Jamul-Dulzura Union School District

District of Civic Excellence

Governance Handbook

September 23, 2023

Board of Trustees

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EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE
Unity of Purpose, Roles, Responsibilities, Norms and Protocols

This document reflects the governance team's work on the creation of a framework for effective governance. This process involves ***ongoing*** *discussions and agreements about unity of purpose, roles, norms, and protocols that enable the governance team to continue to perform its responsibilities in a way that best benefits all children of the Jamul-Dulzura Union School District.*

On February 13, 2017, October 9, 2018, June 30, 2022, and September 23, 2023, Jamul-Dulzura Union School District Board of Trustees and Superintendent participated in workshops on Effective Governance with the California School Boards Association. This document reflects the governance team's discussions about developing and sustaining a framework for effective governance and includes highlights of their conversations about unity of purpose, roles, norms, and protocols that enable the governance team to continue to perform its responsibilities in a way that best serves all students.

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EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Governance

School district governance is the process of setting organizational policies and standards that are adopted by the Board of Trustees and implemented by the Superintendent in order to provide strategic direction and ensure that objectives are met, risks are managed appropriately, and resources are utilized responsibly in order to ensure the best education possible for all students.

Governance tenets encompass the basic characteristics and behaviors that enable governance team members to effectively create a climate for excellence in a school district and maintain the focus on improved student learning and achievement. This Governance Handbook documents the governance responsibilities of the Board of Trustees and Superintendent of the Jamul-Dulzura Union School District within these three dimensions:

1. Governing as a unified team with a shared vision to lead and serve the community
2. Mutual support for roles and responsibilities
3. Creating and sustaining a positive governance leadership culture

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UNITY OF PURPOSE

Unity of purpose is the common focus, overarching goals, and the core values, beliefs and principles governing body members share in common about children, the district and public education.

MISSION STATEMENT

As a school-centered community in a diverse and changing world, we are committed to educating, enriching, and challenging every child by providing to all, excellence in leadership, instruction, opportunities, and resources that develop creative, cooperative, and caring lifelong learners, independent decision makers and contributing citizens.

CORE BELIEFS

We believe in:

· Respect, honesty, and integrity

· Taking personal responsibility for one's own action

· Developing nurturing relationships

We believe:

· Learning is a lifelong process.

· Everyone should have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

· People need to know they are valued.

· Diversity enriches society.

· It is the responsibility of the family and society to provide a safe and supportive environment for individual growth.

· Each of us has the responsibility to further the good of our community and society.

JDUSD BOARD GOALS

Goal 1: Ensure Student Success

Goal 2: Attract, Recruit, Train, and Retain the Highest Quality Staff

Goal 3: Ensure Communication and Collaboration throughout the School Community

Goal 4: Maximize Resources to Maintain Fiscal Responsibility

Goal 5: Ensure Safe and Secure Facilities for Students, Staff, Parents and Community

Goal 6: Provide Current and Effective Mental Health Support for Students, Families and Staff.

STRATEGIES:

Curriculum - We will implement Common Core curriculum that engages and empowers all students to reach their potential through integrated technology and research based instructional practices.

Student Support - We will increase family support for schools and school support for families.

Communication - We will continue to support the function of the schools as the center of the community through communication and involvement of the community.

What We Are Most Proud of About this District:

- For such a small district with limited resources we have been able to accomplish a large amount of good work.
- The fact that we all want what is best for our students and community.
- Our History and Civic education program
- The level of collaborative work that makes children the highest priority
- Our successful strategic plan – which is inclusive of staff and parent input
- That we are a self-described, "school-centered community"

What We Hope to Accomplish:

- Leading the district forward to increase student achievement
- Becoming great communicators for the district
- Having mutual respect and appreciation for each other
- Cohesion as a team to accomplish positive results
- Providing strong governance for student success
- For our Board to continue to build a strong educational team for the district
- Recruiting and retaining appropriate, highly trained, and skilled teachers and staff to best serve our students
- Ensuring high staff morale – People who want to be here and are proud to be here
- Giving kids the skills, they need to be curious critical thinkers, creative, collaborative, contributive and effective communicators
- Helping students develop a mind-set to become lifelong learners
- Developing a STEAM program that is as strong as our Civics program and add additional electives
- Providing opportunities for all students that include STEM, civics, art, and music
- Creating socially and civically proactive, and inclusive students
- Creating a Civic Central School District that prepares students to be active and productive members of our society while meeting the needs of all students
- Providing each child opportunities to figure out who they are and what they want to do with their lives
- Providing students, the support that they need to excel in their chosen area(s)
- Creating civil civic discourse and excellence
- Ensuring financial stability for the district
- Providing safe, clean up-to-date learning environments
- Being a school district that enjoys community support and is a source of community pride.
- Making our district the first-choice schools of the parents of our community
- Increasing parent engagement
- Having our district be known as among the best in the nation and a model of good governance and how that positively impacts our students and society.

