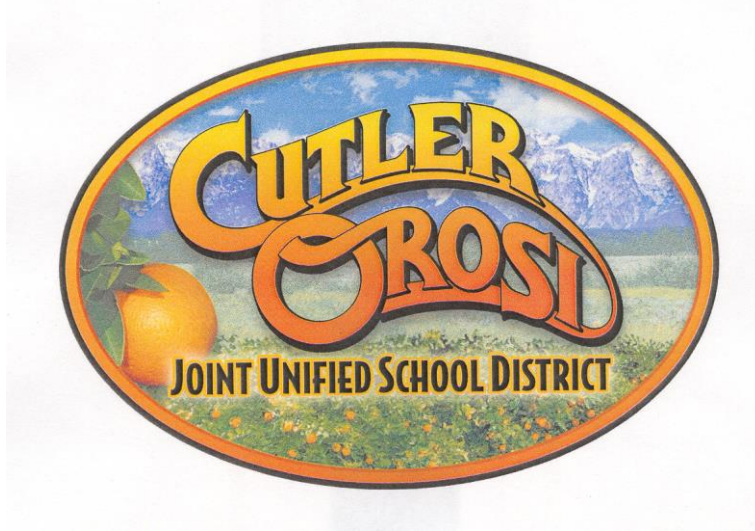


Cutler-Orosí Joint Unified School District



Governance Handbook

2011-12

Board of Trustees

**Josh Franks
Romelia Castillo**

**Mary Helen Espino
Patsy Marquez
Juliana Vinet Bullock**

**Lloyd McClard
Martha Muniz**

Superintendent

Carolyn W. Kehrli, Ed.D.

Unity of Purpose, Roles and Responsibilities, Norms and Agreements

This handbook is a summary of the ongoing governance team's work on effective governance. This process involves continuous discussions and agreements about unity of purpose, roles, norms and protocols that enable the governance team to perform its responsibilities to all children and adults in the community.

Governance Handbook
Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified School District

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Effective Governance

California School Boards Association

Governance- A Definition

School district governance is the act of transforming the needs, wishes and desires of the community into policies that direct the community's schools

As the governance team fulfills responsibilities in the areas of setting direction, human resources, policies, student learning and achievement, finance, judicial appeals, collective bargaining, and community relations and advocacy, the way in which governance team members perform the governance role is critical.

Whether in the boardroom, out in the community or at home, board members are always trustees for the district. The integrity of the school district's educational program is dependent upon the responsible and professional manner in which each board member, and the board collectively, fulfills governance roles and responsibilities with the superintendent. The demeanor of governance team members sends an important message to the public.

Utilizing effective governance techniques, private citizens, once elected to school boards, work with the superintendent to keep all district efforts focused on student learning. Effective governance tenets encompass the basic characteristics and behaviors that enable governance team members to effectively create a climate for excellence in a school district.

The community elects school board members to set and monitor the direction of the school district, but the district superintendent will translate all efforts into action. It is, therefore, vital that the board and superintendent have a respectful and productive working relationship based on trust and open communications.

Working as a group, board members and the superintendent leverage the efforts of the professional staff by setting a direction for the district reflective of the community's wishes for its children, by creating a supportive framework for action in the district, by holding the system accountable through mutually agreed upon mechanisms, by providing support to students and staff through behaviors and actions, and by demonstrating community leadership on behalf of children, district schools and public education. When this is done effectively, the chances of a climate for excellence being created in which students thrive increases dramatically.

Working as an Effective Team

California School Boards Association

To effectively focus all district efforts on student learning and achievement for all students, a governance team needs to have a unity of purpose, a mutual understanding of roles, positive working relationships and supportive structures and processes. One of the chief ways a governance team can strengthen or maintain its effectiveness is to periodically assess its own performance in these areas.

Unity of Purpose

Unity of Purpose is a common focus, super-ordinate goals, the values and beliefs governance team members share in common about children, the district and public education that help them transcend their individual differences to fulfill a greater purpose.

Roles

Effective teams value and respect their essential roles, reach mutual agreement on the roles of the board and superintendent and strive to operate within them.

Culture

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

Structure and Process

How boards operate and how they do business as an effective team occurs when members discuss and agree on the formal structures and processes used by the board (e.g., agenda structure, visiting schools, handling complaints or concerns from the community, bringing up a new idea).

