



School Board Governance Manual

SPOTSYLVANIA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD

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Dr. Clint M. Mitchell
Division Superintendent

Adopted: December 9, 2024

PREFACE

The State of Virginia has empowered and directed School Boards (in Title 22.1, Chapter 7) to do the following:

See that the school laws are properly explained, enforced, and observed; ensure that public schools are conducted according to law and with the utmost efficiency; care for, manage, and control the property of the school division; provide for the consolidation of schools or redistricting of school boundaries or adopt pupil assignment plans to contribute to the efficiency of the school division; operate and maintain the public schools in the school division and determine the length of the school term, the studies to be pursued, the methods of teaching, and the government to be employed in the schools, consistent with state statutes and regulations of the Board of Education; and perform other duties as prescribed by the Board of Education or as are imposed by law.

State law further states that a school board may adopt bylaws and regulations, not inconsistent with state statutes and regulations of the Board of Education, for its government, for the management of its official business, and the supervision of schools.

The Spotsylvania County Public Schools Board takes its charge seriously. As a result, the Board has developed this Governance manual as a plan to conduct our responsibilities professionally. The School Board works collaboratively with the Division Superintendent. The School Board appoints the Division Superintendent for the system's day-to-day operations by the Code of Virginia.

Note: As you review the School Board Governance Manual, please be advised that the Spotsylvania County Public Schools policies and regulations adopted by the Board take precedence over the governance manual.



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DEFINITIONS

Vision

The Vision is “why” Spotsylvania County Public Schools will operate in a manner to ensure the - district’s strategic plan goals are implemented.

Mission

The Mission is “how” Spotsylvania County Public Schools will operate to ensure the district’s strategic plan goals are successful.

Core Values:

This is what we believe in at Spotsylvania County Public Schools

Motto:

A short expression of a guiding principle

Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan provides a framework for decision-making. It builds on the Division’s mission, vision, core values and motto. Its theory of change, SMART goals, key performance indicators, and actions, exemplifies the commitment that all Spotsylvania County Schools (SCPS) staff has for our students.

The Spotsylvania County Schools Board will evaluate the effectiveness of the District based on the established timelines, key performance indicators, and targets outlined in the strategic plan.

Operational Expectations

Operational Expectations refer to other expectations beyond those outlined in the strategic plan that have been expressed by the School Board to the Division Superintendent and his/her staff.

Board Roles and Responsibilities

The School Board views its role to be different from any other entity associated with the District.



That role is defined in this statement: *To do its job effectively, the School Board must create for itself a governing culture that allows 7 very diverse individuals to function as a unit.*

This is reflected in these Board Governing Commitments and Processes.

Board Governing Commitments and Processes

All members of the Spotsylvania County Public Schools Board commit to upholding themselves and each other to the same degree of excellence expected of the Division Superintendent and staff.



MISSION

Together, we prepare our students for their future.

VISION

We inspire and empower students to develop essential skills and access multiple pathways to pursue their dreams. Every day, each child yearns to come to school, excited about learning.

CORE VALUES

Spotsylvania County Public Schools Will:

- *Quality* - We pursue the highest service delivery standards through collaborative and innovative practices.
- *Equity* - We provide resources and learning opportunities that meet the unique needs of each student.
- *Innovation* - We are a future-focused, solution-driven organization that stimulates new processes and demands continuous improvement.
- *Inclusivity* - We promote a culture that values and nurtures diversity, embracing the many voices and contributions of the entire school community.
- *Collaboration* - We depend upon and are accountable to one another, advancing partnerships with students, families, staff, and the community to support organizational excellence.
- *Citizenship* - We commit to providing learning experiences and social-emotional support to develop responsible, respectful, and life-ready citizens.



- *Stewardship* - We effectively manage and maximize the community's investment in our schools while fully engaging community partners to serve the complex needs of each child.

MOTTO:

“Together we prepare our students for the future”

STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS

In October 2024, the Spotsylvania County Public School Board hired Cambridge Strategies to guide the development of a new strategic planning process. Division Superintendent Dr. Clint M. Mitchell, in collaboration with the Cabinet, formed two stakeholder groups—Community and District—to assist in this effort. These groups include:

- Community members
- Business leaders
- Civic leaders
- School Board members
- Administrators
- Central office staff
- Teachers
- Support staff
- Students

To ensure completion of the strategic plan by May 2025, the Strategic Plan Leads partnered with Cambridge Strategies to create a three-phase process:

Phase 1: Pre-Planning – Readiness (November–December 2024)

- Staff awareness and selection of the Strategic Planning Team
- Community Summit

Phase 2: Strategic Planning – Design (January–April 2025)

- **1st Strategic Planning Team Meeting:** Three days
- Action Teams Kick-Off
- **2nd Strategic Planning Team Meeting:** One day
- Superintendent presents the Strategic Plan to the School Board



Phase 3: Strategic Action – Implementation (2025–26 School Year)

- School Board charges the Superintendent with implementing the plan for the next school year
- Progress monitoring throughout the implementation year
- **3rd Strategic Planning Team Meeting:** May 2026

STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL REPORTING

The Division Superintendent will be responsible for the Strategic Plan reporting. The School Board oversight and monitoring of the Strategic Plan are achieved through regularly scheduled goal reports by the Division Superintendent and his/her staff. The Division Superintendent will provide the Board with two updates throughout the year to demonstrate the work accomplished and the results achieved. Each report will provide the Board with a comprehensive overview of the strategic plan goals with key data points/metrics to show progress over time. The Board has the authority to annually reassess the plan and make necessary adjustments to timelines and data points/metrics.