GAINING CLARITY ON ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Role of the Board and Superintendent - CSBA:

School board "trustees" are the representatives of the people, elected to ensure the district schools educate the children in consideration of the interests of the local community. The role of the School Board is to govern the school district through the following five responsibilities:

- Setting direction
- Establishing an effective and efficient structure
- Providing support
- Ensuring accountability
- Providing community leadership as advocates for children and the school district

The superintendent is hired by the school board to provide professional expertise in the day-to-day operations of the district. The role of the Superintendent is:

1. To work with the school board to develop an effective governance leadership team.
2. To serve as the chief administrative officer for the school district.
3. To lead the staff towards the accomplishment of the agreed upon district mission and goals.

Performing Board Responsibilities - CSBA:

We <u>Set the Direction</u> for the Community's Schools by:

- Focusing on student learning
- Assessing district needs
- Generating, reviewing, and revising setting direction documents: (beliefs, vision, priorities, strategic goals, success indicators)
- Ensuring an appropriate inclusive process is used to develop these documents
- Ensuring that these documents are the driving force for all district efforts

We <u>establish an effective and efficient structure</u> for the school district by:

- Employing the superintendent
- Setting policy for hiring of other personnel
- Setting policies
- Setting direction for and adopting the curriculum
- Establishing budget priorities and adopting the budget
- Overseeing facilities issues
- Providing direction for and voting to accept collective bargaining agreements

We <u>Provide Support</u> through our behavior and actions by:

- Acting with a professional demeanor that models the district's beliefs and vision
- Making decisions and providing resources that support mutually agreed upon priorities and goals
- Upholding board approved district policies
- Ensuring a positive personnel climate exists
- Being knowledgeable about district efforts and able to explain them to the public

We <u>Ensure Accountability</u> to the Public by:

- Evaluating the superintendent
- Monitoring, reviewing, and revising policies
- Serving as a judicial and appeals body
- Monitoring student achievement and program effectiveness and requiring program changes as indicated
- Monitoring and adjusting district finances
- Reviewing facilities issues
- Monitoring the collective bargaining process

We <u>Act as Community Leaders</u> by:

- Speaking with a common voice about district priorities, goals, and issues
- Engaging and involving the community in district schools and activities
- Communicating clear information about policies, programs, and fiscal conditions of the district
- Educating the community and the media about issues facing the district and public education
- Advocating for children, district programs and public education to the general public, community, and local, state, and national leaders

GAINING CLARITY ON ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

What the Board Needs from the Superintendent:

The superintendent will support trustees in fulfilling their responsibilities by:

- Ensuring that there are no surprises
- Continuing the excellent communication - the Friday Notes are great!
- Keeping us informed – providing us with staff feedback and news
- Learning each Board Member's desired mode of communication – letters, phone calls, emails, text messages, etc.
- Keeping it real
- Telling us what you need
- Being careful not to be overly optimistic, especially when things are going well – we need to keep our eyes and ears open and always be aware that there is always room for improvement.

What the Superintendent Needs from the Board:

The trustees can support the superintendent in fulfilling her responsibilities by:

- Ensuring that there are no surprises
- Communicating – sharing information from the community – calling, leaving a voice message, etc.
- Providing honest and timely feedback
- Ensuring participation
- Maintaining teamwork
- Staying up to date
- Understanding the difficult role of the Superintendent
- Being supportive

What Board Members Need from the Each Other:

The trustees can support each other by:

- Ensuring that there are no surprises
- Ensuring participation
- Respecting each other's opinions
- Supporting agreed upon goals and "follow through"

Jamul-Dulzura Union School District Governance Team

AGREEMENTS TO FACILITATE GOVERNANCE LEADERSHIP

Governance Team Norms and Protocols:

The Board of Education for the Jamul-Dulzura Union School District is entrusted by the community to uphold the Constitutions of California and the United States, to protect the public's interest in the 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. Agreed upon behaviors or norms, and operating procedures or protocols, support consistent behavior and actions among team members. The purpose of the Jamul-Dulzura Union School District governance team agreements is to ensure that a positive and productive working relationship exists among board members, the superintendent, district staff, students, and the community. Norms and protocols are developed for and by the members of the governance team and may be modified over time as needed.

