

# DSST PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Board Policies Manual Adopted March 2013 Amended August 2017

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### 1. Introduction and Administration

This Board Policies Manual (BPM) contains standing policies adopted by DSST Public Schools.

**1.1. Reasons for Adoption.** The reasons for adopting this BPM include:

- Ability to quickly orient new board members to current policies
- Elimination of redundant or conflicting policies over time
- Ease of reviewing current policy when considering new issues
- Providing clear, proactive policies to guide the chief executive officer (CEO) and staff

**1.2. Consistency.** Each policy in this document is expected to be consistent with the law, the articles of incorporation, and the bylaws, all of which have precedence over these board policies. Except for time-limited or procedural-only board decisions (approving minutes, electing an officer, etc.), which are recorded in regular board minutes, all standing policies will be included or referred to in this document. The CEO is responsible for developing organizational and administrative policies and procedures that are consistent with this BPM.

**1.3. Transition.** This BPM supersedes any past policy that might be found in old minutes unless a prior board resolution or contract obligates the organization with regard to a specific matter. If any actual or apparent conflict arises between the BPM and other policies or board resolutions, the matter will be resolved by the Chair or by the entire board as may be appropriate.

**1.4. Changes.** These policies are meant to be reviewed periodically. The CEO helps the board formulate new language in the BPM by distributing proposed changes in advance. When language is recommended for deletion, it is shown in ~~strike-through~~ format. Proposed new language is underlined. Any change to this BPM must be voted on by the full board. Proposed changes may be submitted by any board member as well as by the CEO. In most cases, proposed changes will be referred to and reviewed by the appropriate committee before being presented to the board for action. Whenever changes are adopted, a new document should be

dated and made available to the board and staff. The previous version should be kept for future reference as needed.

- 1.5. Specificity.** Each new policy will be drafted to fit in the appropriate place within the BPM. Conceptually, policies should be drafted from the "outside in," i.e., the broadest policy statement should be presented first, then the next broadest, etc., down to the level of detail that the board finds appropriate for board action and below which management is afforded discretion as to how it implements the policies in this BPM.
- 1.6. Oversight Responsibility.** Below are the parts, the committees primarily responsible for drafting and reviewing those parts, and the individuals given authority to interpret and make decisions within the scope of those policies:

Part/Section	Oversight Committee	Implementation Authority
Introduction	Governance	CEO
Organization Essentials	Full Board	CEO
Board Structure & Processes	Governance	Chair
Board–CEO/Staff Relationship	Executive	Chair/CEO
Executive Parameters		
General Guidance	Governance	CEO
Finance	Finance	CEO
Programs	Executive	CEO
Advancement	Advancement	CEO
Audit and Compliance	Audit	CEO

- 1.7. Maintenance of Policies.** The CEO or the CEO’s designee will maintain the policies file and provide updated copies to the board whenever the policies change, or upon request. The board will ask that legal counsel review this BPM biennially to ensure compliance with the law.

## 2. Organization Essentials

- 2.1. Mission.** DSST Public Schools transforms urban public education by eliminating educational inequity and preparing all students for success in college and the 21st century.

- 2.2. Vision.** DSST Public Schools will serve 10,500 students in grades 6-12 on 11 campuses and 22 schools. Through our Vision 2025 Growth Plan, we aim to:

- Graduate students who understand their identity, develop self-awareness, display empathy for others, respect different opinions and demonstrate a critical consciousness of the world around them.
- Provide equitable access to truly integrated world-class schools whose student population reflects Denver’s rich diversity.

- Create an innovative school network where students acquire a rigorous academic foundation while instilling a culture of belonging centered on our core values.
- Work collaboratively with Denver Public Schools to create the leading urban public school system in the country.
- Double the number of college-ready graduates attending four-year colleges from Denver Public Schools by 2025.
- Be an innovative charter school network that creates the national model and center for STEM education in the country
- Create a school model that redefines the approach to successful secondary education.

