

**SIMSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**BYLAWS**

**Adopted November 23, 2004**



## Table of Contents

<b>100 Series</b>	<b>ROLE OF THE BOARD AND MEMBERS (POWERS, PURPOSES, DUTIES)</b>	<b>1</b>
Bylaw 100.	Role of the Board	1
Bylaw 101.	Board Member Authority	2
Bylaw 102.	Board - Superintendent Relationship	2
Bylaw 103.	Board Participation in Associations	2
<b>200 Series</b>	<b>MEMBERS OF THE BOARD</b>	<b>4</b>
Bylaw 200.	Board Membership – Elections and Appointments	4
Bylaw 201.	Board Member Qualifications	4
Bylaw 202.	Board Nominees	4
Bylaw 203.	Board Member Oath of Office	5
Bylaw 204.	Board Member Resignation	5
Bylaw 205.	Vacancies	5
Bylaw 206.	Ethical Standards for Board Members	6
(a)	<i>Ethical Principles to be Observed by Board Members</i>	6
(b)	<i>Prohibited Acts by Board Members</i>	6
(c)	<i>Policy on Gifts</i>	7
Bylaw 207.	Board Member Conflict of Interest	7
Bylaw 208.	Board Member Conferences, Conventions and Workshops	8
Bylaw 209.	Board Member Compensation and Expenses	9
(a)	<i>Remuneration.</i>	9
(b)	<i>Reimbursement</i>	9
Bylaw 210.	Board Member Insurance; Liability	9
Bylaw 211.	Bonding of Officers	10
<b>300 Series</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION OF BOARD; APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS; COMMITTEES</b>	<b>11</b>
Bylaw 300.	Organization of the Board	11
(a)	<i>Organizational Meeting</i>	11
(b)	<i>Board Officers</i>	11
(c)	<i>Term and Duties</i>	11
(d)	<i>Removal</i>	11
(e)	<i>Vacancy</i>	11
Bylaw 301.	Board Officers	12
(a)	<i>Chairperson</i>	12
(b)	<i>Vice-Chairperson</i>	12
(c)	<i>Secretary</i>	12
Bylaw 302.	Appointed Board Officials	13
Bylaw 303.	Board Committees	13
(a)	<i>Standing Committees</i>	13
(b)	<i>Temporary Committees</i>	14
(c)	<i>General Provisions</i>	14
(d)	<i>Committee of the Whole</i>	14
Bylaw 304.	Designation of Standing Committees	15
(a)	<i>Policy Committee</i>	15
(b)	<i>Personnel, Negotiations and Evaluations Committee</i>	15

(c) Curriculum Committee _____	16
Bylaw 305. Advisory Committees _____	16
Bylaw 306. Board Representative _____	17
Bylaw 307. School Attorney and Legal Services _____	18
Bylaw 308. Consultants to the Board _____	18
(a) Engagement of Consultants _____	18
(b) Consulting Proposals _____	19
(c) Role of Consultants _____	19
<b>400 Series BOARD MEETINGS _____</b>	<b>20</b>
Bylaw 400. Board Meetings _____	20
Bylaw 401. Regular Board Meetings _____	20
(a) Scheduling Board Meetings _____	20
(b) Adjourning Board Meetings _____	21
(c) Canceling Board Meetings _____	21
Bylaw 402. Special Board Meetings _____	21
Bylaw 403. Executive Sessions; Open Meetings _____	22
Bylaw 404. Notification of Board Meetings _____	22
Bylaw 405. Agenda _____	23
(a) Construction of the Agenda _____	23
(b) Delivery of the Agenda and Supporting Information _____	23
(c) Posting of the Agenda _____	23
Bylaw 406. Quorum _____	24
Bylaw 407. Conduct of Meeting; Rules of Order _____	24
Bylaw 408. Voting Method _____	25
Bylaw 409. Minutes _____	25
Bylaw 410. Public Participation At Board Meetings _____	26
Bylaw 411. Broadcasting; Recording of Meetings _____	27
Bylaw 412. Participation in Meetings by Telephone _____	27
(a) Committee Meetings _____	27
(b) Board Meetings _____	28
Bylaw 413. Resource Material For Board Room _____	28
<b>500 Series DEVELOPMENT OF POLICIES AND BUDGET _____</b>	<b>29</b>
Bylaw 500. Board Policy Process _____	29
Bylaw 501. Policy Adoption _____	29
Bylaw 502. Bylaws _____	30
Bylaw 503. Board Review of Regulations _____	30
Bylaw 504. Suspension or Repeal of Policies and Bylaws _____	30
Bylaw 505. Control of Funds _____	30
Bylaw 506. Board Member Workshops _____	32
<b>600 Series COMMUNICATIONS WITH PRESS AND PUBLIC; BOARD RECORDS _____</b>	<b>33</b>
Bylaw 600. Communications with News Media _____	33
Bylaw 601. Policy Communication; Dissemination _____	33
(a) Dissemination of Policy Manuals _____	33
(b) Regulations Based on Policy Statements _____	34
Bylaw 602. Electronic Mail Communications _____	34
Bylaw 603. Board and School District Records _____	35
Bylaw 604. Board Hearings; Appeal Proceedings _____	36
Bylaw 605. Board Communications _____	36



## **100 Series    ROLE OF THE BOARD AND MEMBERS (POWERS, PURPOSES, DUTIES)**

### **Bylaw 100.    Role of the Board**

The Simsbury Board of Education is the governing body and policy-making body of the Simsbury School District. It derives its power and exists under the Constitution and General Statutes of the State of Connecticut and the procedures of the Connecticut State Board of Education, and the Charter of the Town of Simsbury.

In order to achieve its primary goal of providing each child with the necessary skills, commensurate with his or her ability, to become an effective citizen, the Board will exercise the full authority granted to it by the laws of the State. Its legal powers, duties and responsibilities are derived from statute and regulation. Sources such as the school code, Attorney General's opinions, and regulations of the State Board of Education delineate the legal powers, duties and responsibilities of the Board.

The Board hires the Superintendent who acts as its executive officer in the operation of the school. The Board authorizes the Superintendent to employ certified and non-certified personnel.

The Board adopts the budget annually, makes contracts, and regularly reviews the business affairs of the schools. The Board formulates policies concerning its own operation, the business affairs of the schools, personnel, curriculum and educational practices, maintenance of buildings and grounds. It reviews with the Superintendent and staff the implementation of its policies.

The Board is responsible for establishing educational goals which will guide both the Board and the staff in working together toward the continuing improvement of the educational program. It is responsible for providing for the ongoing evaluation of the school program against the goals and objectives set forth by the Board and by the State Board of Education.

The Board is responsible for providing adequate and direct means for keeping the local citizenry informed about the schools and for keeping itself and the school staff informed about the needs and wishes of the public.

*Legal Reference:    Connecticut General Statutes  
                          1-18a Definitions.  
                          10-186 Duties of local and regional boards of education.  
                          10-220 Duties of boards of education.  
                          10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rules.  
                          10-240 Control of schools.  
                          10-241 Powers of school districts.  
                          Charter of the Town of Simsbury*

*Date of Adoption:    November 23, 2004*

## **Bylaw 101. Board Member Authority**

The Board is the unit of authority for the Simsbury Public Schools. Apart from their function as part of the unit, Board members have no individual authority. Individually, a Board member may not commit the District to any policy, act or expenditure, except when such action is in pursuance of specific instructions of the Board which have been approved by a majority vote of the entire Board.

No individual member of the Board, by virtue of holding office, will exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools, nor as an individual command the services of any school employee. No member of the Board will be asked to perform any routine or clerical duties which may be assigned to an employee.