Our Agreements to Facilitate Governance Leadership:

Norms

Our Governance Team Wishes to Create a Culture that Models:

- Respect
- Listening
- Civility
- Cohesion
- Trust
- Confidence
- Open, honest communication and
- Is responsible, inclusive, and accountable

To that end, we have adopted the following meeting guidelines.

Meeting Guidelines

- We will keep our focus on the best interest of our current and future students.
- We will work toward the future – learning from the past.
- Each member will take responsibility for the work of the team. We will each be responsible for the success of the meeting, participate equally and address concerns.
- We will be civil to each other, respect each other's opinions, knowing that our number one guideline is doing what is best for our students.
- We will listen actively to all ideas. We will listen openly without preparing responses.
- We will wait to speak until a team member has finished talking.
- We will build upon the ideas of others that come before us, look for common ground, and paraphrase for understanding, while ensuring that all members have provided input and have been understood.

Protocols

TO FACILITATE GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Effective governance teams discuss and agree upon the formal structures and processes, or protocols, used by the board and superintendent in their functioning as a team. These structures and processes guide the operations of the governance team and determine how they do business. Protocols are the agreements that ensure that all members of the team are operating within their agreed upon roles.

Protocols to Facilitate Governance Leadership

Requesting Information from the Superintendent	
Principle	• Critical to the ability of trustees to make informed decisions is timely access to Information. • The superintendent wants to be responsive to requests for information, maintain the focus on district priorities and balance the management of staff time. • This will provide clarity about the organizational structure for trustees and staff.
Protocol	• Trustees will always work through the superintendent when asking questions or requesting additional information on board meeting agenda items. • The superintendent will ensure timely responses to requests and will provide the information or direct trustees to the correct source. As appropriate, the superintendent will distribute answers to all trustees. • Board members will self-monitor to ensure one person's request for information does not divert an inappropriate amount of time from staff efforts to achieve district goals. Requests requiring inordinate amounts of time will be brought to the board to decide whether to support the request.

Meetings as Strategic Leadership

Principle

- The board meeting is a meeting to conduct district business in public. Well-run, efficient meetings model leadership, promote trust and confidence and provide opportunities to demonstrate strategically moving the district forward and planning for the future.
- The governance team wants to demonstrate to the public that the board maintains the focus on priorities and that deliberation and discussion are conducted with professionalism and respect.
- The board meeting provides opportunities to share educational philosophy among the governance team and with the community.

Protocol

- The board will communicate how the agenda topics link to district priorities and how actions link to the goals and strategies.
- The principal/superintendent reports will explicitly demonstrate the relationship to the district goals.
- The board members agree to share accountability for board deliberations that demonstrate that the 'right' amount of time is spent on the 'right' things while valuing the input of each member of the governance team.
- Board member comments at the board meeting will focus on goals, professional learning, or educational trends.
- Annually and as needed the board will schedule study sessions and board conversations linked to the district's strategic priorities.

Role of the Board President

Principle

- The board has an obligation to set an example of good government in action for the community.
- The board intends for meetings to proceed professionally, efficiently, and effectively.
- The board president sets the tone and shapes the public's perception of the school board.
- Each board member must have the opportunity to express his or her viewpoint during board deliberation.

Protocol

The role of the board president is to:

- Confer with the superintendent before the board meeting to prepare, as necessary for the board meeting.
- Facilitate the board meeting, supporting the effective flow of the discussion and encouraging input from all trustees while staying on task, moving forward, and maintaining proper meeting decorum.
- Model the tone and behavior the board wishes to convey to the community.
- Following the board meeting, the board president with the superintendent will ensure there is appropriate follow-up and clarification of possible options for the board.
- The board president serves as the primary spokesperson for the board.