Spotsylvania County Public Schools Board

Governance Norms & Protocols

We agree to employ the following norms in all our interactions:

- We will hear each opinion, but ultimately act as one. We will speak candidly and courteously to each other and listen to dissenting or different viewpoints with an open mind. We will help each other to depersonalize disagreements. Once we reach a decision or compromise as a board, we will each support the will of the board in word and deed.
- The chair (or designee) will speak as the official voice of the board. A single board member will not represent the board without the consent of the board, and board members making personal statements (in any format, including speeches, articles, social media posts, etc.) should clearly state that these statements are their opinion and not the position of the board.
- We will be mindful of the different roles and responsibilities throughout the school system and maintain a focus on policy and governance.
- We will be aware of the different roles that we play as individuals (board member, citizen, parent, etc.).
- We will be focused on our work as a board and not interfere with the day-to-day operations of the school system, which is the responsibility of the superintendent.
- We will maintain open communication with each other, staff, administration, superintendent, and the community-at-large. Please refer to policy *BG-Board-Staff Communications* and regulation *BG-R-Board-Staff Communications* for more detail.

We agree to follow the following protocols:



Developing the board agenda	The agenda is drafted by the superintendent with consultation with the Board Chair and will go to chair for approval.
Placing items on the board meeting agenda	Board members should contact the Board Chair with any items to be added to the proposed agenda. The chair will forward items directly to the superintendent and clerk to add to the agenda. The Board Chair will let the board member know if their item make it to the agenda. Items that are not on the proposed agenda can be discussed in new business portion of the meeting agenda.
Obtaining information about board meeting agenda items before the meeting	Question regarding the agenda should be directed to Superintendent. The Superintendent will respond to the board member and copy all board members.
Responding to public comments at board meetings	Board members will not respond to public comments at Board meetings. However, the superintendent or appropriate staff will follow up with community members as needed.
Responding to staff or community comments outside of board meetings	Board members will listen but refer staff and community to the proper channels of communication. When necessary, the board member will make the superintendent aware of the concerns.
Responding to members of the public who continuously disrupt board meetings	Board members will take a motion to remove members of the public after three warnings if they continue to interfere with Board meetings.
Communications between and among board members	Communications between and among board members should be verbal and in writing.



Communications between board members and the superintendent	Communications between board members and superintendent can be in person or by email, phone, or text.
Communications between board members and staff (including requests for information)	Any request for information should go directly to the superintendent.
Assignment of committee members	Committee members are assigned on a volunteer basis. Board members wishing to express interest in committee assignments will submit their top 3 to the Board Chair. The Board Chair assigns members to the committee.
Committee reporting expectations	If applicable, board members are expected to report on the work of the committee at each meeting.
Responding to media inquiries	The chair will serve as the official spokesperson of the board. The Superintendent will speak for the division when it comes to the day-to-day operations of the school division.
Use of social media	Board members will not speak on social media on behalf of the school division.
How, when and whom to notify about visiting school sites in the official capacity of a Board member.	School board members will notify the superintendent when visiting schools during instructional day. Board members will report to the office prior to entering the building.
How, when and whom to notify about volunteering in schools or at school events	School board members should notify the superintendent prior to volunteering in the schools- not as a parent.
How, when and whom to notify about attending	School board members are encouraged to attend school events.



school events (concerts, sporting events, etc.)	
Expectations for participation in professional development	School board members are encouraged to attend professional development and training opportunities.
Expectations for participation in local meetings and conferences	School Board members are expected to make a reasonable effort to attend all regularly scheduled board meetings, special meetings, retreats, and work sessions. Board members are expected to contact the Board Chair directly and provide a reason if they are not able to attend a meeting.
When and how the board evaluates the superintendent	The board will evaluate the superintendent and share the evaluation results with the superintendent before June 30th each year. The superintendent will provide the board with a self-evaluation before June 1st each year.

OPERATIONAL EXPECTATIONS

Global Operational Expectation

The Division Superintendent will not cause, allow, or fail to take reasonable measures to prevent any practice, activity, decision, or organizational condition that is unlawful, unethical, unsafe, disrespectful, imprudent, in violation of School Board policy, or endangers the district’s public image or credibility.

The Division Superintendent will maintain a system of continuous improvement that ensures excellent customer service in the most efficient, effective manner.

The Division Superintendent will track, measure, and evaluate SCPS’s effectiveness in realizing student achievement.

Emergency Division Superintendent Succession

The Division Superintendent will designate the Deputy Superintendent as the acting Division Superintendent who is familiar with the Board’s governance process. In the absence of the



Division Superintendent and the Deputy Superintendent, the Chief Academic Officer will be the acting Division Superintendent. Both of these individuals must be capable of assuming Division Superintendent Responsibilities in his or her absence.

Community Stakeholder and School Personnel Expectations

The Division Superintendent will maintain an organizational culture that treats community stakeholders and school personnel with respect, dignity, and courtesy. The Division Superintendent will assure that all stakeholder groups are informed of any new developments in the district as well as provide assurance about the condition and direction of the district.

The Division Superintendent will:

- Ensure that Spotsylvania County Public Schools does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to all designated youth groups as designated by code.
- Maintain an organizational culture that:
 1. *Values individual differences of opinion.*
 2. *Provides open and honest communication in all written and interpersonal interactions.*
 3. *Maintains an open, responsive, and welcoming environment.*
 4. *Addresses and effectively manage(s) complaints to the Division.*
- Establish and maintain collaborative partnerships with the community
- Prepare and publish, on behalf of the Board, clear, easily accessible reports to show the progress of the Strategic Plan goals.
- Regularly update all policies and write new policies or regulations to address the latest research in education. Policy will be reviewed and updated at least annually.
- Maintain a fiscally responsible budget each year.

Human Resources

The Division Superintendent will:

Recruitment:

- Recruit, select, and hire a high-quality and diverse workforce with a high retention rate that enables SCPS to deliver the best education to every student in the division.
- Ensure that all staff members are qualified to perform the responsibilities assigned to them.