A Board member does not represent a factional segment of the community, but is rather a part of the body which represents and acts for the community as whole. A Board member will respect confidentiality as well as abide by the Freedom of Information Act when communicating with the public and the media.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

## **Bylaw 102. Board - Superintendent Relationship**

The Board believes that the establishment of policies is the proper function of the Board and that the execution of the policies, under the oversight of the Board, is the function of the Superintendent. This authority provides the Superintendent with flexibility to manage the school system according to the provisions of the Board's policies and decisions, and allows Board members to devote their time to policy-making and oversight functions.

The Board holds the Superintendent responsible for the administration of its policies and regulations, the execution of Board actions and decisions, and the operation of schools and will periodically evaluate the Superintendent's performance in these regards. The Superintendent will assist the Board by providing Board members with all requested information and analysis relevant to its decision-making, and otherwise keeping the Board fully informed about school system activities, operations, and concerns.

The Board will strive to procure, when a vacancy exists, the best professional leader available for the Superintendent's position.

The Superintendent may not perform, cause, or allow to be performed any act that is unlawful, in violation of commonly accepted business and professional ethics, in violation of any contracts into which the Board has entered, or in violation of policies and regulations adopted by the Board.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

## **Bylaw 103. Board Participation in Associations**

The Board may maintain memberships in the state and national school boards associations and take an active part in the activities of these groups. It may also

maintain institutional memberships in other educational organizations which the Board finds to be of benefit to members and District personnel. The materials and benefits of institutional membership will be distributed and used to the best advantage of the Board and the staff.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*



## **200 Series MEMBERS OF THE BOARD**

### **Bylaw 200. Board Membership – Elections and Appointments**

The Board consists of eight members, each of whom is elected, from within District boundaries, for a four-year term (except those members who have received interim appointments to unexpired terms) as required by Simsbury Town Charter and State law. Newly-elected members will take the oath of office on the first Monday in December following their election.

*Legal Reference: Simsbury Town Charter 101, 302*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

### **Bylaw 201. Board Member Qualifications**

A member of a Board must be an Elector of the Town of Simsbury. A variety of other public positions, elective and appointive, have been determined by the General Assembly or the courts to be incompatible with Board membership.

*Legal Reference: Simsbury Town Charter 202  
Connecticut General Statutes 9-1  
Connecticut General Statutes 9-210*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

### **Bylaw 202. Board Nominees**

Membership and service on a school board is considered to be one of the highest acts of citizenship. It offers qualified citizens an opportunity to promote the interests of education and thereby the welfare of the community.

The Board considers it important that a new member be knowledgeable about school governance and operations and prepared to discuss and cast informed votes on matters before the Board from the time he or she is sworn into office.

The Superintendent will assist in orienting nominees and newly elected Board members by providing information about school governance, Board operations and school programs, and otherwise preparing the nominee for Board service. This orientation may include the following elements:

1. meetings with the Superintendent and other school personnel and escorted tours of school facilities will be arranged upon request;
2. the individual will be invited to attend public meetings of the Board and all publicly-available information relating to the meeting will be made available;
3. the individual will be provided with published information on the duties and responsibilities of school boards and board members;
4. the individual will be provided with current policies and bylaws of the Board, District regulations, and publications of the school system; and

5. past copies of Board agendas, including minutes and other reports and bulletins of recent origin will be made available.

It is also recommended that nominees and newly-elected Board members attend one or more of the conferences for new board members sponsored by state educational associations.

Nominees should recognize that, until they are elected and take office, their official status is that of other members of the public and that they are not entitled to privileged information or to participate in Board proceedings other than as a member of the public.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

### **Bylaw 203. Board Member Oath of Office**

Each Board member elected in a regular election will qualify by taking the oath of office on the first Monday in December following the election\_ or before the time set for the organizational meeting of the Board under Bylaw 300. Each Board member appointed or elected at a special election will qualify within 10 days by taking the oath of office. The election or appointment and qualification will be entered by the Board Secretary. The oath may be administered by the Town Clerk in the manner and form prescribed by law.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

### **Bylaw 204. Board Member Resignation**

If a Board member's permanent residence ceases to be in the Simsbury School District, or the Board member otherwise ceases to be an Elector of the Town of Simsbury, the Board member will resign immediately. Resignations for this or any other reason will require a written statement of resignation by the Board member to the Town Clerk and to the Chairperson. Upon receipt of a Board member's written resignation for this or any other reason, the Board will consider the resignation request at the next regularly scheduled meeting coinciding with or next following the receipt of written resignation. The Board will then accept the resignation by formal action and declare the Board position *vacant* unless the resignation is withdrawn any time prior to the Board's action.

Vacancies may occur on the Board because of a member's resignation, death, his or her moving outside of the District, or other reasons provided by law.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

### **Bylaw 205. Vacancies**

Vacancies on the Board will be filled within 45 days by appointment of the Board of Selectmen for the unexpired portion of the term, or the next regular election, whichever first occurs.

*Legal Reference: Simsbury Town Charter 205  
Connecticut General Statutes 9-221  
Connecticut General Statutes 10-232*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

*Previous Bylaw: BL-111*

## **Bylaw 206. Ethical Standards for Board Members**

### **(a) Ethical Principles to be Observed by Board Members**

Public office is a trust created by the confidence which the public places in the integrity of its public officers. To preserve this confidence, it is the desire of the Board to operate under the highest ethical standards.

Members of the Simsbury Board will strive to improve public education and serve the Town of Simsbury. To that end they will:

1. render all decisions based on the available facts and independent judgment, and refuse to surrender that judgment to individuals or special interest groups;
2. strive to avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest, and refrain from using a Board position for personal or partisan gain; and
3. respect the confidentiality of information that is privileged under applicable law.

*Legal Reference: Simsbury Code of Ethics Ch. 13-5, 13-6, 13-8*

### **(b) Prohibited Acts by Board Members**

In carrying out his or her duties, a Board member will not:

1. disclose or use confidential information acquired in the course of his or her official duties to further his or her personal financial interests;
2. accept a gift of substantial value or substantial economic benefit tantamount to a gift of substantial value which would tend to improperly influence a reasonable person in his or her position or which he or she knows or should know is primarily for the purpose of rewarding him or her for official action taken;
3. engage in a substantial financial transaction for his or her private business purposes with a person whom he or she supervises in the course of official duties; or
4. perform an official act which directly and substantially confers an economic benefit on a business or other undertaking in which he or she has a substantial financial interest, or in which he or she is engaged as a counsel, consultant, representative, agent or public speaker.

*Legal Reference: Simsbury Code of Ethics Ch. 13-7, 13-8, 13-9, 13-11*

**(c) Policy on Gifts**

It is permissible for a Board member to receive:

1. an occasional non-pecuniary gift which is insignificant in value;
2. non-pecuniary award publicly presented by a nonprofit organization in recognition of public service;
3. payment or reimbursement for actual and necessary expenditures for travel and subsistence for attendance at a convention or other meeting at which he or she is scheduled to participate;
4. reimbursement for or acceptance of any opportunity to participate in a social function or meeting which is not extraordinary when viewed in light of his or her position; and
5. tickets to school-sponsored sporting, recreational, educational, or cultural events.

*Legal Reference: Simsbury Code of Ethics Ch. 13-7*

Date of Adoption: *November 23, 2004*

**(d) Code of Ethics**

The members of the Board of Education are subject to all elements of the Code of Ethics adopted by the Town of Simsbury.

*Legal Reference Simsbury Code of Ethics Ch. 13*

**Bylaw 207. Board Member Conflict of Interest**

The Board desires its members not only to adhere to all laws regarding conflict of interest, but to be alert to situations which have the appearance of a conflict of interest and to avoid actions that might embarrass themselves or the Board.