Board Deliberation and Motions on Agenda Action Items

Principle

- The tenets of parliamentary procedure help ensure the orderly conduct of board meetings.
- Establishing clear and simple rules leads to wider understanding and participation, fostering a healthier exchange of ideas.
- Motions are the vehicles for orderly decision making by the board.

Protocol

- The board president will introduce the agenda item and call for a motion and a second.
- A board member may act by saying "I move that....."
- Another board member may second the motion by saying "I second the motion."
- The board president will acknowledge the motion and second and ask for the superintendent and or staff to report on the issue at hand.
- Members of the public will be afforded the right to address the board regarding an agenda item during Communications – opportunity for public comment on agenda items.
- The board president will open the item for discussion so that board members may exchange thoughts or ask the superintendent and staff for further clarification if necessary.
- The board president will call for a vote saying "All in favor please respond by saying aye." "Any opposed please respond by saying no."
- The board president will announce the results of the vote and clarify Board direction for the Superintendent and the record keeper.

Amended Motions and Substitute Motions

Principle

- A "motion" is a formal proposal put before the board by a member of the board.
- Any motion can be amended before board consideration.
- There can be multiple motions on the floor at the same time.

Protocol

- A recommendation to amend a motion can be made by any member of the board.
- When a board member recommends amending a motion on the floor, if the maker and the person who seconded the motion accept the amendment, that now becomes the pending motion on the floor.
- If a recommended amendment is not accepted by the maker of the motion and person who seconded it, the person proposing the amendment must make a "substitute" motion and it must be seconded before the board can consider it. A substitute motion is a second motion separate from the first motion.
- When multiple motions exist simultaneously, the board should first consider the last motion made that is seconded. If this motion passes the action is final for this topic and the previous motion(s) becomes moot. If the motion fails, the motion made prior to the failed motion then becomes the pending motion for consideration by the board. The first motion made is the last to be considered.
- Substitute motions shall be limited to three to avoid confusion and unwieldy conversations.

Board Meeting Agenda Consent Calendar

Principle

- A consent calendar allows the board to approve items together without discussion or individual motions.
- Consent calendars help streamline meetings by allowing procedural decisions that are likely to be noncontroversial to be made through a single motion.

Protocol

- Board members can request an item be pulled from the consent calendar for individual consideration.
- Typical reasons to remove an item from the consent calendar are to discuss the item, to query the item, or to register a vote against the item.
- Ideally requests to remove an item from the consent calendar and the reason for the request should be made during approval of the agenda. Items may also be removed when the consent calendar is considered by the board.
- Consent items should include, but are not limited to, approval of minutes, field trips, conference requests, inter-district transfers, volunteers, personnel, etc.
- An agenda item "Items removed From the Consent Calendar" will follow the consent calendar on the agenda to facilitate consideration of removed items.

Newly Elected Board Member Resources

Principle

- Newly elected members to the Board of Trustees will likely be unfamiliar with state open meeting laws, meeting procedural policies, board bylaws, the district budget, goals, and other district related issues.
- The governance team wants to provide all the tools necessary to help new board members reach their potential to be a productive and effective member to the team.
- Having resources related to board meeting procedure and pertinent district. information will help prepare new board members for their first board meeting and facilitate integration into the governance team.

Protocol

Newly elected board members will receive the following resources upon election and prior to their first board meeting:

- Brown Act Handbook, JDUSD Governance Handbook and Governance Calendar, Annual Board Meeting Calendar, Board Bylaws/Policies, and CSBA Professional Governance Standards.
- Strategic/Long Range Plan and District Budget
- An invitation to the next Board meeting and the agenda.
- A recording of a previous meeting(s).

The governance team will schedule a workshop/conversation meeting at the first board meeting held with newly elected board member(s).

Establishing Multi - Year Goals

Principle

- Establishing district multi-year and annual goals is critical to a forward thinking, proactive board that is committed to continuous learning.
- Important to the work of the board is the ability to track progress over multiple years.
- Critical to governance work is data driven decision-making that promotes clarity of direction, focus and alignment. Setting goals ensures that the work of the district is focused.

Protocol

- The annual goal setting process is linked to the district mission and the superintendent evaluation and will follow an established calendar.
- Include reviewing the past year's accomplishments and status of goals,
- And setting annual goals based on the District Strategic Plan and establish a schedule of progress reports.

Confidentiality

Principle

- The governing board recognizes the importance of maintaining the confidentiality of information acquired as part of a board member's official duties.