- Administer appropriate and thorough background inquiries and checks before hiring.
- Complete an approved Human Resource checklist to ensure all employees that are referred to the Board meet all identified areas on the checklist
- The Board will approve the regular HR hiring packet and walk-in packet at the regular Board meetings during closed session. On occasions, the Board may approve the HR hiring packet and walk-in packet for hiring during the Board's monthly work session meetings during closed session.

Staff Treatment:

The Division Superintendent will:

- Value employees' talents and expertise.
- Establish a culture of respect that treats all staff members in a fair and balanced manner.
- Engage staff participation in decision-making, consider various viewpoints and reasoned dissent when making decisions, including the budget.
- Establish and communicate clear personnel rules and procedures.
- Create an atmosphere that promotes high morale.

Staff Evaluation:

The Division Superintendent will:

- Implement an evaluation system that is consistent with his/her evaluation. This system must meet the guidelines set forth by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE).

Staff Compensation:

The Division Superintendent will:

- Develop fair and competitive compensation and benefit plans that attract and retain the highest quality employees and consider the regional living wage.

Professional Learning and Support:

The Division Superintendent will:

- Create a system that provides and supports continuous improvement for all staff.

Financial Planning



The Division Superintendent will develop and maintain an annual budget that is directly tied to the Board's Strategic Plan priorities.

The Division Superintendent will develop a budget that:

- Is transparent and easily accessible by and receives input from the community.
- Shows the amount spent in each budget category for the current fiscal year
- The budget will reflect funding from the Commonwealth and local government (Spotsylvania Board of Supervisors).

Division Superintendent's Relationship with the Board

The Board's goal is to maintain a positive relationship with the Division Superintendent. To accomplish this, both sides will strive to maintain excellent communication, mutual respect, personal ethics, and professional integrity and guidance at all times. The Board values collaboration to promote a strong team of seven (7). To assure this result, the Division Superintendent will assure that the Board is fully and adequately informed about matters relating to Board work and significant district concerns.

The Division Superintendent will:

- Annually present current Division data about accreditation and accountability to the Board before VDOE releasing the data to the public. This information must be presented in a simple and concise form so that all Board members can understand the implications to the Division.
- Meet regularly with the Board Chair to discuss key issues before Board meetings as well as build the agenda for each meeting with the Board Chair.
- Provide for the Board, promptly any relevant information about trends, facts, and other information to the Board's work.
- Provide the Board with monthly financial updates at Board meetings.
- Keep the Board abreast of any issues that may negatively impact the Division in the media.
- Keep the Board abreast of any administrative/personnel actions and decisions related to personnel matters that may negatively impact the Board's work.
- Provide professional advice to the Board with recommendations based on thorough study and analysis supported by ample information, including assessment of alternatives, to enable the Board to make informed decisions.
- Serve as the chief educational liaison to the Board on current and new research that impact public education.



- Maintain an ethical and harmonious working relationship with the entire Board. This includes building a working relationship with all members. The Division Superintendent will not criticize Board members in public or private 1-1 conversations about other Board members.
- Respond to Board member concerns within 24-48 hours, depending on the situation. This does not apply to emergencies.
- Maintain an overall positive relationship with the Board.

Instructional Program

The Division Superintendent will maintain a program of instruction that offers challenging and relevant opportunities for all students to achieve at levels defined in the Board's Strategic Plan Goals.

The Division Superintendent will:

- Ensure that instructional programs are based on a comprehensive and objective review of best practices research.
- Base instruction on district academic standards that meet or exceed the Board's Strategic Plan goals.
- Align the Strategic Plan goals to the curriculum
- Effectively measure each student's progress toward achieving or exceeding the Strategic Plan goals by utilizing multiple measures.
- Ensure that the instructional program accommodates the different learning styles of students and differentiates instruction to meet the needs of students of various backgrounds and abilities.
- Encourage new and innovative programs, carefully monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of all such programs at least annually.
- Ensure that all instructional programs are regularly evaluated and modified as necessary to assure their continuing effectiveness.
- Maintain a procedure for reviewing instructional materials upon formal request by a parent or other stakeholder.
- Adequately monitor and control student access to and utilization of electronically distributed information.
- Operate a child nutrition program that meets or exceeds Federal guidelines and that promotes healthy choices.



Learning Environment/Treatment of Students

The Division Superintendent will establish and maintain a learning environment that is safe, healthy, non-discriminatory, respectful, and conducive to effective learning.

The Division Superintendent will:

- Maintain a positive climate at all schools and facilities within the Division
- Assure that all confidential student information is properly used and protected.
- Ensure discipline expectations and procedures are communicated annually to parents/guardians.
- Ensure that student behavior expectations and consequences of violations are addressed promptly, supported with evidence for any relevant consequences
- Ensure that SCPS uses the latest innovation and best practices with student discipline when making decisions.
- Provide school environments that are healthy for students, promoting proper exercise, nutrition, and proper sleep.

The Division Superintendent will not:

- Accept any behaviors, actions, or attitudes by school personnel that hinder the academic performance or the well-being of students.
- Permit unacceptable and inappropriate behaviors on school property and at school-sponsored events by students or by adults that disrupt learning or that are disrespectful or dangerous.
- Permit unnecessary or irrelevant collection of student information.

Facilities and Transportation Operations

The Division Superintendent will be responsible for the smooth operation of facilities and Transportation operations. To that end, he/she must:

Facilities

The Division Superintendent will:

- Maintain a current facilities handbook in all departments with clear expectations about the work that needs to be done.
- Uses resources wisely, efficiently, and in an environmentally responsible way.
- Utilize energy as efficiently as possible.



- Maintain a current Capital Improvement Program (CIP) with a five-year forecast that establishes priorities for construction, renovation, and maintenance projects.
- Plan for long term CIP goals beyond the five-year CIP
- Plan for and schedules preventive maintenance.
- Assure that facilities are safe, clean, and properly maintained.
- Provide for public use of facilities at a reasonable net cost to the school system, as long as safety, student functions, and the instructional program are not compromised and use guidelines are administered consistently.

