With guidance and support all students can reach their greatest potential
- All students and staff have the right to a safe and respectful learning environment that fosters positive connections
- Public education should focus on the whole child, provide equitable opportunities for all students and create socially responsible individuals with character and integrity
- In ensuring a culture and climate that promotes a highly-skilled dedicated, and passionate educational team
- In providing learning that is innovative, irresistible, creative, relevant and rigorous
- It is the school district's responsibility to inspire curiosity and passion for life - long learning.

2. Commitment to Communicate and Support Mission and Vision

- Mission: Our Students will make a better world.
- Vision: Every Student will be a resourceful, resilient, responsible and engaged world citizen
- Demonstrate commitment to the mission and vision and goals by regularly communicating them to staff and the community
- Exhibit behaviors and make decisions that support achievement of the District's mission and vision
- Stay current on trends and emerging needs in education in order to proactively participate in renewing or reviewing the District's direction and policies
- Uphold Board decisions
- New Board members are encouraged to attend CSBA's Masters of Governance and other workshops.

3. Operate openly, with trust and integrity

- Conduct District business in a fair, respectful, and responsible manner
- Consider the concerns and interests of the students, staff, parents, and community
- Encourage thorough consideration of issues, engage in dialogue for clarification, and withhold judgment until all perspectives are heard
- Ensure that all members of the Board have the same information
- Clearly communicate decisions to all those who are affected by them
- Keep confidential information confidential

4. Govern in a dignified and professional manner, treating everyone with civility and respect

- Treat the community, parents, students, and staff with dignity and respect
- Listen openly and respectfully to each other, member of the community, parents, students, and staff
- Welcome open discussion of different points of view
- Demonstrate ability to disagree on issues and still maintain trust, respect, and dignity
- Work together to build consensus for decisions

5. Govern within Board-adopted policies and procedures

- Maintain a policy development, approval, and update process that is understood and followed
- Understand the distinctions between the role of the Board and that of the superintendent and staff
- Have agreed-upon norms and protocols for carrying out Board responsibilities

6. Take collective responsibility for the Board's performance

- Assume collective responsibility for Board conduct
- Function as a governance team with the superintendent
- Demonstrate a commitment to continually improving governance efforts
- Take responsibility for the orientation of new members

7. Periodically evaluate our own effectiveness

- Have procedures in place for regular, on-going self-evaluation
- Ensure meeting agendas provide for a sound order of business and facilitate a primary focus on matters related to student achievement
- Ensure that individual Board members understand their roles and the limits of individual responsibility and authority

8. Ensure opportunities for the diverse range of views in the community to inform Board deliberations

- Ensure practices enable parents, staff, and the public to participate in meaningful ways in District discussions, school programs, and activities
- Consider the concerns and interests of all segments of the community in deliberations

GOVERNANCE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Citizen oversight of local government is the cornerstone of democracy in the United States. The role of the trustees who sit on locally elected school boards is to ensure school districts are responsive to the values, beliefs and priorities of their communities. Boards fulfill this role by performing five major responsibilities: setting direction; establishing an effective and efficient structure; providing support; ensuring accountability; and providing community leadership as advocates for children, the school district, and public education.

These five responsibilities represent core functions that are so fundamental to a school system's accountability to the public that they can only be performed by an elected governing body. Authority is granted to the Board as a whole, not each member individually. Therefore, Board members fulfill these responsibilities by working together as a governance team with the superintendent to make decisions that will best serve all the students in the community.

The Board carries out these responsibilities in each of the following areas:

- **Setting the District's Direction**
- **Establishing Policies and Procedures**
- **Monitoring Student Learning and Achievement**
- **Assuring Financial Stability**
- **Maintaining Safe and Healthy Facilities**
- **Establishing Effective Human Resources Practices**
- **Assuring Compliance with Legal Requirements and Guidelines**
- **Advocating on behalf of the Community**

The superintendent assists the Board in carrying out its responsibilities in each of the areas, and leads the staff toward the accomplishment of the agreed-upon District's mission vision and goals. The following page provides more detail on how the Board performs its governance responsibilities.

PERFORMING GOVERNANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

The members of the Pleasanton Unified School District Board of Trustees agree with the responsibilities of school boards as adapted from the California School Boards Association and adhere to PUSD Board Bylaws.