Two areas of Board operations must be guarded with particular care in order that there be no real or seeming conflict of interest. These are purchasing and hiring of personnel. Therefore:

1. No member of the Board will have any direct pecuniary interest in a contract with the District, nor furnish directly any labor, equipment, or supplies to the District. It is not the intent of this policy to prevent the District from contracting with corporations or businesses because a Board member is an employee of the firm. However, in such instances, the member may be expected to declare an association with the firm and refrain from debating or voting on the question; and

2. A Board member whose immediate family member is under consideration must refrain from advocating, debating or taking action upon the appointment or employment of any family member.

For the purpose of this Bylaw, the term "immediate family" will mean the following relatives of the Board member: father, mother, spouse or domestic partner, siblings, children, or the spouse or domestic partners of those individuals.

The closeness with which the Board works with other agencies of the Town may also give rise to situations in which the Board may be subject to charges of favoritism or involve itself in interagency disputes. Therefore:

1. The Board will not engage the services of persons in the paid employ of other Town agencies on a continuing basis, except for employees who are hired on a joint basis. However, police, fire, and part-time clerical personnel may be employed on a non-continuing basis when the employment of such persons is deemed to be in the best interest of the school system and the Town, as approved by the Board;

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

*Previous Bylaws: BL-116*

### **Bylaw 208. Board Member Conferences, Conventions and Workshops**

Attendance at meetings, conferences or conventions related to education or to school matters is encouraged for the value that they have to the school system and to the professional growth of Board members. The Chairperson and the Superintendent will notify the Board members of appropriate scheduled events. Included among such activities are conferences, workshops, local, state and national conventions, and District-sponsored meetings. Toward this end, the Chairperson may:

1. establish and periodically circulate among Board members a calendar of upcoming events;
2. decide which meetings are most promising and encourage Board members' attendance at them;
3. designate members who will represent the Board at such meetings;
4. subject to budgetary constraints, provide funds to cover expenses;
5. reimburse Board members for out-of-pocket expenses as may be permitted under these Bylaws; and
6. request Board members to report to the Board as a whole following their return to the District.

*Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 10-220; 10-221 (Powers and Duties of the Board), Sec. 10-157 (Appointment of Superintendent*

*of Schools), Sec. 9-185 (Municipal Officers - Boards of Education),  
Sec. 10-248 (Payment of School Expenses)*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

### **Bylaw 209. Board Member Compensation and Expenses**

#### **(a) Remuneration.**

Board members will receive no compensation for their services.

#### **(b) Reimbursement**

Board members authorized to attend educational conferences or meetings or to travel on Board business will be reimbursed, upon submitting vouchers and supporting documentation for reasonable expenditures, transportation costs to and from the destination, and registration fees. Board members must have approval in advance from the Chairperson. Other reasonable expenses which include, but are not limited to, telephone and publications, will be reimbursed up to \$25 per event without Board approval.

Receipts must be attached to the expense report and, in general, are required as follows:

1. Lodging - Lodging accommodations should provide normal comforts and services well located in relation to the area in which business is to be conducted.
2. Meals - Reasonable expenditures are allowed for meals. Expenses that are lavish or extravagant must not be incurred. Any expenses that might seem unreasonable should be carefully documented and explained. Receipts are required for individual meals costing \$10.00 or more. The Board will not reimburse members for the purchase of alcohol.
3. Taxi or Bus Fare - Receipts, when attainable, are required for bus, limousine or taxi fares of \$10.00 or more.
4. Parking Fees or Toll Charges - Receipts are required for parking fees or tolls of \$2.00 or more.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

### **Bylaw 210. Board Member Insurance; Liability**

Because they are members of an agency of government whose powers and duties can only be exercised by a decision of the majority of Board membership when the Board is officially in session, the members of the Board and its employees act as agents of the Board. None of these individuals should be placed in a position of personal liability for the performance of the responsibilities vested in them by the voters of the Town or assigned by this agency.

Therefore, in order to protect the individual members of the Board, its agents, and the educational interests of the Town, the Board may purchase, in the absence of governmental immunity, or in addition to governmental immunity, from public school funds adequate insurance to indemnify Board members and agents of the Board for their official actions in the service of the Town schools.

If a Board member is made a defendant in any legal proceeding resulting from the member's action in good faith in his or her official capacity as a member of the Board and compensatory or punitive damages are requested as a result thereof, the Board will fully protect and indemnify the member against any determination of judgment which may be rendered against him or her in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-235.

If a Board member is made a defendant in any legal proceeding pertaining to any act performed in good faith in his or her official capacity as a member of the Board, the Board will furnish legal counsel to represent and defend the member in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-235..

*Legal Reference:*

*Connecticut General Statutes*

*10-235 Indemnification of teacher, Board members and employees in damage suits; expenses of litigation*

*10-236 Liability insurance*

*10-236a Indemnification of educational personnel assaulted in the line of duty*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

**Bylaw 211. Bonding of Officers**

Members of the Board will be named individually and collectively as additional named insureds within all of the insurance policies with specific coverage provided under the Educators Legal Liability Policy (school leaders) maintained by the Town of Simsbury. Officers of the Board and the Superintendent may be bonded to the extent deemed appropriate by the Board.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

## **300 Series ORGANIZATION OF BOARD; APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS; COMMITTEES**

### **Bylaw 300. Organization of the Board**

#### **(a) Organizational Meeting**

A biennial organizational meeting of the Board will be held on the first regularly scheduled meeting following the date on which newly elected Board members take the oath of office under By-Law 200. The meeting will be called to order by the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson or the Secretary, in that order of priority, provided one of these officers is still a member of the Board. If none of the Board officers from the preceding year is presently a member of the Board, any Board member present may call the meeting to order. A temporary Chairperson will be chosen by a majority of those members present. The temporary Chairperson will preside until a successor is elected. The newly elected Chairperson will take office upon election and preside over the elections of the Vice-Chairperson and Secretary.

#### **(b) Board Officers**

The Board will elect a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and a Secretary who will be members of the Board. The Board may assign a District employee to provide clerical assistance to the Board. Officers will be elected by plurality vote of the members present and voting.

#### **(c) Term and Duties**

Board officers will serve for a term of two years and until a successor is elected, except in the case of removal or resignation. Officers may succeed themselves in office except that no one person shall hold the office of Chairperson for more than two successive terms. Each officer will perform any legal duties of the office and other duties, as required by the Board.

#### **(d) Removal**

Any officer of the Board, may be removed from office by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire membership of the Board.

#### **(e) Vacancy**

Any vacancy to a Board office, other than the Chairperson, will be filled by a majority vote of those members present at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting following or coinciding with the declaration of vacancy. A vacancy to the Chairperson's position will be temporarily filled by the Vice-Chairperson for a period not to exceed six weeks. In the event that the temporary Chairperson is voted to the position on a permanent basis, an election for a new Vice-Chairperson will occur within six weeks from the date of appointment. The newly-elected officers will take office upon election.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*



*Previous Bylaw: BL-101, BL-201, BL-205*

## **Bylaw 301. Board Officers**

### **(a) Chairperson**

The Chairperson will serve as spokesperson for the Board and represent the policies and decisions of the Board in a responsible manner. In addition, the Chairperson will:

1. preside at all meetings of the Board;
2. have a vote on all motions placed before the Board for action;
3. sign such documents on behalf of the Board that require his or her signature as authorized expressly or implicitly by prior Board action;
4. represent the Board in deliberations with other boards, districts, or agencies unless another member of the Board is so designated;
5. call special meetings of the Board that he or she may deem necessary as well as those requested in writing by three members of the Board;
6. select a member to keep minutes of any executive session should the Secretary be unable to do so;
7. serve as ex-officio member of all committees of the Board, permanent and temporary;
8. appoint temporary officers, should an officer be removed or retire from office, for a period of time not to exceed six weeks;
9. appoint Board members to administrative committees and committees of other agencies;
10. communicate with the Superintendent on the formulation of agendas for Board meetings; and
11. appoint membership to temporary committees and to standing committees as established by the Board.