The Division Superintendent will not:

- Authorize construction schedules and change orders that significantly increase the cost or reduce quality.

Transportation Operations

The Division Superintendent will:

- Ensure that students eligible for Transportation services are transported in a safe, timely, efficient, and effective manner.

Safety, Security, and Emergency Preparedness

The Division Superintendent will:

- Ensure the protection of students, staff members, visitors, and SCPS property is of the highest priority. This includes the maintenance and updating of all emergency management plans.
- Make recommendations to the Board regarding best practices in school safety.
- Assure that key personnel receive annual training on emergency preparedness plans.
- Maintain a collaborative and effective working relationship with local, state, and federal emergency management representatives; especially, the Spotsylvania Sheriff's Office, Spotsylvania Fire Department, and the Spotsylvania Emergency Services Department.

Technology

The Division Superintendent will use technology to support teaching, learning, and the Board's Operational Expectations and Strategic Plan goals.



The Division Superintendent will:

- Provide a comprehensive and functional technology infrastructure.
- Provide technology capabilities that are useful for staff members and students.
- Use technology to support diverse learning techniques and styles.
- Provide a means for interactive communication between the school system and parents, students, and the community.
- Provide information electronically about school and division programs and academic progress.
- Provide a system to access relevant and current data by appropriate users.
- Provide support to enable all students to have access to online instructional resources beyond school.

DIVISION SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION

The Board delegates operational control of the District to the Division Superintendent and will hold the Division Superintendent accountable through the evaluation process.

During the evaluation process, the Division Superintendent will complete a self-assessment before meeting with the Board for the goal-setting conference. The Board will work collaboratively with the Division Superintendent to complete/review:

- Division Superintendent Self-Assessment Form
- Division Superintendent Annual Goal-Setting Conference
- Division Superintendent Annual Goals Mid-Year Assessment
- Division Superintendent Summative Performance Report

Note: The calendar below provides a timeline for the Division Superintendent process. In addition, the corresponding forms (Screen Shots) will be utilized by the School Board to complete the evaluation process.

Evaluation Documents

Evaluation Standards:



Evaluation Calendar:

Spotsylvania County Public Schools	
DIVISION SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION CALENDAR 2024-2025	
<p>The dates below are for the Division Superintendent's 2024-2025 evaluation process. The School Board will adhere to this evaluation calendar's deadlines to ensure that the Division Superintendent is evaluated in a timely manner.</p>	
Dates	Action Items to Be Completed
September 23, 2024	❖ Review of assessment and evaluation process in collaboration with the Division Superintendent.
October 14, 2024	❖ A self-assessment must be completed by the Division Superintendent.
November 11, 2024	❖ Goal-setting conference and approval of SMART goals must be completed for the Division Superintendent.
January 13, 2025	❖ Mid-Year Assessment must be completed for the Division Superintendent.
May 12, 2025	❖ Summative Evaluation must be completed for the Division Superintendent.
June 30, 2025	❖ Final date for Board Chair and Division Superintendent Signatures.
<p><i>Failure to comply with the established deadlines may negatively impact the VDOE mandates related to the evaluation process.</i></p>	

Self-Evaluation Form:



Spotsylvania County Public Schools

Superintendent Self-evaluation Form

Directions: Superintendents should use this form annually to reflect on the effectiveness and adequacy of their practice based on each performance standard. Please refer to the performance indicators for examples of behaviors exemplifying each standard.

Superintendent's Name: _____ Date: _____

School Division: _____ School Year: _____

1. Strategic Leadership
The superintendent creates, monitors, and facilitates the process of strategic improvement, and seeks to ensure the division's mission, vision, and goals are fulfilled in a manner that enables all students to be career and college ready and globally competitive.
Areas of strength:
Areas needing work/strategies for improving performance:
Ratings: Highly Effective [] Effective [] Approaching Effective [] Ineffective []
2. Planning and Assessment
The superintendent strategically gathers, analyzes, and uses a variety of data to guide planning and decision-making consistent with established guidelines, policies, and procedures that result in student academic progress and improved student outcomes.
Areas of strength:
Areas needing work/strategies for improving performance:
Ratings: Highly Effective [] Effective [] Approaching Effective [] Ineffective []
3. Instructional Leadership
The superintendent fosters the success of all teachers, staff, division leaders, and students by ensuring the development, communication, implementation, and evaluation of instructional systems that promote high student achievement and professional development and growth for staff.
Areas of strength:
Areas needing work/strategies for improving performance:
Ratings: Highly Effective [] Effective [] Approaching Effective [] Ineffective []

Goal Setting and Mid-Year Assessment of Goals Form:



Spotsylvania County Public Schools

Superintendent's Annual Goals

Directions: This form is a tool to assist superintendents in setting goals that result in measurable divisionwide student academic progress. Goals may relate to other standards, but all goals should address Standard 8 as well. Use a separate sheet for each goal.

Superintendent's Name: _____ Date: _____

School Division: _____ School Year: _____

Preliminary approval granted by school board on: _____

Mid-year review conducted by school board on: _____

Year-end review conducted by school board on: _____

Goal:
Check the standard(s) to which the goal relates
[] 1. Strategic Leadership [] 2. Planning and Assessment
[] 3. Instructional Leadership [] 4. Organizational Leadership and Resource Management
[] 5. Communication and Community Relations [] 6. Culturally Responsive and Equitable Division Leadership [] 7. Professionalism [] 8. Divisionwide Student Academic Progress
Expected term to completion: [] Short-term [] Mid-term [] Long-term
Indicators of Success
Mid-Year Assessment of Goal by School Board
Evidence to Date

Summative Evaluation Form:



Spotsylvania County Public Schools

Superintendent Summative Performance Report

Directions: Evaluators use this form prior to providing the superintendent with an assessment of performance. The superintendent should be given a copy of the form at the end of each evaluation cycle.

