

RSU #63

a. NEPN/NSBA Code:	BIA
b. Title:	New Board Member Orientation
c. Author:	
d. Replaces Policy:	
e. Date Approved:	03/23/2020 RSU #63
f. Date Previously Approved:	12/16/2013
g. Policy Expiration:	Review as Needed
h. Responsible for Review:	Board of Directors
i. Date Reviewed:	03/03/2020
j. References:	MSBA Handbook; 1 MRSA § 412

k. Narrative:

In order that newly elected members of the RSU #63 Board of Directors (the Board) may cast informed votes and function effectively as Board members, the Board and Superintendent will extend to them the fullest measures of courtesy and cooperation, and will make every reasonable effort to assist newly elected Board members (or: members-elect) in understanding the Board's functions, policies, procedures and current issues.

- I. In the interim between a new member's election/appointment and him/her assuming office, the Board, through the Superintendent, will invite new members or members-elect to attend meetings, except those held in Executive Session, and will provide new members or members-elect with an agenda, minutes, and reports applicable to those meetings.
- II. During the time between election/appointment, the swearing in, and the assumption of office, the status of the future-member remains that of a private citizen and not that of an elected or appointed official.
- III. The Board, through the Superintendent, will provide new members with copies or electronic access to appropriate publications, such as the Board policy manual, student handbook(s), collective bargaining agreements, and current budget documents.
- IV. The Board will encourage new members to attend appropriate in-district workshops. Any reimbursement for such activities must be approved in advance by the Board Chair, in consultation with the Superintendent, and is subject to the availability of funds.
- V. The Chair and the Superintendent will schedule and arrange for an orientation session for new Board members as soon as practicable after election or appointment. A reasonable amount of time will be provided for discussion of:
 1. The roles and responsibilities of the Board and individual members;
 2. Basic operational procedures of the Board;
 3. Placement of items on the agenda;

4. The role of committees, subcommittees, and advisory committees;
5. How/why executive sessions may be held;
6. What information is considered confidential or privileged;
7. Appropriate responses of an individual member when a request or complaint is made directly to him/her by a student, parent, or member of the community;
8. How the Board responds to complaints involving personnel;
9. General information about the school system and its resources;
10. How Board members, in fulfilling their duties, may request information concerning schools and District operations, finances, and personnel;
11. How to use social media appropriately as a member of the Board;
12. How Board members may make arrangements to visit schools and the protocol for such visits;
13. Protocol for dealing with the media; and
14. Other relevant topics.

- VI. The Superintendent will remind Board members of their obligation to complete, no later than the 120th day after the date of taking the oath of office, training on the requirements of Maine's Freedom of Access Law. The Superintendent will provide Board members with information regarding available training options. Each Board member will attest by means of a written or electronic record that he/she has completed the training and provide a copy of such record to the Superintendent's Office. To facilitate documentation of training, the Superintendent will make available to Board members copies of the State's sample Certification of Completion of Freedom of Access Training form.

[NOTE: The Freedom of Access Law is ambiguous as to whether an elected official must complete the required training only the first time he/she is elected, or every time. Given the importance of this training and the potential for changes in law, it is recommended that a Board member complete Freedom of Access training each time he/she is elected. Also, while the law requires an elected official to "keep the record [of training] or file it with the public entity to which the official was elected," MSMA recommends that training documentation be maintained at the Superintendent's Office for ease in fulfilling Freedom of Access requests.]

- VII. All Board members will be invited to the orientation session and encouraged to attend. The orientation is intended to serve as a useful review of basic boardsmanship concepts for experienced members, as well as an opportunity to provide information and meet new Board members.