


Kuwait Bilingual School No. 2

مدرسة الكويت ثنائية اللغة رقم 2

# SCHOOL BOARD AND GOVERNANCE POLICY

## 2024-2025





# School Board & Governance Basics

- Foundational Principles of Effective Governance
- Code of Conduct
- School Board Member Opportunities and Expectations

The *Foundational Principles of Effective Governance* serves as the Kuwait Bilingual School 2 Boards' primary document to explain the role of school board members. These six principles are the cornerstone of KBS2's beliefs about the governance process and procedures.

Supporting these principles are certain rights and responsibilities. These include the *Code of Conduct*, a document that states 12 standards for ethical and effective behavior for all school board members. Coinciding with these responsibilities are the *School Board Member Opportunities and Expectations*.

Combined, these documents form the basic tenets of the KBS 2 School Board & Governance Policy.

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# Foundational Principles of Effective Governance

As the corporate entity charged by with governing a school, each school board sits in trust for its entire school community. The obligation to govern effectively imposes some fundamental duties on the board:

## 1. The board clarifies the school's purpose.

As its primary task, the board continually defines, articulates, and re-defines school ends to answer the recurring question — who gets what benefits for how much? Effective ends development requires attention to at least two key concerns: student learning and organizational effectiveness.

- Ends express the benefits the school should deliver, thereby providing leadership and staff with clarity of purpose and a clear direction. A school board rarely creates school ends; rather, it most often detects them through listening and observing.
- Ends reflect the school's purpose, direction, priorities, and desired outcomes and are recorded in statements of core values/beliefs, mission, vision, and goals.
- In effective schools, every part of the organization is aligned with the ends articulated by the school board in written board policy.
- Well-crafted ends enable the school board to effectively and efficiently monitor school performance and assess organizational success (Principle 5).

## 2. The board connects with the community.

The school board engages in an ongoing two-way conversation with the entire community. This conversation enables the board to hear and understand the community's educational aspirations and desires, to serve effectively as an advocate for school improvement, and to inform the community of the school's performance.

- Community engagement, also called public engagement or civic engagement, is the process by which school boards actively involve diverse citizens in dialogue, deliberation, and collaborative thinking around common interests for their schools.
- Effective community engagement is essential to create trust and support among community, board, Director, SMT and staff.
- A board in touch with community-wide concerns and values will serve the broad public good rather than being overly influenced by special interests.
- The school board must be aggressive in reaching out to the community to engage people in conversations about education and the public good. In contrast, people who bring customer concerns to board members should be appropriately directed to the Director and SMT.

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themselves in day-to-day operations.

### 3. The board employs a Director.

The board employs and evaluates one person — the Director — and holds that person accountable for school performance and compliance with written board policy.

- An effective school board develops and maintains a productive relationship with the Director.
- The employment relationship consists of mutual respect and a clear understanding of respective roles, responsibilities, and expectations. This relationship should be grounded in a thoughtfully crafted employment contract and job description; procedures for communications and ongoing assessment; and reliance on written policy.
- Although the board is legally required to approve all employment contracts, the board delegates authority to the Director and Business Manager to select and evaluate all staff within the standards established in written board policy.

### 4. The board delegates authority.

The board delegates authority to the Director to manage the school and provide leadership for the staff. Such authority is communicated through written board policies that designate school ends and define operating parameters.

- Ultimately, the school board is responsible for everything, yet must recognize that everything depends upon a capable and competent staff.
- “Delegates authority to” means empowering the Director and staff to pursue board ends single-mindedly and without hesitation. A board that does (or re-does) staff work disempowers the staff. High levels of Director and staff accountability require high levels of delegation.
- Delegation is difficult for anyone accustomed to direct action. However, to appropriately stay focused on the big picture and avoid confusing the staff, members of the school board must discipline themselves to trust their Director and staff and not involve

## 5. The board monitors performance.

The board constantly monitors progress toward school ends and compliance with written board policies using data as the basis for assessment.

- A school board that pursues its ends through the delegation of authority has a moral obligation to itself and the community to determine whether that authority is being used as intended.
- Unless the board is clear about what it wants, there is no valid way to measure progress and compliance.
- A distinction should be made between monitoring data (used by the board for accountability) and management data (used by the staff for operations).
- The constructive use of data is a skill that must be learned. The board should have some understanding of data, but will typically require guidance from the staff.

processes and contributions. Board deliberations and actions are limited to board work, not staff work.

- The board seeks continuity of leadership, even as it experiences turnover in membership. The board accomplishes this by using written board policies to guide board operations, by providing thorough orientation and training for all members, and by nurturing a positive and inviting board culture.

## 6. The board takes responsibility for itself.

The board, collectively and individually, takes full responsibility for board activity and behavior — the work it chooses to do and how it chooses to do the work. Individual board members are obligated to express their opinions and respect others' opinions; however, board members understand the importance of abiding by the majority decisions of the board.