Superintendent's Name: _____ School Year(s): _____

School: _____

Performance Standard 1: Strategic Leadership

<p>Highly Effective <i>In addition to meeting the requirements for Effective ...</i></p> <p>The superintendent establishes a highly productive relationship with the local school board to lead strategic improvement to promote student learning.</p>	<p>Effective <i>Effective is the expected level of performance.</i></p> <p>The superintendent creates, monitors, and facilitates the process of strategic improvement, and seeks to ensure the division's mission, vision, and goals are fulfilled in a manner that enables all students to be career and college ready and globally competitive.</p>	<p>Approaching Effective</p> <p>The superintendent is inconsistent in creating, monitoring, and/or facilitating the process of strategic improvement, and/or seeking to ensure the division's mission, vision, and goals are fulfilled in a manner that enables all students to be career and college ready and globally competitive.</p>	<p>Ineffective</p> <p>The superintendent fails to create, monitor, and/or facilitate the process of strategic improvement, and/or fails to seek to ensure the division's mission, vision, and goals are fulfilled in a manner that enables all students to be career and college ready and globally competitive.</p>
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Comments: _____

THE DIVISION SUPERINTENDENT DELEGATED AUTHORITY

Steps in the process:

The Spotsylvania County School Board delegates authority to the Division Superintendent. In addition, the School Board provides direction to the Division Superintendent through written policies, the Strategic Plan, and formal votes.

As long as the Division Superintendent uses a reasonable interpretation of the Board's direction, he/she is authorized to establish district regulations, make operational decisions, establish instructional practices, and initiate activities deemed necessary and appropriate to achieve the School Board's goals and expectations. The School Board will make the final determination as to whether any such decision is reasonable. The Board further delegates to the Division Superintendent the authority necessary to implement the goals and mission established by the School Board, subject to any approvals or actions specifically reserved for the Board.

SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE COMMITMENTS

The Board will govern by the law outlined in the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-2, 22.1-28, 22.1-31, 22.1-71, and Constitution of Virginia, Article VIII, § 7 as stated in School Board Policy BB.



- The main responsibility of the Board is to achieve SCPS' mission of educating all students through hiring and overseeing the Division Superintendent's responsibilities, setting/revising policy, providing fiscal stewardship, and accountability, and establishing/refining the goals outlined in the Division Strategic Plan.
- The Board will hold itself accountable by monitoring its performance periodically and participating annually in professional development. This includes:
 1. VSBA Fall Conference
 2. Board training for newly elected members
 3. Chair and Vice Chair training for newly elected Chair and/or Vice Chair
 4. Annual Board training with the Division Superintendent
 5. Annual Parliamentary Procedures Training
 6. School Board Governance Training through VSBA or a contracted vendor

Board members can attend individual professional development on specific topics from the Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) or other organizations with the approval of the Board Chair. Board members can also attend national conferences with the approval of the Board Chair. Interested Board members upon approval of the Board Chair will work with the Division Superintendent and Board Clerk on these specific opportunities.

- The Board will focus on strategic leadership and give direction to the Division Superintendent through majority decisions of the full Board.
- The Board will communicate regularly with residents in the community through school board meeting minutes, maintaining public trust through full and open communication.
- The Board will collaborate with the Superintendent to create several committees to oversee the work being done in the Division. This includes but is not limited to the list provided on School Board Committees.
- The Board will permit no officer, individual, or committee to hinder its performance or prevent the Board from fulfilling its commitments.
- The Board will ensure that all actions are consistent with State and Federal laws and with the Board's policies and commitments.

School Board Member Code of Conduct

The Spotsylvania County School Board supports the Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) Code of Conduct for School Board Members:

SCPS Code of Conduct Ethics for School Board Members

As a member of my local school board, I will strive to be an advocate for students and to improve public education and to that end:



1. I will have integrity in all matters and support the full development of all children, Division staff, and the welfare of the community, Commonwealth and Nation.
2. I will represent SCPS at the local, state, and national levels in areas about public education.
3. I will attend scheduled board meetings.
4. I will come to board meetings informed concerning the issues under consideration.
5. I will make policy decisions based on the available facts and appropriate public input.
6. I will delegate authority for the administration of the schools to the Division Superintendent and his/her staff.
7. I will delegate authority for the administration of the schools to the superintendent, and establish a process for accountability of administrators.
8. I will encourage individual board member expression of opinion in a professional and respectful manner, and establish an open, two-way communication process with all segments of the community.
9. I will communicate, in accordance with board policies, public reaction and opinion regarding board policies and school programs to the full board and superintendent.
10. I will bring about desired changes through legal and ethical procedures, upholding and enforcing all laws, state regulations, and court orders pertaining to schools.
11. I will refrain from using the board position for personal or partisan gain and avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of impropriety.
12. I will respect the confidentiality of privileged information and make no individual decisions or commitments that might compromise the board or administration.
13. I will be informed about current educational issues through individual study and participation in appropriate programs, such as those sponsored by my state and national school boards associations.
14. I will always remember that the foremost concern of the board is to improve and enhance the teaching and learning experience for all students in the public schools of Virginia.
15. I will always abstain from physical, sexual, and verbal harassment of school employees, agents, volunteers, contractors, or other persons subject to the supervision and control of the school division.

Therefore, I will always strive to demonstrate appropriate behavior/conduct as a public school board member. **(Each member of this school board voting to adopt this Code should sign.)**

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____



School Board Clerk: _____ Date: _____

School Board Member Roles and Responsibilities

The role of the Spotsylvania County School Board is to ensure that Spotsylvania County Public Schools (SCPS) provide a successful educational program for students that is consistent with the Strategic Plan.