### **(b) Vice-Chairperson**

The Vice-Chairperson will have all the powers and duties of the Chairperson in his or her absence or during his or her disability and such other powers and duties as the Board may from time to time determine.

### **(c) Secretary**

The Secretary, with the assistance of the Superintendent as requested, will:

1. sign all other documents that require his or her signature as authorized expressly or implicitly by prior Board action;

2. be responsible for maintaining minutes of all Board meetings, in accordance with the bylaws;
3. preside over Board meetings as Acting Chairperson when both the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are absent, and in that capacity perform all the duties of the Chairperson;
4. be responsible for sending out notices of Board meetings and for presenting information relative to the Board's section of the annual town report;
5. serve as parliamentarian for the Board, in the absence of another appointment; and
6. perform such other duties as may be required by the Board or statute.

*Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 10-218, 10,224, 10-243 and 1-200 et seq.*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

*Previous Bylaw: BL-202, BL-203, BL-204*

### **Bylaw 302. Appointed Board Officials**

The Board will not appoint a Clerk of the Board. The Superintendent will be responsible for designating staff sufficient to keep a record of all public meetings of the Board, subject to the oversight of the Board Secretary.

*Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes 10-224, 10-232*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

### **Bylaw 303. Board Committees**

#### **(a) Standing Committees**

The Board may from time to time establish one or more standing committees. Temporary and liaison assignments are not considered to be standing committees.

The Chairperson will designate standing committee members, subject to Board action. Therefore, any member of the Board who is interested in serving on a particular standing committee should notify the Chairperson concerning his or her interest.

The following rules will apply specifically to standing committees:

1. Standing committee chairpersons and members on standing committees will serve for the same term as the Chairperson; and
2. No board member may chair more than one standing committee.

## **(b) Temporary Committees**

The Chairperson may establish a temporary committee at any regular meeting of the Board. The committee purpose, membership, and term will be determined at the time of creation. A temporary committee will be considered dissolved when its final report has been accepted by the Board.

## **(c) General Provisions**

The following general provisions govern the appointment and functions of standing and temporary committees:

1. A temporary committee may be established or dissolved at any regular Board meeting through action of the Board. A standing committee may be established or dissolved by amendment to the Board's bylaws.
2. The committee members will be appointed and may be removed by the Chairperson.
3. The Chairperson will be an *ex-officio* member of all Board committees.
4. The Chairperson will select a committee chairperson from among the members of a committee, subject to action by the Board.
5. Advisory members, community, staff, or student representatives may be appointed by the Board to serve as advisory members to a Board committee for a specific length of time or purpose.
6. The status of *ex-officio* members and advisory members of Board committees will be as follows:
  - a. These members may not be included in considering whether a quorum of the committee is present.
  - b. These members may not vote on recommendations to be made by the committee to the Board.
  - c. *Ex-officio* or advisory members may present in writing a minority report to the Board whenever they disagree with recommendations made by the committee to the Board.
7. Board committees have no authority independent of the entire Board.
8. All reports of Board committees will be made directly to the Board.
9. By majority vote, the Board may modify the membership or change the designation of chairman of any standing or temporary committee.

## **(d) Committee of the Whole**

The Board will act as a committee of the whole in final consideration of all matters.

*Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes 1-18a Definition, 1-21 Meetings of Government Agencies to be Public*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

### **Bylaw 304. Designation of Standing Committees**

The Board will have five standing committees as follows: Policy, Personnel and Negotiations, Curriculum, Communications and Wellness. The general charge and specific duties of each of these standing committees will be as follows:

#### **(a) Policy Committee**

##### ***General Charge:***

To develop policy upon the recommendation of the Board. To revise existing policy and eliminate, revise and /or develop new policies, as necessary.

##### ***Specific Duties:***

1. Formulate policies to be presented to entire Board for action.
2. Suggest amendments or revisions to existing policies;
3. Serve as a resource to provide policy reference to other board members;
4. Conduct annual reviews of policies;
5. Review legislative updates to ensure District policy compliance;
6. Review bylaws on an annual basis; and
7. Plan for periodic Board workshops.

#### **(b) Personnel and Negotiations Committee**

##### ***General Charge:***

To oversee all contracts and negotiations and plan for future negotiations. To review and recommend to the Board salaries for non-bargaining group employees.

##### ***Specific Duties:***

1. Negotiate contracts with administration, professional staff and non-certified personnel; and
2. Oversee the District's personnel development programs, including staff evaluation and development

**(c) Curriculum Committee**

***General Charge:***

To review and consider recommending for approval new courses and/or major revisions to courses and programs; to review recommendations and monitor the implementation of recommendations presented by the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning resulting from annual curriculum and program evaluation reports; to follow up curriculum-related policy issues as identified by the Board of Education;

***Specific Duties:***

1. Oversee curriculum and quality of school life issues within the schools
2. to review the annual curriculum budget as presented by the Assistant Superintendent.

**(d) Communications Committee**

***General Charge:***

To oversee district-wide communication plan. To review, recommend and provide input on enhancing district level communications.

***Specific Duties:***

**(e) Wellness Committee**

***General Charge:***

Monitor and guide implementation of district's Wellness Policy.

***Specific Duties:***

*Previous Bylaw: BL-112*

*Revised: September 24, 2013*

**Bylaw 305. Advisory Committees**

The establishment and functioning of citizens advisory committees will be subject to the following requirements:

1. The Board will create the committee and issue its assignment. This will be fully outlined to the committee when it is appointed.
2. All committees will be temporary. They will be created to serve only during the fiscal year of appointment or until completion of their assignment, whichever is shorter. Continuing the committee for all or part of the subsequent fiscal year is at the discretion of the Board.
3. Committee members will be appointed and vacancies filled by the Board Chairperson. Persons appointed will be residents of Simsbury who are able to give the effort, time, and talents needed for the committee's assignment. At the discretion of the Board, one of its members may be appointed to serve the committee in an advisory capacity.
4. The Board Chairperson may appoint the committee chairperson, or may appoint a committee member to serve as chairperson until the committee selects a chairperson from its membership. The committee will appoint a member as secretary.
5. Meetings will be announced to all committee members and Board members through the office of the Superintendent, and such meetings shall be posted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act. Members of the Board, and the Superintendent or a designee, and members of the public may attend committee meetings except for executive session discussion, if any, as authorized by statute.
6. Minutes of meetings will be promptly distributed to members, Board members, and the Superintendent and shall conform to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act.
7. Joint meetings of the Board and the committee may be held at the request of the Board.
8. To ensure smooth and orderly procedures, the chairperson of the committee will maintain liaison with the Board through the Superintendent's office.
9. At the conclusion of its assignment, the committee will submit a written report to the Board. At this time a joint meeting may be called to discuss the report and the committee's recommendations.
10. Through the public records of the Board and other appropriate means, the public will be informed on the organization, purpose, and membership of citizens committees and of each committee's final recommendations.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

### **Bylaw 306. Board Representative**

The Chairperson shall appoint Board members as representatives, liaisons or alternates to organizations, such as the following:

Board of Finance  
Insurance Committee  
Information & Technology  
CREC  
University of Hartford Magnet School  
Education Enhancement Foundation  
Board of Selectmen

Additional appointments as required shall be made by the Chairperson.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

*Previous Bylaw: BL-113*

### **Bylaw 307. School Attorney and Legal Services**

The Board may appoint, either on a full-time or retainer basis, one or more attorneys to serve as School District Attorney. The primary function of the School District Attorney is to provide professional legal representation for the Board and the Superintendent in questions related to their official duties.