Cutler-Orosi Governance Team

Who Are We?

The Cutler-Orosi Governance Team members are leaders who care about our students, the school district, and our community. We are people who are committed to public education and understand the role education plays in sustaining our democratic society. We represent the entire community: children, parents, staff, businesses, and all community members. We hold the interest of ALL the children in trust. We have been chosen to provide educational leadership to the district and to see that the mission of the district is achieved. Even though we bring our individual perspectives and experiences to the table, we are committed to developing collective understanding, making informed decisions and operating as a unified team.

What Is Our Purpose?

We are a leadership team, responsible for the realization of the mission of our District while being fiscally responsible with the public monies in our trust. We consider the future, as well as the present and maintain our focus on our mission, vision and goals that were developed through inclusive processes. We have the responsibility to do the best job we can for our students within the state and federal requirements, and to see that our students graduate from our schools able to become responsible citizens. We see that the necessary resources are available to our staff to do the work we expect of them. We inspire, engage, and inform our staff and community about education issues on behalf of our students, our district, our teachers, and public education.

To Whom Are We Responsible?

We are responsible to our children to provide the best possible education in a safe, nurturing, challenging learning environment. We are responsible to district staff to provide necessary resources and a safe, supportive, challenging work environment. We are responsible to parents to provide a free public education for their children in an environment that is physically and emotionally safe for the children and their families, and to provide avenues for their involvement in their children's education. We are responsible to our voters and taxpayers to provide a high quality of education in our schools so the community is perceived as a good place to live, and to use public funds efficiently and effectively. We are responsible to our entire community to keep them informed and help them understand the benefits of our educational system whether or not they have children in our schools. We are responsible to the state and federal government to obey the law, to be informed, and to keep other elected officials informed about the effect of legislation on our district and to advocate on behalf of our children, the teaching profession and our schools. We are responsible to the other members of our team to come to meetings prepared, to be interested and informed, to be committed to our work, and to be respectful and honest in our interactions.

MISSION AND BELIEFS

District Mission Statement

*Working together to develop character and academic excellence
in a safe and supportive environment.*

Cutler-Orosi Board of Trustees is proud of the progress we have made in the past few years as we work towards being a results-oriented professional learning community. The Board of Education has set high standards of expectations for all staff through a collaborative process; administrators, teachers, classified staff, students, and parents work in a partnership to provide all students a quality education in a safe, supportive, and disciplined environment, preparing them to become responsible citizens in a culturally diverse society.

The Board of Education has adopted the following Belief Statements:

- Each child should be treated equitably with their needs being addressed.
- Each child can learn.
- Everyone- child/parent/staff- should be treated with respect and confidentiality.
- Everyone- child/parent/staff- should feel safe.
- Everyone- child/parent/staff- should be treated with equal tolerance and sensitivity.

What We Want to Accomplish as a Governance Team

- Improve our children's education so they will be ready to accomplish whatever they want in life.
- Ensure that all our students are able to reach a high standard of education.
- Create a unified team that leads the District to success of every student.
- Provide the best education possible for our children.
- Ensure higher scores for our kids and the ability to attend the college of their choice.
- Make our community whole by keeping our students in our school district.

A Discussion of Governance

California School Board Association

Effective teams value and respect their essential roles, reach mutual agreement on the roles of the board and superintendent, and strive to operate within them.

There are important distinctions to be made between the board's role and that of the superintendent and staff. Boards and superintendents must team together to ensure a district has effective leadership. Just as board members should govern and not manage a school district, superintendents should not administer a district in isolation from the representatives whom the public has entrusted with the schools. School board "**trustees**" are the representatives of the people, elected to ensure a community's schools educate the community's children in accordance with the wishes of the local community.

Board members have collective, not individual, authority. Authority to make decisions is only granted to the board as a whole. The full board gives direction to the superintendent, most commonly at board meetings. The individual board member does not have the authority to direct the superintendent, unless otherwise agreed to by the board and superintendent.

The role of the school boards is not to run the schools, but to see that the schools are well run. When a board member inadvertently takes over the staff role, he/she is in essence vacating his/her board seat and effectively undercutting his/her ability to govern. He/She is forfeiting his/her ability to hold the superintendent responsible for the way the board's policy direction is translated into action by the professional staff.