Set the direction for PUSD schools

- Focus on student learning
- Assess needs and review and understand data
- Generate, review, or revise setting direction documents (mission, vision, priorities, strategic goals, success indicators, and core beliefs and moral imperatives)
- Ensure an appropriate inclusive process is used
- Ensure these directional documents are the driving force for all District efforts

Establish an effective and efficient structure for the School District

- Employ and work with the superintendent in support of an effective governance team
- Establish a human resources framework that includes policies for hiring and evaluating other personnel
- Oversee the development, review, and adoption of policies
- Adopt and support curriculum that meets the District's mission and vision and according to state guidelines
- Establish budget priorities, adopt a responsible budget, and provide oversight of facilities issues
- Provide direction for and approve collective bargaining agreements

Provide support through our behavior and actions

- Act with professional demeanor that models the District's core beliefs and vision
- Make decisions and provide resources that support mutually agreed upon priorities and goals
- Uphold Board-approved District policies and support staff implementation of Board direction
- Ensure a positive climate exists for the governance team
- Be knowledgeable enough about District efforts to explain them to the public

Ensure accountability to the public

- Evaluate the superintendent in accordance with the Contract.
- Set Policy for the evaluation of other personnel
- Monitor, review, and revise policies
- Serve as a judicial and appeals body
- Monitor student achievement and program effectiveness and provide direction regarding program changes
- Monitor and adjust District finances, and periodically review facilities issues
- Monitor and provide direction for the collective bargaining process
- Evaluate the Board's performance through board self-evaluation

Act as community leaders

- Communicate clear information about District priorities, goals, policies, programs and the fiscal condition of the District
- Engage and involve the community in District schools and activities
- Educate the community and the media about the issues facing students, the District and public education
- Advocate for children, District programs, and public education to the general public, key community members, and local, state, and national leaders

POSITIVE GOVERNANCE TEAM CULTURE

Culture is the positive or negative atmosphere created by the interaction among the people in an organization. Teams have unwritten (implicit) or written (explicit) agreements about how they will behave. These behavioral ground rules, often called norms, enable teams to build and maintain a positive culture.

Because the community elects school Board members to set and monitor the direction of the school district, and the District superintendent translates all efforts into action, it is vital that the Board and superintendent have a respectful and productive working relationship based on trust and open communication.

PUSD GOVERNANCE NORMS

We agree to

- focus on the best interests of students
- respect each other's opinions
- listen to each member's ideas
- value each member's point of view
- be open to new ideas
- exhibit positive body language
- not interrupt, nor monopolize or pontificate
- encourage everyone to verbalize
- disagree agreeably
- recognize the positive
- be willing to compromise
- focus on process, not personalities
- act by building on the thoughts and ideas of fellow governance team members
- commit the time necessary to govern effectively
- commit to open communication, honesty, and transparency
- be prepared for board meetings
- maintain confidentiality

STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES TO SUPPORT EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Effective governance teams discuss and agree on the formal structures and processes used by the trustees and the superintendent in their functioning as a team (e.g., processes or structures for agenda setting, set-up of board room and table, agenda structure, handling complaints or concerns from the community, bringing up a new idea); how governance teams operate, and how they do business. These agreements about how groups will operate are often called protocols.

PUSD BOARD OF EDUCATION PROTOCOLS

The following protocols were developed to support and promote the effectiveness of the Governance Team.

Issue	Protocol
Self-monitoring of governance team effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Board will annually schedule a date to review governance team agreements and processes.

Issue	Protocol
Voting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Board members agree it is a courtesy to the governance team to explain the reasons for a dissenting vote either during deliberation or before casting the vote.• Board members are expected to cast a yes or no vote to indicate their preference and to abstain only when they have a conflict of interest.

Issue	Protocol
Visiting schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visits to assigned schools are encouraged.• As a professional courtesy, Trustees are encouraged to call the principal ahead of time to arrange the visit.• Trustees will also be cautious about encroaching on the learning environment. To assist in this matter, the superintendent will ensure principals and teachers know that a teacher does not need to interrupt his/her lesson when a Board member visits a classroom.

PUSD BOARD OF EDUCATION PROTOCOLS (Cont'd)

Issue	Protocol
Handling concerns from the public and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When someone brings a concern to the Board, the Board will listen carefully, remembering it is only hearing one side of the story. The Board member(s) will direct the complaining party to the person in the District most appropriate to resolve the concern. • The Board will ensure that the complaining party is aware of the uniform complaint policy. • As representatives of the public, it is important that the Board member(s) invite the person with the complaint to request help if further assistance is needed. <p>In response to complaints, Board members will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receive - Listen, smile and thank them. 2. Repeat - Explain their point to their satisfaction. ("Do you believe that I understand?" and/or "What would you like me to do for you?" 3. Remind - Explain that you have no authority as an individual. 4. Re-Direct - Direct them back into the system at the appropriate level. 5. Inform - Inform the Superintendent.