To accomplish this goal, the School Board will:

- Adopt a fiscally responsible budget based on funding sources for the local, state, and federal governments.
- Establish expectations for student achievement, provide resources to enable students to meet those expectations, and hold SCPS accountable for student achievement.
- Monitor performance against approved benchmarks in the Strategic Plan.
- Hire and regularly evaluate the performance of the Division Superintendent.
- Adopt operating and capital budgets that support the Board's identified goals.
- Represent and serve the interests of the citizens of Spotsylvania.
- Report student achievement data and other operational goals/challenges to the public.
- Ensure that SCPS responds respectfully and promptly to issues raised by members of the community.
- Provide advocacy at the local, state, and federal levels by working collaboratively with elected and appointed officials.
- Respect the value and importance of employees and other organizations serving SCPS. The Board must reasonably involve them in decisions that affect them.
- Review, create, amend, and adopt policies.

Note: The Board Governance clock below provides a synopsis of the roles and responsibilities for Board members and Division Superintendent.



The Governance Clock



www.vsba.org

School Board Member Conflict of Interest

Board members are expected to avoid conflicts of interest involving all matters considered by the Board. A conflict of interest exists when a member is confronted with an issue in which the member has a personal or financial interest or an issue or circumstance that could render the member unable to devote complete loyalty and singleness of purpose to the public interest.

Board members are expected to comply with state law and current versions of School Board policies and SCPS regulations about conflict of interest, including Policy BBFA, Conflict of Interest, and Statement of Economic Interest.

School Board Meeting Protocol

As per School Board Policies BCA, BDA, BDC, BDB and BDCA, the goal of the Spotsylvania School Board is to ensure that the Board meetings are conducted ethically and efficiently.



To that end, Board members will:

- Collaborate with the Board Chair to create or add items to the agenda.
- Be on time and arrive prepared for the meeting.
- Review the agenda, any necessary documents, and the personnel recommendations before the meeting.
- Identify issues of concern before the meeting, and avoid surprises whenever possible.
- Support the Board Chair's efforts to facilitate an orderly meeting.
- Be respectful of the Board Chair, Vice Chair, and other Board members when they have the floor.
- Minimize unnecessary repetition when addressing the public, Board members, and Division Superintendent during Board meetings and closed sessions.
- Address the merits of the issue at hand during Board meetings
- Assure that all perspectives are understood as issues are considered.
- Takes a positive outlook when discussing issues or concerns and displays a respectful tone in words and actions.
- Continuously engage in active listening, take part in productive discourse, and value differing opinions.
- Entertain a motion to remove members of the public after three warnings if they continue to interfere with Board meetings.
- Initiate a remedy process as outlined in SCPS policy BBC* if another Board member willfully or continuously violates the policy or the Code of Ethics. The full school board will vote to act and impose sanctions only by a majority vote.

The Board will attend to consent agenda items as expeditiously as possible. An item may be removed from the consent agenda upon request of one member to the Chair before the meeting is convened or they can make a motion on the floor to move the item from the consent agenda. The Board will monitor the effectiveness of its meetings through a debriefing process at the end of every meeting as needed. All School Board members will adhere to *Robert's Rules of Order* and limit the length of their remarks on their initial turn at work sessions to no more than five (5) minutes. Board members will make their comments and raise their initial questions in these five minutes, with staff then responding before going to the next Board member. Board members may raise other questions and make further comments during go-backs.

Election of School Board Chair and Vice Chair

- All School Board members will conduct campaigns for leadership positions, or support for a candidate, with integrity and respect for all School Board members.



- Board members running for a leadership position should be nominated by another Board member.
- If there is more than one Board member nominated for the same position, the Board must take a vote for each candidate nominated.

Role of the School Board Chair

The School Board empowers the Chair to provide leadership to the Board by ensuring the integrity of the School Board's processes, exercising these responsibilities with integrity, fairness, and impartiality.

The chair has the following authority and duties:

- Serves as the School Board's official spokesperson
- Support and monitor School Board behavior to ensure that it is consistent with its own rules and policies and those legitimately imposed upon it from outside the organization.
- Conduct and monitor School Board meeting deliberations to ensure that discussions and attention are focused on School Board issues.
- Ensure that School Board meeting deliberations are fair, open, and thorough, but also efficient, timely, and orderly.
- Chair School Board meetings with all the commonly accepted power of that position as described in *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*.
- Lead timely periodic self-assessments to ensure process improvement.
- Facilitate sound Board decision-making by anticipating and addressing Board and member needs; this includes input in creating the School Board agenda for monthly meetings.
- Compile and facilitate the Board's summative evaluation of the Division Superintendent.
- Except as otherwise provided in the section authorizing committee chairs to speak for the Board on specific matters, represent the Board as appropriate, and serve as spokespersons for the Board in announcing Board-stated positions.
- Execute all documents authorized by the Board, except as otherwise provided by law.
- With the advice and consent of the School Board, appoint the members, Chair, and Vice-Chair and/or liaison of all School Board committees.
- On behalf of the School Board, and in concert with the Division Superintendent, develop proposed Board meeting agendas consistent with the Board's annual work plan.

The Chair has no authority to supervise or direct the Division Superintendent except as authorized by the School Board. When the Chair is not available, the Vice-Chair of the School Board will perform the role and duties of the Board Chair. The Board Chair and Vice-Chair will work together to ensure that the duties of the Chair are accomplished effectively.



School Board Committees

The School Board may create one or more committees to perform delegated functions or to advise the School Board. These committees may assist the School Board by preparing alternatives, implications, or recommendations for consideration by the entire School Board.