The School District Attorney will:

1. represent the Board in legal proceedings;
2. provide legal advice or give an opinion on legal questions referred by the Board, acting through its Chairperson or otherwise as a whole, or the Superintendent or his/her authorized delegate; and
3. attend Board meetings, conferences, and other meetings as requested by the Board or Superintendent.

The performance of the School District Attorney will be subject to evaluation on a continuing basis by the Board and the Superintendent.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

### **Bylaw 308. Consultants to the Board**

#### **(a) Engagement of Consultants**

The Board will from time to time engage the services of qualified professional consultants to provide special services which present staff is unable to provide. The kinds of assistance sought from consultants may include, but will not necessarily be limited to the following:

1. Conducting fact-finding studies, surveys, and research;
2. Providing counsel or services requiring special expertise; and
3. Assisting the Board in developing policy and program recommendations.

**(b) Consulting Proposals**

Before engaging a consultant, the Board will require submission of a written proposal which could be incorporated into a contract or purchase order. Proposals will detail:

1. The specific objectives to be accomplished by the consultant;
2. The specific tasks to be performed;
3. The procedures to be used in carrying out the tasks;
4. The target dates for completion of tasks;
5. The method to be used to report results to the Board and to deliver any work product to the Board; and
6. Anticipated costs.

**(c) Role of Consultants**

Consultants who serve the District will exercise no authority over the work of the employees of the District, but will act only as advisor in the field in which they are qualified to offer assistance.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*



## **400 Series BOARD MEETINGS**

### **Bylaw 400. Board Meetings**

All actions of the Board will be taken only in official Board meetings called, scheduled, and conducted in accordance with the Bylaws of the Board and the Connecticut General Statutes. Except as otherwise provided by the Connecticut General Statutes, meetings of the Board will be conducted in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*, in a manner consistent with these Bylaws.

In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson will preside over the meeting. In the absence of both of these officers, the Secretary will preside over the meeting. In the absence of all officers, the Board will choose a Chairperson *pro tempore* for the purpose of conducting a meeting.

All Board meetings will commence at the stated time and will be guided by an agenda which has been prepared and delivered in advance to all Board members as designated by these Bylaws.

When a question is submitted to vote, every member present will vote upon it or abstain from voting. If a member has a conflict of interest in the issue, he or she will identify the conflict of interest and abstain from voting.

Due to the Freedom of Information Act, due process and appropriately designated channels of communication in the school system, charges or complaints against employees of the District may be referred where appropriate to executive session.

Should the meeting be interrupted by the conduct of anyone in attendance to the extent that the business of the meeting cannot be conducted in an orderly manner, such person may be asked by the Chairperson or presiding officer to leave the room in which the meeting is taking place.

*Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 1-200 et seq.*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

*Previous Bylaws: BL-206, BI-207*

### **Bylaw 401. Regular Board Meetings**

#### **(a) Scheduling Board Meetings**

Regular meetings of the Board will be held the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at a consistent time to be determined by the members of the Board. A schedule of meetings will be made at a regular meeting of the Board. A calendar of such regularly scheduled meetings will be made known to the Town Clerk of Simsbury by the Superintendent no later than January 21 of each calendar year and **[[at least 30 days]]** prior to the first regularly scheduled meeting of the calendar year. Any change in the location, date or time of a regular meeting, due to a legal holiday or some other

circumstance, will be determined at a public meeting of the Board. Where reasonably possible. Every effort will be made to give notice of such change to the Town Clerk and the public no less than 48 hours prior to the revised meeting. If a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board would otherwise fall on the November Election Day or other legal holiday, the meeting will be rescheduled to such other date as determined by the Board.

**(b) Adjourning Board Meetings**

A regular meeting of the Board may be adjourned in the absence of a quorum or due to incomplete business. A majority vote of those members present is required when a meeting is adjourned due to incomplete business. Within 24 hours of the adjournment, notice must be given to all Board members, the office of the Town Clerk, and clearly posted at the meeting site. Such notice will include the site and time for the rescheduled adjourned meeting. If the hour for the rescheduled adjourned meeting is not stated, it will be held at the hour specified for regular meetings.

**(c) Canceling Board Meetings**

A regular meeting of the Board may be canceled by agreement of the majority of the entire Board and notice given to the Town Clerk at least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting. Emergency cancellation of a regular or special Board meeting may be made by the Chairperson or the Superintendent when such a condition exists. Board members will be notified as soon as possible and public notice given by local radio stations or cable channel or other appropriate means.

*Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes 10-218 (Offices Meeting); 1-21 (Meetings of Public Agencies)*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

**Bylaw 402. Special Board Meetings**

Special meetings of the Board will be called by the Chairperson when he or she deems it necessary or upon the written request of three or more of the members of the Board. No business will be transacted at any special meeting which does not come within the purpose set forth in the call for the meeting unless all members are present.

Notice of the time and location of each special meeting will be given to the Office of the Town Clerk not less than 24 hours prior to the time of such meeting. Notice of any special meeting will be given to all Board members and to the public through posting not less than 24 hours prior to the time of such meeting.

In the case of an emergency, a special meeting may be held without complying with the requirement set forth above regarding notification to the Office of the Town Clerk. However, a copy of the minutes of such emergency meeting which adequately sets forth the nature of the emergency and the proceedings which occurred at the meeting will be filed with the Office of the Town Clerk not later than 72 hours following the meeting. No business will be considered at emergency meetings other than that for which the meeting is called.

*Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 1-200 et seq.*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

*Previous Bylaw: BL-102, BL-103, BL-104*

### **Bylaw 403. Executive Sessions; Open Meetings**

All meetings will be open to the public except for executive sessions which will be closed as allowed by law.

Executive sessions of the Board may be held upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting, taken at a public meeting and stating the reasons for the executive session. Executive sessions may be held for the following reasons:

1. Discussion concerning appointment, employment, evaluation, performance, health or dismissal of a public officer or employee, unless the individual has exercised his or her right to request that such discussion be held at a public meeting;
2. Strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims and litigation;
3. Matters concerning security;
4. Discussion of site selection or lease, sale or purchase of real estate where publicity may cause an increased price; or
5. Discussion of any matter which would result in the disclosure of exempt records or information contained therein as described in the Connecticut General Statutes, Section 1-200 et seq.

Attendance at executive session will be limited to members of the Simsbury Board, the Superintendent and other persons invited by the Board to present information pertinent to matters before the Board.

The Board will maintain minutes of the executive session. The minutes will indicate all persons who are in attendance, except job applicants who attend for the purpose of interview by the Board.

*Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes Sec., 1-200 et seq.*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

### **Bylaw 404. Notification of Board Meetings**

The Board must file a schedule of all regular meetings with the town clerk no later than January 31st of each year, and no such meeting may be held less than 30 days after the schedule is filed. In order to ensure timely compliance, the Superintendent will present to the Board before December 1st a calendar of proposed regular meetings which, when approved, will be transmitted to the town clerk.

Notification of special meetings must be given by posting a notice of time, place, and purpose of the meeting in the town clerk's office at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Where practical, the Board must give notice by mail of each regular and special meeting to any person who has filed a written request for such notice. The Board may make a reasonable charge for this service. State law requires that notices of special meetings be delivered to the home of each member of the Board, but this requirement may be waived by individual members as permitted by law.

Wherever possible the Board will announce in advance through the media the date, time, place, and agenda for all regular, special, and rescheduled meetings the Secretary will supervise this notification.

*Legal Reference: Connecticut State Statutes Sec. 1-200 et seq.*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

## **Bylaw 405. Agenda**

### **(a) Construction of the Agenda**

To expedite Board business and to provide a framework for its orderly conduct, the Superintendent, under the direction of the Chairperson, will prepare an agenda outlining the matters to be brought to Board attention at meetings. Any Board member wishing to request an item be placed on the agenda of a regular meeting may do so by contacting the Superintendent or Chairperson prior to the meeting for which the agenda applies and sufficiently in advance of the agenda mailing. If the Chairperson decides not to include a matter on the agenda, upon the written request of at least three Board members, the item shall be included on the agenda of the next meeting following timely receipt of such request.