Issue	Protocol
Individual Board member requests for information on board meeting agenda items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When an individual Board member requests information pertaining to an agenda item, it will be provided to all Board members. • An individual Board member will – insofar as possible - work to let the superintendent and staff know ahead of time when a request for information is to be made in public so the staff can be prepared to provide a thoughtful answer. • Individual Board members will strive to ensure one person's request for information does not divert an inappropriate amount of time from staff efforts to achieve District goals. • If a Board Member asks for additional information that is not readily available, the Superintendent may present the request to the full Board for discussion and seek direction.

Issue	Protocol
Individual Board member requests for action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The only authority to direct action rests with the full Board during public Board meetings. • A majority vote provides direction to the superintendent. • Individual Board members may request that an item be placed on a future agenda by explaining their interest in a particular issue or requested action. <p>Board Policy 9322</p>

Issue	Protocol
Board meeting management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board meetings are meetings of the Board held in public. • Town hall, open forums and study sessions are held as appropriate. • The Board will allow the public to provide input at the time allotted to ensure the multiple voices of the community inform Board deliberations. • The Board will review its policies, bylaws, and protocols relating to Board meeting management (for example, time limits on input from members of the public), and revise or reaffirm them as appropriate.

Issue	Protocol
Individual Board member comments at meetings during Board business	<p>Board business allows Board members an opportunity to report to fellow board members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide relevant information about our schools that the full Board should know • Report on commission, committee or other relevant meetings • In respect of audience and staff time, Board comments should be limited to 3 minutes. • Comments on routine school visits or events should be omitted.

PUSDBOARD OF EDUCATION PROTOCOLS (Cont'd)

Issue	Protocol
Email	<p>Board members will use email in a manner that ensures the Board does not violate the Brown Act. The Brown Act prohibits a majority of Board members from exchanging facts to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop collective concurrence• Advance or clarify an issue• Facilitate agreement or compromise• Advance ultimate resolution <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We recognize that using "Reply to All" makes email part of the deliberative process and creates public record• Board members will be aware of and follow District policy as it pertains to electronic communications.• Board members are encouraged to use the PUSD email system for all board business.• Superintendent and board members will make every effort to respond to emails within 24 hours. <p>When the Board receives an email addressed to all Board members, the Board President will thank the sender and inform him/her that she/he will be forwarding it to the Superintendent with a cc to the entire Board.</p> <p>If individual trustees wish to respond individually, they will do so indicating that they are responding as individual trustees and not as a Board.</p> <p>For emails involving complaints, the Board member will respond by thanking the sender and inform him/her that they are forwarding the message to the Superintendent.</p>

Issue	Protocol
Staff Reports	<p>The board receives complete and thorough information in order to make informed decisions.</p> <p>Staff reports will be provided in advance.</p> <p>Staff reports should address as applicable.</p> <p>Rationale for proposed action, which may include background and history, committee/taskforce notes, and or minutes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on students and their families • Financial Impact • District Priorities • Policy • Options & alternatives

PUSD BOARD OF EDUCATION PROTOCOLS (Cont'd)

Issue	Protocol
<p>Roles and responsibilities of the Board president in managing Board meetings</p>	<p>The Board has an obligation to set an example of good government in action for our community. The Board will model dignified problem solving for our community and our children. The Board president works with the Superintendent so that Board meetings proceed professionally, efficiently and effectively. District staff will have the opportunity to provide necessary background materials and information to the Board in a respectful environment. Each Board member will have the opportunity to express his or her viewpoint during Board deliberations. Everyone in attendance at Board meetings will be treated with dignity and respect.</p> <p>The Board president has the primary facilitation role at Board meetings, and acts as spokesperson for the Board. S/he has no more authority than any other Board member outside of Board meetings.</p> <p>The role of the Board president is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair the meetings • Work with the Superintendent to ensure Board members have the necessary information and materials to make informed decisions • Assure that pending agenda items are addressed appropriately • Confer with the superintendent before meetings to prepare agendas, as necessary, for the upcoming meeting • Model the tone and behavior the Board wishes to convey to the community. • Ensure board requests are tracked. <p>As meeting chair, the Board president will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open and preside over meetings • Introduce agenda items • Staff presents the items • Trustees ask questions for clarification • Call on speakers for public comment • Ask for motions at appropriate times during deliberation, • make sure all Board members have a chance to share in deliberation • Facilitate effective deliberation • Interpret and clarify motions or directives as needed, • Call on other Board members to speak on issues before adding his or her own comments • Call for a vote restating the motion • Clarify and authenticate all action, orders and procedures of the Board • Adjourn meetings • Remind the governance team and audience members of any meeting guidelines the Board has adopted, as necessary • Work with the Superintendent to make sure there is appropriate follow-up and clarification of actions following the Board meeting, • Serve as the primary spokesperson for the Board.