**2.3. Values.** Our core values are central to our organization. These values are embedded in everything that we do and how we do it. These values include:

- **Respect:** Appreciating the value of a person or an object through your words, actions and attitude – treating people appropriately with common courtesy.
- **Responsibility:** Able to be trusted and or depended upon to complete tasks, follow directions and own up to your actions.
- **Integrity:** Being truthful, fair and trustworthy in your words and actions – doing as you say and saying as you do.
- **Courage:** Possessing confidence and resolve to take risks and make right decisions in the face of pressure and adverse or unfamiliar circumstances.
- **Curiosity:** Eager to learn, explore and question things to gain a deeper understanding.
- **Doing Your Best:** Putting your best effort into everything you do.

**2.4. Moral Owners.** The moral owners to whom the board feels accountable are parents, alumni, donors, taxpayers, employees, Denver Public Schools and the communities in which we serve.

**2.5. Primary Beneficiary.** The primary beneficiary of our services is our students.

**2.6. Strategic Plans.** The CEO will work directly with the board and various constituents to annually develop and update the DSST Public Schools strategic plan. The strategic plan includes clear objectives and measures of success that are continually monitored by the board and the CEO.

### **3. Board Structure and Process**

**3.1. Governing Style.** The board will approach its responsibilities with a style that: reflects DSST Public Schools Core Values; offers clear, future-oriented strategic governance; emphasizes outward vision rather than preoccupation with internal administrative detail; clearly distinguishes board and staff roles; and performs proactively rather than reactively. In this spirit, the board will:

- 3.1.1. Exercise its responsibilities with the discipline necessary to govern competently.
- 3.1.2. Emphasize accountability to stakeholders for competent, conscientious, and effective accomplishment of board responsibilities.
- 3.1.3. Allow no member or committee of the board to usurp or hinder the board's commitment to its governing style or responsibilities.
- 3.1.4. Pursue excellence through monitoring and regularly discussing the board's own processes and performance. The board, not the staff, will be responsible for its performance.
- 3.1.5. Foster a constructive partnership between the CEO and board members, collectively and individually.
- 3.1.6. Remain vigilant to strategic and creative thinking that leads to mission and results driven decision making.
- 3.1.7. Value and cultivate inquiry, independent mindedness and continuous learning.
- 3.1.8. Maintain an ethos of transparency.
- 3.1.9. Address relevant issues, debate policy and strategy, and act decisively.
- 3.1.10. Support board members to responsibly present their views and maintain a decent respect for the opinions of other members.
- 3.1.11. Speak to leadership and the public with one voice.
- 3.1.12. Strive to be nimble and responsive.
- 3.1.13. Respect confidentiality of sensitive issues.
- 3.1.14. Represent the entirety of DSST Public Schools rather than any one part or a particular interest, community, or constituency.
- 3.1.15. Foster openness and trust among the board, the administration, the faculty, the students, the parents/guardians, and the public.

**3.2. Responsibilities.** The job of the board is to lead DSST Public Schools to fulfill its vision, meet its mission and achieve its strategic plans. To perform its responsibilities, the board will:

- 3.2.1. Approve the vision, mission, values, strategies, and major goals and outcomes of DSST Public Schools.
- 3.2.2. Determine the parameters within which the CEO is expected to achieve the goals and outcomes and hold the CEO accountable.
- 3.2.3. Monitor the performance of DSST Public Schools relative to the achievement of its goals and outcomes.
- 3.2.4. Select CEO who is equipped to advance the mission and strategy. Fairly compensate, nurture, evaluate annually, and, if necessary, terminate the CEO who functions as the board's sole direct report.

