

## **Improving Local New Board Member Orientation**

In working with boards, it has become apparent that boards and superintendents across the state are seeking ways of improving local new board member orientation. A suggestion has been made to create a board handbook, similar to a student or teacher handbook. The following is a list of materials to include which may be useful. I'm sure you can think of ways to improve or adapt this list for your local needs.

- Local Board Member Code of Ethics
- District Mission Statement
- District Long Range Plan/Goal Statement
  - Data Selected to Monitor Progress
- Board Goal Statement
- Data
- Superintendent's Job Description
- Superintendent's Yearly Goal Statement
  - Data Selected to Monitor Progress
- Superintendent's Evaluation Form
- Chain of Command Graphs
- Adopted Budget for the Year
- School Calendar
- Board Calendar (meeting dates - timelines)
- Board Committees/Liaison Appointments (including descriptions of duties)
- Discipline Policy and/or Student Handbooks
- Board Policies
  - School Attorney
  - Board Meeting Procedures
    - Agenda Format
    - Agenda Preparation & Dissemination
    - Rules of Order
    - Public Participation at Board Meetings
    - Special Proceedings for Conducting Hearings
    - Use of Committees/Advisory Groups
  - Board Policy Development
    - Adoption, Review, Evaluation & Oversight
  - Board Member Services
    - Board Office Facilities & Services
    - Board Compensation and Reimbursement
      - Forms (expense voucher, etc.)
  - Board Member Development
    - Board Self-Evaluation
- Board Minutes of Previous Year

Either the board chair, the superintendent, or a designated mentor could go through these materials with your new members and answer any questions they may have. In addition, you may wish to discuss the powers and duties of board members and officers as taken from the MSBA Service Manual or "A Guide for Newly-Elected Board Members." Please let us know if you try this and it proves helpful!