



Saratoga Union School District Adopted by the Board of Trustees 4.10.12

Board Protocol: Discussion Meetings and Study Session Meetings

The Governing Board recognizes the value in and outcomes of being able to discuss and explore specific subject areas or topics of special interest. We believe that greater understanding yields better decisions, which result in positive outcomes for students, staff and the district as a whole. California Education Code recognizes three legal types of meetings: Regular, Special, and Workshops. In this protocol the SUSD Board details two special meeting formats that can be used in their meetings. These formats are distinct from the Board's twice-yearly Board Workshops and Community Workshops.

Purpose of protocol

- To allow the Board to discuss in-depth a specific topic or area of interest before Board action is required
- To enable the Board to participate in an in-depth study of a specific topic using the Study Session format
- To insure a rich discussion among Board members during open session with the public present, using the CSBA format for Discussion Meetings
- To enable the board hear multiple viewpoints from key stakeholders as well as thorough information from staff

Protocol

When to Call a Study Session or Discussion Meeting

We agree that the Board President and Superintendent can plan this type of meeting when it can be foreseen as part of the District's governance calendar. We also agree that situations will arise during the year that the Board may want to study or discuss further. These may also be externally driven, of district-wide significance, on a topic with budget impact, or of public concern. Any Board member can make a proposal to call for a Study Session or Discussion Meeting. Scheduling this type of meeting will be discussed during Future Agenda Items and should be determined by consensus.

Depending on the length of time required, the Board President and Superintendent will decide whether to schedule this type of meeting within a regularly scheduled Board Meeting agenda or have a separate Special board meeting. We agree that if these types of meetings are scheduled effectively we can be pro-active on important issues facing the district. No Board action will be taken at these meetings.



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Roles of Board, Staff, and Members of the Public

During a Study Session:

The Board agrees that when we ask to have a Study Session, it is because the Board wants to hear an in-depth presentation on a topic with the goal of greater understanding. In these meetings Staff members will present the topic in greater detail than is feasible in a staff report.

The Study Session Template will be used for the Study Session:

- Educational impact
- Fiscal impact
- Articulation implications between K-5 and 6-8
- Challenges and opportunities
- Dissenting opinions

The Board members will receive materials in advance and have ample opportunity to ask questions of staff and have a discussion about the implications for the District. Members of the public are welcome to observe the Study Session, and there will be time for their comments or questions.

During a Discussion Meeting

The Board agrees that a Discussion meeting allows the Board members to engage in rich discussions on a topic of interest with members of the public and staff present. The Board members prepare before the Discussion Meeting by completing an analysis of the topic using the attached CSBA format, which delves into the topic's impact district-wide in detail. This serves as the basis for rich discussion. Staff and members of the public are observers in this type of meeting, and may be called upon if their expertise or opinion is needed.

Examples of Study Session and Discussion Meeting Topics

- Common Core Standards
- Budget
- Transitional Kindergarten
- District Programs (i.e. Special Education)
- District Consolidation/Restructuring