To the Cutler-Orosi Governance Team, Effective Governance Means.....

- The board collectively sets the direction for the district.
- The board keeps the district efforts focused on student learning.
- The board creates a climate of excellence by
 - Providing the necessary resources so students and staff can be successful
 - Supporting students and staff through our behaviors and actions
 - Holding the system accountable by establishing clear expectations for students and staff, instituting and consistently following fair evaluation processes, and requiring changes as necessary, and
 - Providing community leadership on behalf of our students, the district and public education
- The board and superintendent have a respectful, productive working relationship based on trust and open communication.
- The superintendent and staff translate the board's direction into action.
- The board communicates to the entire community about the role of the board and what "governance" is.
- The board maintains open, two-way communication with all stakeholders about district programs, activities, challenges and accomplishments.

What the Board Needs From the Superintendent to Be Successful

- Correct, clear, timely information
- Professional credibility
- No surprises
- Carry out district policies
- Use good judgment, leadership and creativity
- Be highly knowledgeable and able to develop and carry out the district vision
- Understand his/her role
- Be a good listener
- Have good crisis management skills
- Be fiscally smart

What the Superintendent Needs From the Board to Be Successful

- Clear, timely, accurate information
- “Professional board members” who come prepared for meetings and workshops
- Trust
- Maintain confidentiality
- Clear direction
- Accountability- an evaluation process
- Understand the board’s role
- Community leadership:
 - Be connected in the community
 - Understand needs and wants of constituents
- No surprises
- Be supportive of staff and understand staff roles and responsibilities

Positive Culture

California School Boards Association

Culture is the positive or negative atmosphere created by the way people in an organization treat each other. Teams have unwritten, (implicit) or written, (explicit), agreements about how they will behave with each other and others. The behavioral ground rules, often called norms, enable teams to build and maintain a positive culture or shift a negative one.

The Legacy We Want to Leave

We want to leave a district where:

- All decisions put children first.
- Agreed upon guiding beliefs drive decision-making.
- The vision is toward the future, people are forward thinking, and everyone is focused on moving ahead and making constant improvement.
- Structures and resources are in place to ensure success for all students.
- There are tangible improved results in student achievement for all students, groups, and schools.
- Systems are in place to help students become successful adults.
- Innovation and collaboration are valued and preserved.
- Fiscal responsibility is important and sustained.
- The governance team models professional behavior, demeanor, and decision-making.
- The community believes in our schools' work and that we made the best decisions we could.
- Principals and teachers are prepared to deliver high quality instruction.

Cutler-Orosi Governance Team Norms

- *Once a vote has been called, support the decision of the majority*
- *Listen carefully and respect one another's point of view*
- *Ask questions when you don't understand something*
- *Keep confidential information from closed session confidential*
- *Support each other—do not “throw each other under the bus”*
- *Practice and experience humility—each of us may not have all the answers*
- *It is okay to challenge ideas, but not people*
- *No surprises from Board members or Administration at Board meetings*
- *Keep a sense of humor*

Orientation of Prospective Board Members

What Prospective Board Members Should Know:

- Board members don't run the district but see that the district is well run.
- The board operates as a "body" when making decisions and then stands behind those decisions as staff carries out the work.
- The board serves **all** students at **all** school sites.
- Monthly board meetings are generally 2 – 3 hours in length with board packets averaging about 200 pages- all of which need to be read before the meeting. Packets are delivered to board members the Friday before the board meeting, allowing the board member to have the weekend to read. Questions about the board packet should be addressed to the superintendent on Monday morning so that answers are ready for the Thursday night board meeting.
- Regular board meetings are conducted on the second Thursday night of each month except July when there is no scheduled board meeting. The Regular Open Session of the Board begins at 6:00 p.m. with Closed Session beginning at 7:00 p.m. or after.
- Special board meetings and board study sessions are conducted about once every two months and begin around 4:00.
- The district board policies are online at www.cojUSD.org. Under Board of Education.
- All board members must be trained in the Brown Act. This training will be scheduled for January or February of each year.
- All new board members should plan to attend the New Board Member Orientation at the CSBA Annual Conference which will be held in San Francisco this year at the Marriott Hotel and Convention Center from December 1 – 4.
- FYI: Board members rarely receive praise!