The Board will follow the order of business set up by the agenda unless the order is altered or new items are added by vote of the Board during the meeting. Only by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire Board present at a regular meeting can the Board add, or take action on, a matter which did not appear on the printed agenda.

### **(b) Delivery of the Agenda and Supporting Information**

The Superintendent is responsible for the delivery of the agenda, with all necessary supporting information, to all Board members. Board members will have the agenda and supporting information at least 48 hours prior to each regular meeting and 24 hours prior to each special meeting unless exceptional circumstances make this impractical. In the case of a special meeting, a verbal communication of the proposed agenda and purpose may be appropriate. This requirement of agenda delivery is not applicable to emergency meetings.

### **(c) Posting of the Agenda**

The agenda of all regular meetings of the Board will be available to the public and will be on file, not less than 24 hours before the meeting to which it refers, in the Central Office of the Board.

*Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes 1-200 et seq. Meetings of Government Agencies to be Public*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

*Previous Bylaw: BL-110*

### **Bylaw 406. Quorum**

A majority of all the members of the Board serving will constitute a quorum; that is, if there are no vacancies on the Board five of the eight members constitutes a quorum. In the absence of a quorum, the Chairperson or the presiding officer will cancel or adjourn a meeting.

*Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-200 et seq.*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

*Previous Bylaw: BL-108*

### **Bylaw 407. Conduct of Meeting; Rules of Order**

The Board will follow *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*, latest edition, except that the Chairperson shall participate in the meeting with the same rights and privileges as any other member of the Board, and those rules will be deemed modified as otherwise provided in these Bylaws.

The parliamentarian will be the Board Chair who will be well versed in *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*, and these Bylaws and able to advise the Board to resolve any questions related to the rules of order that arise during a public meeting. In the absence of the Board Chair, the Vice-Chairperson or Secretary, in that order, will act as parliamentarian.

In adopting and construing the rules governing its conduct, the Board will, to the extent practical, give effect to the following principles:

1. to establish guidelines by which the business of the Board can be conducted in a regular and internally consistent manner;
2. to organize the meetings so that all necessary matters can be brought to the Board and that decisions of the Board can be made in an orderly and reasonable manner;
3. to insure that members of the Board, concentrating on the substantive issues at hand, have the necessary information to make decisions, and to insure adequate discussion of decisions to be made; and
4. to insure that meetings and actions of the Board are conducted so as to be informative to the staff and the public, and to produce a clear record of actions taken and decisions made.

In accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*, the Board may suspend rules of order by a two-thirds vote of members at the meeting.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

*Previous Bylaw: BL-107*

### **Bylaw 408. Voting Method**

The *ayes*, *nays* and *abstentions* upon votes taken will be entered on the record on all questions called by the Chairperson. Any member may request that his or her vote be changed if such request is made prior to consideration of the next order of business. Motions or resolutions will be recorded as having passed or failed and the votes of each Board member will be clearly identified.

The affirmative vote of a majority of those members present and voting at any meeting having a quorum will be considered sufficient for action except for those actions required otherwise by law or these Bylaws. In addition, the following actions will require an affirmative vote of a majority of the entire Board then serving:

1. approval of negotiated personnel contracts;
2. approval of the annual budget and special appropriations;
3. approval of long-term leases, purchase agreements or other contracts;
4. approval of the high school course of studies;
5. approval of the annual school calendar; and
6. approval of transfer of appropriation (line item transfers).
7. Election of a Superintendent

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

### **Bylaw 409. Minutes**

The Secretary of the Board will be responsible for complete and accurate minutes of all meetings of the Board. Copies of the proceeding will be made for distribution to the board members where practical with the agenda for the next regular meeting. The official minutes of the Board meetings will be kept in the office of the Superintendent. The votes of each Board member upon any issue will be made available to the public in writing within 48 hours of the meeting and also recorded in the minutes of the session as which they were taken. Minutes will be made available to the public for inspection within seven days after each meeting, except as required by the law regarding emergency meetings.

The minutes of the Board will include:

1. the date, place and type of meeting (regular, special, adjourned, emergency);
2. members present by name;
3. notation of other school staff present, including the Superintendent;
4. call to order, identification of the person presiding including his or her office and the opening ceremony;

5. late arrival and early departure of members by name;
6. approval or amended approval of the minutes of preceding meetings;
7. a recorded summary of public comments made at the meeting;
8. recorded summary of all business identified in the agenda as well as any item appropriately placed on the agenda in accordance with the state law and these bylaws;
9. the exact wording of each motion, the names of the individuals making and seconding, and the disposition including the vote of each Board member present; and
10. the time of adjournment.

The minutes will be permanently filed and indexed for the purpose of reference. All reports requiring Board action, resolutions, agreements, and other written documents may be made a part of the minutes by reference, and if so, will be placed in the District office as a permanent record.

*Legal Reference:* Connecticut General Statutes - Sec. 1-19, 1-200 et seq.

*Date of Adoption:* November 23, 2004

*Previous Bylaws:* BL-115

#### **Bylaw 410. Public Participation At Board Meetings**

All regular and special meetings of the Board will be open to the public. Because the Board desires to hear the viewpoints of citizens throughout the District, it will schedule one or more periods during each meeting for public participation. Members of the public may address the Board on any item not on the meeting's agenda during the public comment portion. Comments and questions at a regular meeting may deal with any topic related to the Board's conduct of the schools. Comments at special meetings must be related to the call of the meeting.

No violent behavior, harassment or unruly conduct will be permitted and will be grounds for summary termination by the Chairperson of the individual's privilege to address the Board. The Chairperson also reserves the right to adjourn the meeting to a later time or date if the improper conduct persists. The Chairperson may direct any public comments to the appropriate place on the agenda. The Chairperson may set a time limit on the length of this period and a time limit for individual speakers.

The Chairperson will be responsible for recognizing all speakers. To maintain proper order and to adhere to any set time limits, all speakers must properly identify themselves and must direct all questions and remarks to the Board. Questions asked by the public may, in the discretion of the Chairperson, be answered immediately by the Chairperson, referred by the Chairperson to staff members or others present for appropriate reply, or referred by the Chairperson to the Superintendent for consideration and later response.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

*Previous Bylaw: BL-114*

### **Bylaw 411. Broadcasting; Recording of Meetings**

Photographic and electronic audio and video broadcasting and recording devices may be used at regular and special Board meetings legally open to the public according to the following guidelines:

1. The Board encourages the televising of regular and special meetings otherwise open to the public to meet the needs of the community and to better educate citizens about the schools and will act to facilitate the televising, whenever practical, of those meetings by Simsbury Community Television and other broadcast media.
2. Photographs, broadcasting, and recordings of meetings are permitted only when all parties involved are aware that cameras, broadcasting, and recording devices are being used.
3. Persons operating cameras, broadcasting, or recording devices must do so with a minimum of disruption to those present at the meeting. Specifically, the view between Board members and the audience must not be obstructed, interviews must not be conducted during the meeting, and no commentary is to be given in a manner that distracts Board members or the audience.
4. Video and audio recordings are not to be considered part of the minutes of any meeting.
5. If, in the judgment of the Chairperson, presence at a Board meeting of any photograph or recording process causes such a disruption that the orderly conduct of public business at the meeting becomes infeasible, the Chairperson can direct that such photograph or recording process terminate.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

*Previous Bylaw: BL-105*

### **Bylaw 412. Participation in Meetings by Telephone**

#### **(a) Committee Meetings**

Any one or more members of any committee of the Board may participate in a meeting of such committee by means of a conference telephone or similar communications equipment allowing all persons participating in the meeting to hear each other at the same time. If the committee meeting is open to members of the public the communications equipment must allow members of the public to hear all proceedings and (if public audience is permitted) to be heard to members of the Board. Participation by such means by a member of the Board shall constitute presence in person at the committee meeting for all purposes, including determination of a quorum and voting.