These committees will work collaboratively with Division personnel to accomplish the School Board's goals. Their functions include:

- School Board committees will not be created to direct or oversee school system staff, which is the function of the Division Superintendent. Any direction to the Division Superintendent related to a committee recommendation will come from the full Board.
- No School Board committee may speak or act for the entire School Board.
- School Board committee expectations and authority will be stated carefully by the Spotsylvania School Board to assure that committee authority will not usurp or conflict with the School Board's authority or conflict with the authority delegated to the Division Superintendent.
- These rules do not apply to committees formed by the Division Superintendent to support the Division Superintendent's work.
- Members are appointed and School Board Committee terms are for one year unless otherwise specified.

Standing committees supporting the Board's work:

1. Calendar Review Committee

Charge: To work collaboratively with the Division Superintendent or his/her designee to create a new school calendar for each school year.

2. Policy Review Committee

Charge: To work with the Division Superintendent and his/her staff to review pertinent policies and assist in the development and review of the School Division Strategic Plan.

3. Division Safety Committee

Charge: To oversee work with the Division Superintendent and his/her staff to review the code of conduct and safety plan.

Citizen's Advisory Committees Support the Board's Work:

1. Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)



Purpose: 8 VAC 20-81-230(D)—A local advisory committee for special education, appointed by each local school board, will advise the school board through the Division Superintendent.

2. *Title I Parent Advisory Committee*

Purpose: The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) requires that a school district consult with teachers and parents as the district designs and implements its Compensatory Education Title I program.

State Committees Support the Board's Work:

1. *Gifted Education Advisory Committee*

Purpose: Va. Code §22.1-18.1—Each school board may appoint, by the regulations of the Board of Education, a local advisory committee on gifted education. The local advisory committee on gifted education will annually review the local plan for the education of gifted students, including revisions, and determine the extent to which the plan for the previous year was implemented.

Other Board Committees:

1. *Local Finance Board*
2. *Finance & Audit*
3. *Transportation Services Steering Committee*
4. *Board Disciplinary Review Committee*
5. *Commonwealth Governor's School Governing Board*
6. *CTE Advisory Committee*
7. *School Health Advisory Board (SHAB)*
8. *Spotsylvania Education Foundation*
9. *Construction & Maintenance Change Order Committee*
10. *Head Start Policy Council*

**PROCESS FOR ADDRESSING NON-COMPLIANCE WITH BOARD
MEMBER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Steps in the process:



The Spotsylvania County Public School Board and each of its members are committed to faithful compliance with the School Board's roles and responsibilities as outlined in the Governance Manual. The School Board will address any deliberate or continuous violations by Board members to ensure effective governance. Refer to policy BBC*.

In the event of such noncompliance, the School Board will seek a remedy by applying any of the following measures:

- Conversation in a private setting between the member in question and the School Board Chair or another individual member.
- If a School Board member perceives that a fellow Board member has been non-compliant, that School Board member may address his/her concerns with the School Board member who is perceived to be non-compliant.
- If the School Board member who attempts to remedy a concern with another School Board member feels that the issue is not resolved, the School Board member may refer the concern to the School Board chair.
- If the School Board chair is suspected of noncompliance, the concern would be referred to the School Board Vice Chair. The purpose of this step is to attempt to resolve any perceived violations at the lowest possible level, involving the fewest number of individuals.
- In the event of serious or continuing noncompliance by one School Board member, any School Board member may request the Chair schedule a full School Board discussion in closed session with the identified member. The identified member will receive advance written notice of the discussion, including a statement of the alleged violation.

In the event there is a need to remove a School Board member from any leadership or committee positions to which the member in question has been appointed or elected, these steps must be followed.

- Removal of a School Board member from a committee leadership or committee membership position, any member may request the School Board Chair to notify the identified member in writing of the scheduled School Board discussion of removal.
- The identified member will be removed only after discussion and only on a majority vote of the Board.

The School Board has the authority to release a public statement regarding noncompliance with School Board roles and responsibilities. To do this the School Board may issue a statement regarding any instances of individual School Board member's noncompliance, after notice to the individual and a discussion and vote to do so by the Board.



OTHER ESSENTIAL BOARD PERSONNEL

School Board Clerk and Deputy Clerk

The School Board shall appoint and evaluate the performance of the Clerk of the School Board. The School Board Clerk shall be responsible for efficiently and effectively managing the School Board office and for:

- Keeping full and accurate records of the proceedings of the Board and arranging for the safe keeping of such records, other documents, and correspondence pertaining to the actions and proceedings of the Board.
- Signing and certifying for the Board official documents which may be required in the conduct of the business of the school system.
- Discharging such other duties in connection with the business of the school division as may be required of him or her by the School Board or State Board of Education.
- Deputy Clerks are empowered to act in all matters in the absence of the Clerk [Code of VA § 22.1-76(A) and 22.1-77].
- The Board will develop a midyear review of the Clerk's performance at a time specified annually by the Chair, as well as a Summative Evaluation in July of each year. The Clerk will be evaluated by the Board according to the most current Support Personnel Summative Evaluation forms.

Student Representative

The Spotsylvania County School Board may appoint a student representative to voice the interests of students in Spotsylvania County Public Schools. Currently, there is no student representative on the board. If a student representative is approved, he/she will be selected by the student body, in consultation with the principal and key school personnel. The student representative will have the opportunity to participate in school board discussions that relate to the student body. The student will not have any voting authority.

SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

Types of Meetings:

Annual Organizational Meeting

The annual meeting of the School Board shall be the first regular meeting in January, at which time officers shall be elected. Some of the agenda items for this meeting include but not limited to:



- *Set School Board member compensation*
- *Appoint Clerks and agents of the School Board*
- *Designate individuals to sign legal documents*
- *Organize School Board committees and liaisons*

Regular Meetings:

Regular meetings of the School Board shall be held once a month on the second Monday of the month. All meetings shall be open to the public except when the School Board is in closed meetings.

Work Sessions:

Work session meetings of the School Board shall be held once a month on the fourth Monday of the month when voted on by the entire board for the next fiscal year. All meetings shall be open to the public except when the School Board is in closed meetings.