- 3.2.5. Develop a succession plan for the CEO position and keep it up-to-date.
- 3.2.6. Provide fiduciary oversight including, but not limited to, monitoring financial stability; ensuring resources are sufficient to achieve the strategic plans; tracking legal challenges and issues; and, establishing effective and regular ways of monitoring compliance.
- 3.2.7. Require periodic financial and other external audits to ensure compliance with applicable laws, policies and good practices.
- 3.2.8. Evaluate and constantly improve the board's performance, and set expectations for board members' involvement and commitment to DSST Public Schools.
- 3.2.9. Advocate for DSST Public Schools and serve as an ambassador for its schools.
- 3.2.10. Seek to be fully informed about DSST Public Schools and its role in the state educational environment and be responsive to the changing environment that affects it.
- 3.2.11. Listen to and consider input from constituents including donors, supporting organizations, parents, students, sponsors, neighbors and governmental leaders.
- 3.2.12. Elect a Chair and prepare for succession of the Chair's responsibilities.
- 3.2.13. Define criteria for new board members to ensure the composition of the board will include character, talent, loyalty and capability necessary for accomplishing the strategic plan of DSST Public Schools and for providing continuity of the board.
- 3.2.14. Contribute individual judgment and expertise to DSST Public Schools and, with the concurrence of the CEO, offer counsel, direction and assistance to individual DSST Public Schools leaders.
- 3.2.15. Orient and evaluate board members.
- 3.2.16. Form standing and ad hoc committees of the board, approve committee charters, and monitor committee performance against committee goals.
- 3.2.17. Adopt and maintain by-laws for the orderly conduct of board business.
- 3.2.18. Adopt a Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy for the board.

**3.3. Board Member Criteria.** In nominating members for the board, the board Governance Committee will be guided by the profile that is developed during the annual board retreat. Every board member will be asked to sign a DSST "Board of Directors Commitment" outlining high level responsibilities, including an expectation to be a donor of record in each fiscal year.

**3.4 Nominating Process.** The nomination process for Board candidates includes, but is not limited to the following:

- 3.4.1 Introduction of candidates: board members may introduce a candidate by bringing a resume/bio to any member of the nominating committee.
- 3.4.2 Evaluation: If nominating committee is interested in moving forward with a

given candidate (by majority vote) the Nominating and Governance Committee schedules the following:

- A time for two board members (at least one from the Nominating and Governance Committee) to meet face-to-face with the candidate.
- A school visit and a meeting with the CEO
- After these two events, the Nominating and Governance Committee will meet to review each candidate. The sponsor, the two additional board members and the CEO provide observations on each candidate.

3.4.3 Nomination: If there is agreement by the Nominating and Governance Committee, the committee formally nominates the candidate and sends a written summary to the full Board.

3.4.4 Voting/Approval: The board votes on a slate of candidates no later than June of each fiscal year, but retains the option to consider candidates at other times during the year.

3.4.5 A list of past and current Board prospects and record of conclusions will be maintained by the Nominating and Governance Committee for institutional memory.

**3.5 Orientation.** Prior to election, each nominee will be given this BPM along with adequate briefings on the role of the board, officers, and staff and an overview of programs, plans, and finances. Soon after election, the Governance Committee will provide each new board member a more comprehensive orientation to DSST Public Schools and the board. Orientation will also include assignment by the Board Chair, in conjunction with the interests and skills of the new member, to a standing DSST committee no later than December of the new member's first year on the Board.

**3.6 Board Evaluation Process.** Board members will be asked to assist with an annual Board planning and self-evaluation process to increase individual Board member accountability and gauge perceived effectiveness of the Board. This will include the following:

- The Chair and CEO will target individual Board Member engagement to advance the purposes of DSST.
- An anonymous annual survey of board effectiveness covering overall board activities and committee activities at the end of each fiscal year.

**3.7 Board Term Renewals.** If a Board Member's term is expiring in a given fiscal year the Board President, CEO and Board Member should discuss if there is a mutual desire to renew the expiring term. The Board President should then inform the Nominating and Governance Committee who will bring the renewal up for a vote at a Board meeting no later than June of the fiscal year."