The minutes of the committee meeting shall record the names of the Board members participating in person and by phone.

**(b) Board Meetings**

Participation by conference telephone or similar communications equipment is not permitted for meetings of the Board, other than committees as specified above. The Chairperson may permit members of the Board or (with respect to meetings open to members of the public) of the public to listen to Board meetings through such means. However, individuals listening through such means will not be considered present at the meeting or allowed to participate in the conduct of the meeting.

*Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes 10-220, 10-221*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

**Bylaw 413. Resource Material For Board Room**

In the interest of having current information more readily available for Board Meetings, the following material should be kept on hand in the Board Room:

1. *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*;
2. up-to-date Policy Book;
3. complete set of Minutes;
4. the general statutes pertaining to education;
5. any other material designated by the Board.

For purposes of records storage, study, meeting preparation, and other related needs, space will be reserved at the administration building for the use of Board members.

In addition to all official Board correspondence and reports being provided through the office of the Superintendent, clerical services will be made available to Board members upon request. Administrative assistance also will be available to Board members. All such services and assistance will be coordinated by the Superintendent.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

## **500 Series DEVELOPMENT OF POLICIES AND BUDGET**

### **Bylaw 500. Board Policy Process**

It is the intent of the Board to develop policies and put them in writing so that they may serve as guidelines for the discretionary action of those to whom it delegates authority and for the successful and efficient functioning of the public schools.

The Board considers policy development one of its chief responsibilities. Proposals regarding policies may originate with a member of the Board, the Superintendent, a staff member, a parent, student, consultant, civic group, or any resident of the District.

The policies of the Board are framed and meant to be interpreted in terms of state laws and regulations and other regulatory agencies within our State and Federal levels of government.

Changes in needs, conditions, purposes, and objectives will require revisions, deletions, and additions to the policies of the present and future Boards. The Board will welcome suggestions for ongoing policy development.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

*Previous Bylaws: BL-301*

### **Bylaw 501. Policy Adoption**

A careful and orderly process will be used in examining such proposals prior to action upon them by the Board. At the outset, formulation, revision or amendment of policies generally will be directed through the Policy Committee of the Board. That Committee will review the proposal, consider the recommendations of the Superintendent and the viewpoints of person and groups affected by the policy and then report the proposed action to the full Board.

Policies will be adopted, amended or repealed only by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Board then serving when such action has been scheduled on the agenda of a regular or special meeting.

To permit time for study of all new policies or amendments to policies and to provide an opportunity for interested parties to react, proposed policies or amendments will be presented as agenda items to the Board in the following sequence:

1. Information item: distribution with agenda (this may be an announcement that a policy is being developed in a particular area and that interested persons may submit suggestions.)
2. Discussion item: first reading of proposed policy or policies; response from Superintendent; report from the Policy Committee, or other Board or advisory committee assigned responsibility in the area; Board discussion and directions for any redrafting.
3. Action item: discussion, adoption or rejection.

Amendments to the policy at the action stage will not require repetition of the sequence, unless the Board so directs. In some cases, the Board may dispense with the above sequence to meet emergency conditions.

Policies will be effective immediately, unless a later date is set by the Board if it feels that affected persons need an opportunity to become familiar with the requirements of the new policy prior to its implementation.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

### **Bylaw 502. Bylaws**

Proposed new bylaws and suggested amendments to or revisions of existing bylaws may be adopted in accordance with the process outlined in Bylaw 501 for adoption of policies.

*Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes: 10-220 (Duties of boards of education), 10-221 (Duties of boards of education to prescribe rules, policies and procedures), 10-241 (Powers of school districts)*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

*Previous Bylaws: BL-302*

### **Bylaw 503. Board Review of Regulations**

The Board does not adopt administrative regulations unless specifically required to do so by law, or unless requested to do so by the Superintendent. Adoption and amendment of such Board-adopted regulations will be by the same procedure as that specified for adoption of policies in Bylaw 501.

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

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

### **Bylaw 504. Suspension or Repeal of Policies and Bylaws**

Policies, Bylaws and Board-adopted regulations will be subject to suspension for a specified purpose and limited time by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all members of the Board present and voting at a legally called Board meeting.

*Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes 10-220, 10-221*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

### **Bylaw 505. Control of Funds**

The Board will be responsible for preparing and presenting a budget annually to the Director of Finance, the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectmen, in accordance

with the Simsbury Town Charter. The Board of Finance will present a recommended budget to the electorate at the Annual Budget Meeting.

Upon appropriation of funds by the Board of Finance, the funds will be expended by and at the discretion of the Board. The Superintendent will allocate funds as to programs or functions. All expenditures for school purposes, from town appropriations, will be requested through the Superintendent. Bills to be paid from town appropriations will be presented to the Town Treasurer for payment upon approval by the Board.

The Board may transfer any unexpended or non-contracted portion of any appropriation for school purposes to any other item of such itemized estimate. For the purpose of making such transfers, line items in the budget shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

Salaries

Employee Benefits

Purchased Services

Tuition, Public In-State

Tuition, All Other

Supplies

Property

Other

The Superintendent is authorized to make such transfers as necessary if the urgent need for transfer presents the Board of Education from meeting in a timely fashion to consider the transfer, provided that such transfers by the Superintendent shall not exceed five percent (5%) of the annual budget. Transfers made in such instances shall be announced at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education, and transfer subsequently ratified by the Board at any such meeting shall not be counted in the limitation on the authority of the Superintendent to make transfers.

Expenditures will not exceed the appropriation made by the Town. If any occasion arises whereby additional funds are needed, the Chairperson will notify the Board of Finance in accordance with the Simsbury Town Charter and submit a request for additional funds. No additional funds will be expended unless such supplemental appropriation is granted.

The annual report of the Board, as well as the budget document, will include a summary showing:

1. the total cost of operating and maintaining the schools;
2. the amount received from the state and other sources for the operation and maintenance of the schools; and

3. the net cost to the town for the operation and maintenance of the schools.

*Legal References: CT. Gen. St., # 10-222, 10-240, 10-241, 10-242, 10-243, 10-248  
Town of Simsbury Charter, Sec. 901 et. seq.*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

### **Bylaw 506. Board Member Workshops**

The Board, as a decision making body, is confronted with a continuing flow of problems, issues, and needs which require action. While the Board is determined to expedite its business, it is also mindful of the importance of planning, brainstorming, and thoughtful discussion without the requirement of immediate action. Therefore, the Board may schedule workshops from time to time in order to provide its members and the executive staff with just such opportunities. Topics for discussion and study will be announced publicly, and workshops will be conducted in accordance with the state law on public meetings.

On an annual basis, the Board will consider a workshop involving Board members and, where appropriate, administrators, staff, teachers and members of the public. Issues to be considered may include:

1. establishing goals for the coming year;
2. evaluating past performance of the Board, the District and key staff;
3. improvement of general curriculum and instruction;
4. improvement of communication skills, community relations and community services; and
5. other timely or special issues.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

## **600 Series COMMUNICATIONS WITH PRESS AND PUBLIC; BOARD RECORDS**

### **Bylaw 600. Communications with News Media**

The Board believes that one of its essential responsibilities is to keep the public informed of its actions. Consequently, the local news media representatives will be welcome to attend all regular and special meetings of the Board.