Orientation of New Board Members

New Board Member Orientation Will Include:

- A buddy system for new board members so that they have a veteran board member to use as a source of reference and a sounding board
- Opportunities for the new board members to visit each of the school sites
- Information that includes specific district documents such as:
 - District budget in a user friendly format
 - Contact information
 - Union contracts
 - District calendar
 - Brown Act
 - Governance Handbook
 - Board Bylaws
 - District Report Card
- The Assistant Superintendents and the Superintendent will review these documents with the new board members.
- A Governance Team workshop in January will review board and governance team operations and to discuss and review:
 - The roles of the board, superintendent, District office staff and other staff
 - The District mission and goals and the Governance Team's Core Values and Beliefs
 - School finance in general and specific to Cutler-Orosi
 - How to manage the board role and the parent role simultaneously
 - Chains of command and lines of authority
 - Closed Session confidentiality and other brown Act issues
- New board members will be encouraged to attend the CSBA new Board Member Orientation at the Annual Conference in December and the New Board Member Institute when it is held.

Protocols and Procedures to Facilitate Governance Leadership

Protocol 1 on Communication has been developed; other protocols will be developed during the 2010 – 2011 school year.

General Procedures:

Board Meeting Dates/Times: Second Thursday of Month: 6:00 p.m. at Board Room

Order of Items on Agenda:

1. Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance
2. Public Comments
3. Superintendent's Report
4. Student Member Report
5. Consent
6. Curriculum/Instruction Items
7. Administrative/Organizational Items
8. Board Member Comments
9. Closed Session

Purpose of Public Comments Section: To allow the public to comment on topics of interest to them that they feel the Board should be aware of and possibly address at a future meeting.

Purpose of Board Member Comments Section: To allow each Board member to report on activities or raise issues that they would like to see addressed at future Board meetings.

Board Member Benefits:

Stipend	Maximum allowed per Education Code - \$240.00 per month
Health Benefits	Board members participate in the same plans as selected by the management team.
Attending Conferences, Educational Meetings/ Community Events	Contact Superintendent or Board President to place on agenda. Contact Superintendent's Administrative Assistant for paper work and reservations.
Travel Expenses and Reimbursements	Contact Frank Jerome to sign out district credit card; if you wish to be reimbursed for an expense, turn in original receipts.
Business Cards	Contact Superintendent's Administrative Assistant to order.
Laptop	Contact Superintendent's Administrative Assistant to check out your laptop.
Email address	Contact Superintendent's Administrative Assistant to have email address set up.

Setting Direction for the District

Key Concepts:

- The board has been meeting for two years to develop and refine a Leadership Systems Cycle that will guide the district through the DAIT process.
- The journey begins when leaders understand and leverage **Culture and Context**, which shapes **Vision and Goals and Strategy**, which are shared through **Key Messages** and translated into **Tactics** that are adjusted on the basis of **Results and Continuous Improvement**.
- The DAIT Plan of Action is the driving force behind the goals of the district and is the key focus for the work of the district.
- The Superintendent and the district administration provide evidence to support the action plan outlined in the goals of the district.
- The Governance Team wants to ensure that the DAIT Plan of Action continues to be relevant as new people join the board and as changes occur in the school district and community.

Proposed Actions:

- The Superintendent and Administrative Staff will bring progress reports to the board during each regularly scheduled board meeting.
- The Governance Team will hold a workshop in January of 2011 to review:
 - Governance Team Core Values and Beliefs
 - Board Bylaws
 - DAIT Plan of Action
- The Superintendent's evaluation (which is to be completed by June 30, 2011) will be structured around success indicators developed for an agreed upon number of district goals.
- The DAIT Action Plan will be reviewed every year during an open study session of the Board. The session will be open to anyone who is interested in participating in the process.

Superintendent Evaluation

The Cutler-Orosi Governance Team believes that superintendent evaluation should be a communications process that serves as a model for district evaluation at all levels. It should be:

- Based on district goals
- Data-driven
- Ongoing
- Collaborative (Working together as a governance team to agree on success indicators for each goal.)

We believe superintendent evaluation is an important leadership tool to focus and align all district efforts, an opportunity for the governance team to reflect and talk about where the district is going, not just this year, but with an eye to the future.