**3.8 Chair's Role.** The job of the Chair is, primarily, to maintain the integrity of the board's processes. The Chair "manages the board." The Chair is the only board member authorized to speak for the board, other than in rare and specifically authorized instances. The Chair ensures that the board behaves in a manner consistent with its bylaws and policies and those rules legitimately imposed upon it from outside DSST Public Schools. Meeting discussion content will be those issues that clearly belong to the board to decide, not to staff. The Chair has no authority to make decisions beyond policies created by the board. The Chair is expected to maintain close communication with the CEO, offer advice to the CEO, and provide

encouragement to the CEO and staff on behalf of the board. The Chair’s relationship with the CEO is collaborative relationship rather than supervisory.

**3.9 Vice Chair Role.** The job of the Vice Chair is to: assume the responsibilities of the Chair if the Chair is unable to perform; review the board meeting minutes for completeness and accuracy before they are submitted to the board for approval; and complete other assignments made by the board.

**3.10 Board Meetings.** Board events often will include time for guest presenters, interaction with staff and beneficiaries, board training, and social activities, as well as business sessions. Policies that are intended to improve the process for planning and running meetings follow:

3.10.1 The annual schedule for the regular board meetings will be set well in advance of the start of the fiscal year.

3.10.2 The Chair will work with the Executive Committee and the CEO to develop agendas, which, along with background materials for the board and committees, monitoring reports, the CEO’s recommendations for changes in the BPM, previous minutes, and other such materials, will be provided to all board members approximately two weeks in advance of board meetings.

3.10.3 Minutes will be sent to board members in advance of the next meeting for discussion and approval at that meeting.

3.10.4 Regular board meetings will be held seven times a year in the months of September, October, November, January, March, May, and June preceded by a reminder notice approximately two weeks in advance of the meeting date. The meetings will generally follow the schedule below. Special meetings of the board can be called in accordance with the bylaws.

Month	Key Topics
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review of the performance of the CEO and the organization for the past year.</li> <li>▪ Approval of Financial Statements</li> <li>▪ Committee reports</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Board retreat</li> <li>▪ Board self-evaluation</li> <li>▪ Approve committee charters and annual reports</li> <li>▪ Review strategic plan for the upcoming year</li> <li>▪ Committee reports</li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Committee reports</li> </ul>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Committee reports</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fund development plan</li> <li>▪ Committee reports</li> </ul>
May (Annual Meeting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Approve strategic plan for the upcoming year</li> <li>▪ Approval of the budget for the next year</li> <li>▪ Approval of staff salary and benefits parameters</li> <li>▪ Set meeting schedule for next fiscal year</li> <li>▪ Elect new board members</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Elect members for renewed term on the board</li> <li>▪ Elect DSST Building Corporation directors</li> <li>▪ Board member annual conflict of interest disclosure</li> <li>▪ Committee reports</li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discuss strategic plan for the upcoming year</li> <li>▪ Committee reports</li> </ul>

**3.11 Standing Committees.** Committees help the board be effective and efficient. They speak "to the board" and not "for the board." Unless authorized by the whole board, a committee may not exercise authority that is reserved to the whole board by the bylaws or by the laws of Colorado not-for-profit organizations. Committees are not created to exercise authority over staff. The board Chair will recommend committee chairs, vice chairs and members for one-year terms, subject to board approval. The CEO will assign one senior staff member to assist with the work of each committee and the committee should evaluate that staff member's assistance as part of the CEO's annual evaluation.

**3.12 Committee Charters.** The board will annually approve charters for each committee. The charter will include the following elements: role; authority; membership; responsibilities; and goals.

**3.13 Committee Member Roles and Responsibilities.** The chair of the committee will prepare an agenda for each meeting with input from committee members and staff. The committee chair and the staff member assigned to the committee will make materials available prior to meetings to allow committee members sufficient time to prepare. The committee chair will prepare an annual report to the board about the committee's activities, performance and confirmation of fulfilling the committee's responsibilities. The committee vice chair will assume the role of chair when the chair is absent and may be elected by the board to replace an outgoing committee chair. Minutes will be prepared for committee meetings. The staff member assigned to each committee will be responsible for archiving committee minutes and making them available to board members upon request.