Action Item Process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. President introduces the item 2. Staff presents the item 3. Board questions for clarification 4. Public comment – 3 minutes – encourage groups with the same comments to stand together – encourage public to add to what has been said and not to repeat 5. Call for the motion and second 6. Debate on the motion if a second is made 7. Follow Roberts Rules of Order for motions, debate, amendments, voting etc.
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Issue	Protocol
Designated Spokesperson(s)	<p>It is essential that important information be communicated to the staff and the community in a timely manner. Board members and the superintendent have an obligation to communicate clearly about District issues. It is important that the Board speak with clarity and consistency regarding Board actions in order to maintain the trust of the community.</p> <p>The Board recognizes that some situations have legal, privacy, or other considerations that may place restrictions on what may be told to the media or public. Confidential issues must remain confidential.</p> <p>In most cases, the press may contact any Board member for comment. However, a sensitive or confidential issue may best be addressed by one chief spokesperson. Individual board members communicate to press that a comment is being made as an individual member and not as the speaker for the board as a whole.</p> <p>When a Board member is invited to speak to a community group or organization, s/he will make sure other Board members know about the invitation and will seek updated District information as appropriate.</p>

ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENT BOARD REPRESENTATIVE

- The student board representative attends meetings of the Governing Board and keeps the Board informed about the activities, issues, ideas, and concerns of the District's students.
- The student board representatives are encouraged to consider and report on academic, safety, and social issues affecting students.
- The Board values and encourages input from the SAB and the student board representative.
- The student board representative may accompany Board members to the California School Board's Association's annual conference.

GOVERNANCE CALENDAR - PUSD ADD Dates											
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
	CSBA Delegate Assembly Elections	Approve Second Interim Financial Report		School Accountability Report Cards (SARCS)	Ethics Training		Installation of Student Board Member	Summer School Report	t		Organizational Matters
		Reso: Layoff of Certificated Employees	Approve Course Outlines				Approve Bell Schedules	Academic Report Card		CSBA Delegate Assembly Nominations	Approve First Interim Financial Report
Approve School Site Plans				CA Healthy Kids Survey Results					Approve Admin Panel Participants for Student Expulsion Hearings	Proposed Dates, Times, Places for Board Meetings	
Accept Annual Audit Report		Approve I Developer Fee Justification Study		Governor's May Revise Budget Update		Reso: Delegating Authority to Sign Personnel Contracts		Approve Unaudited Actuals Financial Report			
	Revise xxx: Board Policy xxxx	SELPA Annual Budget & Service Plan		Approve App for Carl Perkins Voc & Technical Education Funds		Approve Professional Fees: to Authorize Use of Legal Firms					
	Receive and File – Annual Investment Policy Pooled Investment Fund,			Approve Course Outlines							
		Approve Course Outlines					Reso: App Child Dev Contract: State Preschool	Reso: GANN Limit			

PLEASANTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

AGREEMENTS TO FACILITATE GOVERNANCE LEADERSHIP

A major difference between groups and teams is that teams have clear agreements (norms that identify expectations for behavior, and protocols that describe how the team will operate) set by the team's members. Once developed, these norms and protocols shape how team members behave with each other and how they perform their responsibilities.

Group expectations help a group work together to not only address difficult issues in an objective and consistent way, but also to confirm what each member will do in the normal course of business to help the team succeed.

- CSBA

PUSD Governance Team Norms and Protocols

The Board of Education for the Pleasanton Unified School District is entrusted by the community to uphold the Constitutions of California and the United States, to protect the public interest in schools, and to ensure that a high quality education is provided to each student.

To effectively meet District challenges, the Board and superintendent must function together as a governance leadership team. Common agreement about procedures and protocols support the efforts and effectiveness of the governance team.

The purpose of the PUSD governance team agreements is to ensure a positive and productive working relationship among Board members, the Superintendent, District staff, students, and the community. These protocols were developed for and by the members of the governance team, and may be modified over time as needed.

The PUSD Board of Education has reviewed and agrees to follow the aforementioned governance team norms and protocols in order to support a positive and productive working relationship among the Pleasanton Unified School District Board of Education, staff, students and the community. This agreement shall be reviewed annually by PUSD Board of Education no later than July 1.