- The school board's role as trustee for the community is unique and essential to both the school and community.
- While the board must operate within legal parameters set forth by the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Private Education, and the Labor Law, good governance requires the board be responsible for itself, its

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# Code of Conduct for Members of School Boards

As a member of my school board, I will do my utmost to represent the community interest in education by adhering to the following standards and principles:

1. I will represent all school constituents honestly and equally and refuse to surrender my responsibilities to special interest or partisan political groups.
2. I will avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of impropriety which could result from my position, and will not use my board membership for personal gain or publicity.
3. I will recognize that a board member has no legal authority as an individual and that decisions can be made only by a majority vote at a board meeting.
4. I will take no private action that might compromise the board or administration and will respect the confidentiality of privileged information.
5. I will abide by majority decisions of the board, while retaining the right to seek changes in such decisions through ethical and constructive channels.
6. I will encourage and respect the free expression of opinion by my fellow board members and will participate in board discussions in an open, honest, and respectful manner, honoring differences of opinion or perspective.
7. I will prepare for, attend, and actively participate in school board meetings.
8. I will be sufficiently informed about and prepared to act on the specific issues before the board, and remain reasonably knowledgeable about local, national, and global education issues.
9. I will respectfully listen to those who communicate with the board, seeking to understand their views, while recognizing my responsibility to represent the interests of the entire community.
10. I will strive for a positive working relationship with the Director, respecting the Director's authority to advise the board, implement board policy, and administer the school.
11. I will model continuous learning and work to ensure good governance by engaging in focused board member professional development opportunities and encourage my fellow board members to do the same.
12. I will strive to keep my board focused on its primary work of clarifying the school's purpose, direction and goals, and monitoring school's performance.

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# School Board Member Opportunities and Expectations

This is a summary of the rights and treatment that all board members are entitled to expect as members of the school board. These rights are limited to the board's operating authority and should not be interpreted to extend an individual's authority as a board member. The school board recognizes that good governance operations depend on each board member being able to expect the following in a manner consistent with board policy:

## On joining the school board

1. A thorough orientation to the board, including the board's governing process — the work the board chooses to do and how the board chooses to do the work.
2. A thorough orientation to the school's operations, finance, and structures.
3. Access to the school's school board & governance policy, the board's regular meeting minutes for the past year, material explaining the board's roles and responsibilities, and other information that might facilitate a better understanding of school operations.

## Before a meeting


1. Notification of board meetings and receipt of meeting agendas at the same time that other board members receive theirs and consistent with board policy.

2. An opportunity to propose the addition of pertinent items to the agenda.
3. The timely receipt of information before each meeting that will enable the board member to make informed decisions.

## During a meeting

1. Board meetings that start on time, stay on task, and end at a reasonable time.
2. Unless restricted by board policy, the opportunity to question the appropriateness of any item on the agenda, to request the removal of an item from an agenda for independent consideration, and to propose changes before the agenda is approved.
3. The opportunity to make and second motions regarding agenda items and to move to defer action on any agenda item or to enter into closed session as deemed necessary by a quorum.



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4. An opportunity to request the justification, alternatives, and consequences for items presented for a decision and to participate in full and free discussion before voting.
  5. The opportunity to express opinions during a board meeting without interruption and ridicule, as well as civil and respectful treatment by all other school board members and staff members.
  6. The opportunity to speak candidly during a formally called closed session without concern for being repeated or confidentialities being breached after the meeting.
  7. The opportunity to remind other board members of policy and legal responsibilities without fear of reprisal. This includes the ability to suggest that the board, according to board policy, consult with the school's attorney about the legality of a current or planned action or procedure.
  8. The opportunity to request that a roll call vote be taken and, when a voice vote is taken, the opportunity to request that the minutes reflect an individual's vote.
  9. The opportunity to suggest the correction of any inaccuracies in the minutes before their approval while recognizing that minutes are not a meeting transcript.

10. The opportunity to participate in the process of selecting officers when the board reorganizes at an open meeting.
11. The opportunity to participate in all policy making functions including suggesting changes to board processes.

### In general

1. Similar opportunities afforded other members of the board including the opportunity to have expenses reimbursed pursuant to board policy for attending business meetings and professional development opportunities.
2. A professional relationship with the Director in which both parties respect each other.
3. The receipt of timely, accurate responses from the Director to reasonable inquiries.
4. The opportunity to express personal opinions and viewpoints provided no attempt is made to undermine board action, misrepresent the majority board opinion, or otherwise violate board policy or this "School Board Member Opportunities and Expectations."
5. The opportunity to participate in regular board self-evaluations.
6. Access to relevant data pertaining to school and board performance.