**3.14 Task Forces.** To increase its knowledge base and depth of available expertise, the board supports the use of task forces of qualified advisors. A task force is a group appointed by the CEO or the Chair to assist him or her to carry out various time-limited goals and responsibilities. The Chair or the CEO will notify the board of the task force as well as its purpose and membership within 10 days of its formation. The CEO may assign senior staff members to serve task forces.

**3.15 Board Member Code of Conduct.** Board members embody the core values of the organization in all their interactions as board members, and thereby; set a high standard for the rest of the organization. The board expects of itself and its members to act with ethical and businesslike conduct. Board members must offer loyalty to the interests of DSST Public Schools in accordance with the bylaws. Each board member is expected to complete and sign an annual Conflict of Interest Statement.



**3.16 School Accountability Committees.** Board members may be assigned to participate on a school accountability committee, which provides an opportunity for board members to engage directly with school staff and parent volunteers. School Accountability Committees are defined in Colorado statute as advisory bodies that provide oversight to school administration. Specifically, the committees are charged to: recommend school spending priorities; advise school directors on school performance plans; and assess whether leadership, personnel and infrastructure are advancing implementation of school performance plans. Board members will attend the meetings of the assigned accountability committee and report back to the board periodically.

**3.17 Long-Term Board Member Preference in Enrollment Lottery.** Children of founding DSST Board Members receive a preference in the enrollment lottery. Additionally, any Board Member that has served a full term (3 years) and has been invited to serve a second term will receive a preference in the enrollment lottery, regardless of the years in which they served. Qualifying individuals can choose to apply the enrollment preference to any school in the DSST network. This policy would retro-actively include previous Board Members that would qualify under the new definition. Qualified current and historic DSST Board Members would be communicated to the DPS School of Choice office and may prioritize any DSST campus of their choice in the lottery.

#### **4 Board–CEO/Staff Relationship**

**4.1 Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).** While the board’s job is generally confined to establishing high-level policies, implementation and subsidiary policy development are delegated to the CEO.

4.1.1 All board authority delegated to staff is delegated through the CEO, so that all authority and accountability of staff is considered to be the authority and accountability of the CEO.

4.1.2 The CEO is directed to achieve certain results contained in the mission, vision and strategic plan. Executive Parameters define the acceptable boundaries of prudence and ethics within which the CEO is expected to operate. The CEO is authorized to establish all further policies, make all decisions, take all actions, and develop all activities as long as they are consistent with a reasonable interpretation of the board’s policies in this BPM.

4.1.3 The board may change its policies during any meeting, thereby shifting the boundary between board and CEO domains. Consequently, the board may change the latitude of discretion given to the CEO, but so long as any particular delegation is in place, the board and its members will respect and support the CEO’s discretion within the Executive Parameters. This does not prevent the board from obtaining information in the delegated areas.

4.1.4 Except when a person or committee has been authorized by the board to incur some amount of staff cost for study of an issue, no board member, officer, or committee has authority over the CEO. Only officers or committee chairs may request information, but if, in the CEO’s judgment, such a request requires a material amount of staff time or funds or is disruptive, it may be refused.

**4.2 CEO Job Description.** As the board's single formal portal to the organization, CEO performance will be considered to be synonymous with organizational performance as a whole. Consequently, the CEO's job contributions can be stated as performance in two areas: accomplishment of the major DSST Public Schools goals; and, operations within the boundaries of prudence and ethics established in board policies on Executive Parameters.

**4.3 Communication and Counsel to the Board.** With respect to providing information and counsel to the board, the CEO will keep the board informed about matters essential to carrying out its responsibilities. Accordingly, the CEO will:

4.3.1 Inform the board of relevant trends; anticipated adverse media coverage; material external and internal changes; and, particularly, changes in the assumptions upon which any board policy has previously been established. Information should always be presented in as clear and concise a format as possible.