Special Meetings:

Special meetings of the School Board may be called by the Chair, or at the request of any two School Board members or the Superintendent, provided that all members are notified of the time and purpose 48 hours prior to the meeting unless a majority of the School Board agrees to meet upon shorter notice. The final decision to call for a special meeting lies with the Board Chair. Notice, reasonable under the circumstance, of special or emergency meetings shall be given to the public at the same time the notice is provided to the members of the School Board. [Code of VA §2.2- 57 3707]

Closed Meetings:

The Code of VA permits closed meetings in order to discuss specific matters. Closed meetings must be convened by a vote of the majority of the School Board members in attendance in public session. Closed meetings of three-member committees of the School Board are held regularly throughout the school year and at other times, as required, in order to hear student disciplinary cases. [Code of VA §2.2-3711 and 3712]

Meeting Procedures:

A quorum of School Board members is required for regular, special, and closed meetings. The School Board chair shall call the meeting to order at the appointed time and place, if a quorum is present, to transact business according to the agenda. At any meeting of the School Board, a majority of the members shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of convening a meeting.

1. Parliamentary Procedure-The Board shall observe Robert's Rules of Order.



2. Agenda- An agenda for each regular School Board meeting shall be prepared under the direction of the School Board Chair in consultation with the Division Superintendent. School Board members wanting to have an item included on the agenda shall contact either the School Board Chair or the Clerk with the request. Final decisions on agenda items rests with the Board Chair. The Division Superintendent or individual School Board members may bring up new business not listed as part of the agenda. The Chair has the prerogative to limit or postpone discussion of new business until the next scheduled School Board meeting unless overruled by a majority of the School Board. The agenda and all supporting documents and information shall be made available to the School Board and the public and posted to the web at least five days in advance of the meeting whenever possible.
3. Voting- All voting on motions or resolutions may be done by voice vote, raised hands or the electronic voting system. The Chair shall announce the vote for the record, including members voting aye, nay, and abstentions, and if the motion passed or failed.
4. Public Notification of Meetings-The School Board Clerk, in consultation with the School Board Chair and the Division Superintendent, shall publish, in July, an annual calendar of meeting dates. Notice of all School Board meetings shall be given to the public and posted in a prominent place at the School Board office at least three (3) business days before the meeting. Additions or deletions of meeting dates shall be made to the calendar throughout the year, as necessary. [Code of VA §2.2-3707]

Recording of Minutes:

- The minutes of open meetings of the School Board shall include:
- Date, time, and location of the meeting.
- The Board members are recorded as absent or present.
- A notation of the presence or absence of the Superintendent and/or of the student representative to the Board.
- A record of any corrections to the minutes of the previous meeting
- A summary of discussions on matters proposed, deliberated, or decided and a record of any votes taken.
- The Board Clerk will ensure that the meeting minutes are ready for approval by the board in a timely manner.

Closed Session Recording:

- The Division Superintendent will record all closed meeting sessions to ensure accuracy of information shared by Board members.



Posting of Minutes:

Except as provided in subsection I of § 2.2-3707, any local public body subject to the provisions of this chapter shall post minutes of its meetings on its official public government website, if any, within seven working days of final approval of the minutes.

The minutes shall be permanently retained and indexed for reference purposes. The exhibit files (agendas, minutes, and all supporting documentation) for all open meetings shall be permanently retained. [Code of VA §2.2-3707]. The minutes of all school board meetings shall be signed by the chairman and clerk. [Code of VA §22.1-74].

School Board Nondiscrimination Policy

The Spotsylvania County Public School Board is committed to a nondiscrimination policy concerning sex, gender, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, ancestry, age, marital status, genetic information, or other protected characteristics. This commitment will prevail in all its policies and practices concerning staff, students, educational programs and services, and individuals and entities with whom the Board does business.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Procedures:

Members of the community are invited and encouraged to attend public meetings of the School Board to observe its deliberations. The School Board welcomes community members to provide comments at its regular business meetings and public hearings on school board deliberations, school-related issues, or particular topics concerning the Division. This is an opportunity for the School Board to hear the thoughts of our community so the School Board members will listen to these comments but will not engage with speakers during the public participation section of the meeting. Community members who continuously disrupt board meetings will be addressed by the Board Chair. A board members will take a motion to remove members of the public after three warnings if they are continue to interfere with board meetings.

The Spotsylvania County Public School Board meets on the second Monday of every month, unless otherwise noted, in the Board Meeting Room of the Administrative Services Building, 8020 River Stone Drive, Fredericksburg, VA. Anyone requiring special accommodations should contact the Clerk's office (540.834.2500) at least two days before the meeting to discuss the required accommodations.



[Use this link for more information about meetings](#)

APPENDICIES

School Board Contact Information

School Board Contact Information	
Board Members	Contact Information
Dr. Lorita C. Daniels, Board Chair	lcdaniels@spotsylvania.k12.va.us
Ms. Nicole Cole, Vice Chair	ncole@spotsylvania.k12.va.us
Ms. Megan Jackson, Board Member	mkjackson@spotsylvania.k12.va.us
Ms. Belen Rodas, Board Member	brodas@spotsylvania.k12.va.us
Ms. April Gillespie, Board Member	agillespie@spotsylvania.k12.va.us
Ms. Lisa Phelps, Board Member	lphelps@spotsylvania.k12.va.us
Dr. Carol Medawar, Board Member	cmedawar@spotsylvania.k12.va.us
Student Representative (VACANT)	TBD @spotsylvania.k12.va.us
Dr. Clint M. Mitchell, Superintendent	cmmitchell@spotsylvania.k12.va.us
Ms. Patricia Boller, Board Clerk	pboller@spotsylvania.k12.va.us
Dr. Dennis Martin, Deputy Clerk	dwmartin@spotsylvania.k12.va.us

The school board meeting calendar is posted online.