Protocol

- The responsibility of the board includes being privy to closed sessions or confidential information about district litigation, personnel, negotiations, superintendent evaluation, or other issues permitted under the Brown Act.
- We will work to maintain the public's trust by not breaching confidentiality.
- If we inadvertently or accidentally violate a confidential issue, we will take immediate responsibility for our action.
- Confidential items will be reserved for full board discussion.

Designated Spokesperson

Principle

- It is essential that important and accurate information be communicated to members of the board, the staff, and the community in as timely a fashion as possible.
- The governance team recognizes that some situations have legal or other considerations that may place restrictions on what may be told to the media or public.

Protocol

The governance team commits to speaking with one voice. The designated spokesperson will vary depending on the issue or situation:

- **Crisis/Disaster:** The superintendent is the primary spokesperson and may involve the board president at his/her discretion.
- **Meeting Information** (e.g., board meetings, agenda items, study sessions): The board president and the superintendent will serve as primary spokespersons or may choose a designee.
- **Core Values /Vision / District Priorities / General District Information:** All governance team members may serve as spokespersons utilizing developed and agreed upon key messages.

For requests via email:

- If the request is sent to the superintendent, she will copy the answer to all trustees.
- If the e-mail is sent to some or all trustees, trustees will refer the request to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will respond and inform the Board, as appropriate.

For requests from the media:

- A trustee shall direct the request from the media to the Board President or the Superintendent, as appropriate, and inform the Board President and/or Superintendent about the request – giving them a "heads-up."
- The Board Vice President will perform the role of the Board President if the Board President is unavailable for an extended period.

Responding to Staff or Community Concerns or Complaints

Principle

We care about our constituents' concerns and want to hear them, but we recognize that individual Board Members do not have the authority to resolve issues and complaints, as stated in BB 9200, *Limits of Board Member Authority.*

Protocol

Therefore, when a Board Member is approached by a community or staff member with an issue or concern, he/she will:

- **Receive** – Listen without interruption and without preparing a response to the person's issues or concerns, unless it is an issue that may come before us in **our judicial role** - that information will be shared with the entire Board at the appropriate place and time - during the hearing.
- **Repeat** – If it is appropriate for us to listen to the concern, we will paraphrase or ask a clarifying question to ensure understanding of what has been said.
- **Request** – Ask what the person sees as the solution to the problem or concern. Ask what they would have us do with the information they have given us.
- **Review** – The conversation (and next steps, if any).
- **Redirect** – Put the person back into the system at the appropriate place and/or refer the complainant to the district complaint process.
- **Report** - Notify the Superintendent of the conversation so that she has the full picture and can follow through as appropriate and/or necessary.

Email: When a Board Member receives a complaint via email, the Board Member will thank the sender and inform him/her that they are sending the email to the Superintendent so that she can address the issue appropriately.

Social Media: Board Members will refrain from commenting or reacting to social media posts regarding District issues.

Board Governance Self-Assessment

Principle

- Conducting a governance self-evaluation demonstrates accountability to the community and the willingness of the governance team to strengthen and improve.

Protocol

- The board supports continuous improvement through ongoing evaluation of governance effectiveness.
- The governance self-assessment provides an opportunity to reflect, evaluate, prioritize and focus on strengthening the governance team.
- The board will participate in at least one workshop annually to review the governance goals, governance team agreements and processes and to participate in a self-evaluation process.
- The assessment process will align with assessment of progress on district goals and the superintendent evaluation.
- At the conclusion of the annual governance self-assessment, the board will reach agreement on one to two governance goals/objectives that are directly linked to the district goals.

Visiting Schools and Attending School Events

Principle

- The board wants to be informed about instructional practices, and the needs of the students and staff with regard to school programs.
- The board respects the busy schedule of staff and the anxiety that can be created by well-meaning, but unannounced visits to schools.

Protocol

- As a professional courtesy, trustees will schedule school visits.
- The superintendent and/or principal will accompany trustees on classroom visits.
- Trustees requesting a meeting with school staff or administration will schedule this meeting through the superintendent.
- The superintendent will ensure that staff is aware of the process and protocols for trustees visiting the classrooms.
- Board members are encouraged to visit schools and attend school events.