The superintendent's evaluation should:

- Provide an opportunity for acknowledging and commending the superintendent's accomplishments;
- Support growth of the superintendent and sustained improvement for the district, and
- If necessary, identify areas of improvement that need to be addressed by the superintendent to ensure continuous progress.
- Be conducted through a collaborative process with the Board's coach.

About the District

School District Address	12623 Avenue 416, Orosi, CA, 93647
Main District Phone Number	559-528-4763
Superintendent	Carolyn W. Kehrli, Ed.D.
Cell Phone Number	559-999-9245
Email Address	ckehrli@cojUSD.org
Superintendent's Administrative Assistant	Micaela Rivera
Cell Phone Number	559-246-5520
Email Address	mrivera@cojUSD.org

Board Members

<u>Name</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Office</u>	<u>Home Phone</u>	<u>Email Address</u>
Mary Helen Espino	2	President	559-528-3344	Mhespino@cojUSD.org
Juliana Vinet Bullock	3	Vice President	559-528-2960	jbullock@cojUSD.org
Patsy Marquez	2	Clerk	559-528-2573	pmarquez@cojUSD.org
Robert Castillo	3	Member	559-528-4793	
Romelia Castillo	1	Member	559-273-3161	romeliasr@yahoo.com
Lloyd McClard	4	Member	559-337-0221	lmclard@cojUSD.org
Martha Muniz	1	Member	559-528-1868	mmuniz@cojUSD.org

Communities Served by the District: Cutler, Orosi, Yettlem, Badger and the surrounding Fresno and Tulare Counties' areas within Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified School District boundaries.

Reason District is considered a "Joint Unified School District": The district has a boundary that crosses Fresno County's line. Therefore, it is a "joint" district—joint with two counties.

Number of Employees in the District: Certificated – 228; Classified - 254
Confidential/Management- 55

Bargaining Units: COUTA: Cutler-Orosi Unified Teachers' Association, CSEA: California Schools Employees Association

The Cutler-Orosi Management group meets as a group, but has no bargaining.

Grade Levels Served by the District: Childcare, Preschool – Grade 12 and Adults

Number of Students Enrolled (CBEDS): 2008 – 2009:

K – 5: 2037

6 – 8= 913

9 – 12 = 1178

Total of 4128

Student Population: Based on 2008 – 2009 Information Posted on CA Department of Education Website:

Ethnic groups by percentage: Asian= .2%; Filipino = 3.3%; Hispanic = 94%; African American = .1%; White = 1.9%; Multiple = .4%

Percent of English Language Learners: 57%

Percent of Special Education Students: 4.2%

Percent of Students Receiving Free/Reduced Lunch: 100%

Percent of Students Classified as Dropouts: 16%

Percent of Students Expelled: 1%

Percent of Total Students Suspended: 13%

Percent of Truancy Rate: 13.97%

Primary Language Spoken in Home: Spanish/English

Number of Square Miles the District Covers: 426

Home to School Transportation: The District operates its own transportation department with 19 buses transporting 1200 students or 29% of our students.

General District Information

Number of Full-Time Equivalent Teachers: 208

Average Years Teaching Experience: 13.4 (12.3 in district)

Percent of First and Second Year Teachers: 12.5%

Average Pupil-Teacher Ratio: 20

Average Class Size in District: 24.1

Average Teacher Salary: \$60,789

Students per Computer: Elementary = 2.9; Middle = 2.5; High = 5.4

Per Pupil Total Revenue: \$11,060

Per Pupil Total Expenditures: \$9,547

District Office/Departments
All may be reached at 559-528-4763

Department

Department Head

Administration	Carolyn Kehrli
Personnel	Craig Drennan
Business	Frank Jerome
Curriculum/Instruction	Peggy Green
Community Services	Melissa Calvero
Adult Education	Melissa Calvero
Special Education	Gary Sanchez
Student Services	Ramon Oyervidez
Maintenance, Transportation, Facilities	Raffi Soghomonian
Food Services	Brenda Lightfoot-Handy
District Nurse	Ellen Suarez
Bus Yard	Art Reyes

District Documents

Governance Handbook
Board Policies/Bylaws
Certificated/Classified/Administrative Handbooks
District School Calendar
Collective Bargaining Agreements
2010 – 2011 Adopted Budget