A copy of the agenda of all official Board meetings will be made available to members of the working press who request it. All reports approved by the Board will be a matter of official record and, upon request, will be made available to the press or other members of the public. No report-in-progress, including all of those on which the Board has taken no final action, will be released by any Board or staff member unless the Board specifically authorizes its release as a "tentative report" or such release is required by law.

In situations where individual Board members, including Board officers, receive requests from news media representatives for information about Board meetings, members may speak only for themselves and not as spokesperson for the Board unless this responsibility has been specifically delegated to a Board member.

Public statements in the name of the Board, to the extent authorized by the Board, will be issued by the Chairperson, or if appropriate, by the Superintendent, at the direction of the Chairperson. The Board supports the use of established channels of communication and members must recognize that only the Board has authority and that Board action is corporate action. It is inappropriate for an individual Board member to make public statements in the name of the Board.

Press releases relative to Board action will be released only by the Chairperson or other designated agent of the Board.

### **Bylaw 601. Policy Communication; Dissemination**

The Superintendent will establish and maintain an orderly plan for preserving and making accessible the policies and regulations of the public schools. Accessibility will extend to students, to all employees of the school division, to members of the Board, and to persons in the community.

All employees are expected to know and observe the school policies and regulations contained in this manual. Each school will be furnished a copy of the Board's policy manual. The Superintendent will arrange for school employees to be informed of new policies and revision of existing policies.

#### **(a) Dissemination of Policy Manuals**

Policy manuals will remain the property of the Board and will be considered as "on loan" to anyone, or any organization, in whose possession they might be at any time. They are subject to recall at any time for updating.

The Board's policy manual will be considered a public record and will be open for inspection at the Central Office.

Copies of approved policies will be distributed to the following:

1. each building principal and assistant principal;
2. each Board member;
3. each Central Office administrator;
4. the president of the organization selected to represent teachers; cafeteria workers, custodians, and clerical staff;
5. the School District Attorney; and
6. District media or press (upon request).

Personnel policies will be published annually in policy booklets for certified and classified employees.

#### **(b) Regulations Based on Policy Statements**

It will be the responsibility of the Superintendent to see that the regulations developed to implement policies and administer the school system are appropriately coded and included as regulations in the Board's policy manual. A regulation concerning a particular group in the schools will be distributed to the group prior to the effective date of the regulation. Members of the Board will also receive copies of all new or revised regulations that are issued for insertion in the manual.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

#### **Bylaw 602. Electronic Mail Communications**

It is the policy of the Board that E-mail will not be used in such a manner as to deprive the public of the rights given to it under the Freedom of Information Act. This Bylaw sets forth guidelines for the uses intended to be made of E-mail by Board members when communicating with other Board members:

1. E-mail, like other written forms of communication relating to the conduct of the public business is subject to the Freedom of Information Act and subject to disclosure unless otherwise exempt;
2. Board members will not use E-mail as a substitute for deliberations at public Board meetings, and will not vote informally on any issues; and
3. to maintain the confidentiality of employee data, pupil data, and other sensitive subjects, it is advisable to avoid discussing such matters through E-mail.

*Legal Reference:*

*Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-200 et seq.*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

### **Bylaw 603. Board and School District Records**

Any record data or information relating to the conduct of the public's business prepared, owned, used received or retained by the Board or the District by any method is by definition a "public record" and prompt access thereto during normal business hours will be granted to any citizen unless the information is otherwise exempt from disclosure. All such records will be maintained by the Superintendent, who will be the custodian of all public records of the District.

Any person will receive upon request in writing, a copy of any public record except those which access is not permitted under law, at an appropriate cost.

The Superintendent, on behalf of the Board, will notify an employee in writing when a request is made for disclosure of the employee's personnel, medical or other files, if the Superintendent reasonably believes disclosure would invade the employee's privacy.

Not included in the category of public records to which the privilege of access is given are exempt records as set forth in the Freedom on Information Act, including the following:

1. Preliminary drafts or notes, provided that the Superintendent or the Board has determined that the public interest in withholding such documents clearly outweighs the public interest in disclosure.
2. Personnel or medical files or any similar files, the disclosure of which would constitute an invasion of personal privacy.
3. Records pertaining to strategy and negotiation with respect to pending claims and litigation to which the District is a party until such litigation or claim has been adjudicated or otherwise settled.
4. Trade secrets.
5. Test questions, scoring keys and other examination data to administer licensing examination, examination for employment or academic examinations.
6. The contents of real estate appraisals, engineering or feasibility estimates and evaluation made for or by the District relative to the acquisition of property or to prospective public supply and constructions contracts, until such time as all of the property has been acquired or all proceedings or transactions have been terminated (except that the law of public domain is not affected by this provision).
7. Records, reports and statements of strategy or negotiations with respect to collective bargaining.
8. Records, tax returns, reports and statements exempted by federal law or state statutes or communications privileged by the attorney-client relationship.



9. Names or addresses of or other personally identifiable information concerning students enrolled in the public schools without the consent of each student whose name or address is to be disclosed who is eighteen or older and a parent or guardian of such minor student.
10. Records including engineering and architectural drawings; security systems' operational specifications (except a general description, cost and quality of the system); training manuals that describe security procedures, emergency plans or security equipment; internal security audits; and logs and other documents containing information on security personnel movement or assignments if reasonable grounds exist to believe their release would pose a safety risk, including harm to anyone, a facility or equipment.
11. Security manuals, emergency plans, emergency recovery or response plans and staff meeting minutes or records or portions of them that contain or reveal security information.

*Legal Reference:*

*Connecticut General Statutes, Section 1-200 et seq.*

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

**Bylaw 604. Board Hearings; Appeal Proceedings**

In conducting public hearings required by law, and any other hearings as it deems advisable, the Board will adhere strictly to any statutory requirements that apply to the specific type of hearing and will seek to conduct the hearings in a fair, open, and objective manner, giving all persons involved an equal opportunity to be heard.

The Chairperson, or another member at his or her and the Board's approval, will preside at hearings before the Board.

At the beginning of the proceedings, the attending public will be informed of particular rules that it will be following in regard to questions, remarks, rebuttals, time limitations, or other rules necessary to give everyone an opportunity to be heard.

To address the Board, citizens must be recognized by the Chairperson, and all remarks must be addressed to the Chairperson and be germane to the topic.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*

**Bylaw 605. Board Communications**

It is the belief of the Board that keeping open communication with the public is critical to its proper functioning.

The Board will ensure that its members have knowledge of the communications directed to it from the public, and the public will know that Board members have received the communication. All communications received by the District which are addressed to the Board will be copied and distributed to all Board members, either in the agenda

materials for the next meeting or at the beginning of the meeting. Significant complaints or communications from teachers, parents, or patrons to individual Board members or to the Board as a whole, will be conveyed to the office of the Superintendent.

The Chairperson or appropriate administrative officer of the Board will acknowledge expeditiously any letter, if appropriate, other than letters of acknowledgment, circular letters, or letters terminating a correspondence.

Communications to individual Board members requesting action or a statement of view may be acknowledged. It is recommended that an answer which commits the Board member should be avoided until the full Board has reviewed the issue. Statements of a Board member's opinion to any citizen will be clearly identified as an individual opinion which does not necessarily reflect the thinking of the entire Board.

The Secretary will be informed of all invitations to speak or represent the Board received by Board members.

### **Bylaw 606. Board - Community Relations**

Within the bounds of legal and ethical responsibilities, the Board will endeavor to inform the community about the operations of the school system to establish two-way communications with the community, and to involve citizens in the work of the schools. The Board and the District operate most successfully with the support of the community. The quality of education in the District is highly dependent upon what the community believes is a good school program and the extent to which the community is able and willing to support such a program. The Chairperson will be responsible for the Board's procedures in the area of Board-community relations.

*Date of Adoption: November 23, 2004*