Collective Bargaining

Principle

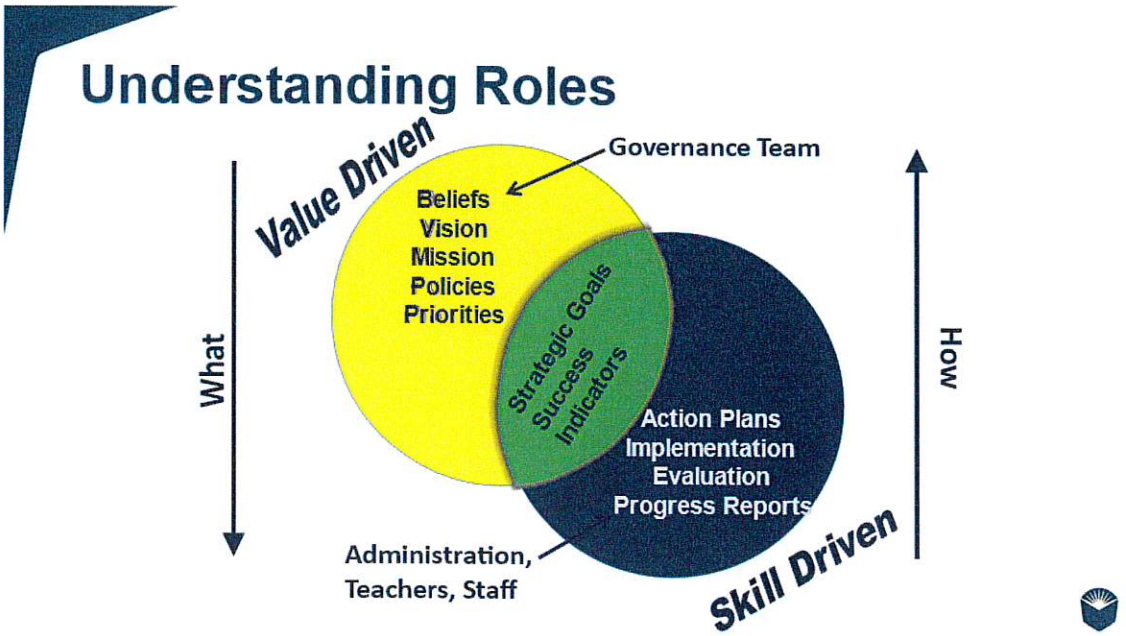
Board members' involvement in the collective bargaining process ensures that the District is represented well by those selected to negotiate on behalf of the Board and the community, while also ensuring that the ethical, fiscal, and educational goals of the JDUSD community are represented in the actions taken throughout the collective bargaining process.

Protocol

To achieve this, board members should:

- Participate by providing direction and guidance to those selected to represent the Board (District Negotiating Team). Board members will not participate in the individual negotiation sessions, either directly (at the table) or indirectly (observing the District's negotiation team).
- Create the most positive environment possible to support the negotiation process; (e.g., Superintendent will endeavor to hold regular employee/employer relations meetings with each union's lead Negotiator and President). Superintendent and management team members shall endeavor to hold regular meetings to maintain consistent positive communication.
- Set the District's collective bargaining parameters for its negotiation team.
- Expect, as the representative of the Board, that the Superintendent will ensure that the Board, collectively and individually, is informed on the issues and strategies implemented within the collective bargaining process.
- Expect, as the representative of the Board, that the Superintendent will recommend, for approval of the Board, the Chief Negotiator, and the members of each of the District's negotiation teams.
- Encourage open communication to all those impacted by negotiations, within allowed parameters.
- Expect, while the negotiation process is taking place, that the Superintendent will be available to address the challenges related to the district. As the representative of the Board, the Superintendent will guide the development of the bargaining strategy and will be primarily responsible for facilitating the collective bargaining process.

UNDERSTANDING GOVERNANCE ROLES*



*Source: California School Board Association

We have reviewed and agree to follow the aforementioned governance team norms and protocols in order to support a positive and productive working relationship among the Jamul-Dulzura Union School District Board of Education, Superintendent, staff, students, and the community. We shall review and renew this document annually.

Affirmed on this 10th day of October, 2023.

Pete Reichert, Board President

Greg Wall, Vice President

Ariel Romero-Mendivil, Clerk

Dr. Wadad Dubbelday, Trustee

Dr. Don Sauter, Trustee

Liz Bystedt, Superintendent