4.3.2. Relate to the board as a whole except when fulfilling reasonable individual requests for information or responding to officers or committees duly charged by the board. Report immediately any actual or anticipated material noncompliance with a policy of the board, along with suggested changes.

**4.4. Monitoring Executive Performance.** The purpose of monitoring is to: determine the degree to which the mission is being accomplished; assess whether board policies are being fulfilled; measure performance against goals; and hold management accountable for budgets and plans. Information that does not do this will not be considered monitoring. Monitoring will be as automatic as possible, using a minimum of board time, so that meetings can be used to affect the future rather than to review the past.

**4.5. Annual Performance Review.** The CEO's evaluation will be based upon achievement of the mission, vision, values and goals that the board and the CEO have agreed upon in advance. Board members will make no judgments of the CEO or staff performance except as the performance of the CEO is assessed against explicit board policies and agreed-upon performance objectives. All board members will participate in the annual performance evaluation of the CEO and the CEO will prepare a written self-evaluation for consideration by the board. The Chair will meet with the CEO to report the collective evaluation of the board and discuss recommendations on the CEO's compensation. The Executive Committee of the board will determine final compensation. During this process, the CEO and the board will agree on any specific, personal performance goals for the year ahead. These goals will be documented in a letter to the CEO from the board Chair and will be a primary basis for determining the CEO's performance at the end of the next year. The Chair will invite other input in a carefully planned "360" review, inviting feedback from staff, peers in our sector, and individuals outside the organization who have interacted with the CEO.

**4.6. Staff Compensation.** The CEO is expected to hire, train, motivate, compensate, and terminate staff in a professional and caring fashion. Salary adjustments and benefit contributions will be implemented by the CEO within parameters established annually by the board. The CEO will develop and maintain an employee manual that is reviewed annually by competent counsel.

**4.7. Staff Treatment.** With respect to treatment of paid and volunteer staff, the CEO may not cause or allow conditions that are inhumane, unfair, or undignified. Accordingly, he or she may not:

- 4.7.1. Discriminate among employees on other than clearly job-related, individual performance or qualifications.
- 4.7.2. Fail to take reasonable steps to protect staff from unsafe or unhealthy conditions.
- 4.7.3. Withhold from staff a due-process, unbiased grievance procedure.
- 4.7.4. Discriminate against any staff member for expressing an ethical dissent.
- 4.7.5. Prevent staff from grieving to the board when internal grievance procedures have been exhausted; and the employee alleges that board policy has been violated to his or her detriment.
- 4.7.6. Fail to acquaint staff members with their rights under this policy.

**4.8. CEO Transitions.** At any time, the Chair may appoint a transition task force to explore options and propose strategies and board policies related to succession and transition of the CEO and to facilitate any special needs of the outgoing and incoming CEOs and their families. The incumbent CEO will give the board, if possible, a six-month notice of intent to leave that office. Any need for an acting or interim CEO will be determined by the board Chair subject to board approval. The Chair is authorized, as soon as a vacancy or scheduled departure of the CEO is known, to appoint a search committee and committee chair. The search committee may include up to two people not on the board. The committee will, within 30 days, recommend for board approval a position announcement, a recommendation on any search consultant, the appointment of a search secretary, and a budget for the search. The search committee will present qualified candidates to the full board for selection. The Chair or a task force appointed by the Chair will, at the time of selection, negotiate the new CEO's compensation and service agreement and give both the incumbent and the successor CEO any special performance priorities from the board. After he/she leaves the organization, the outgoing CEO may be given a paid role, but only with the approval of the new CEO in consultation with the officers and the board.

**4.9. Board Reference Book and Web Site.** In addition to reports that the CEO may choose to make to the board, the CEO will develop and maintain a Board Reference Book with all pertinent documents to which board members might want to refer during board and committee meetings (e.g., articles, bylaws, organization chart, recent minutes, committee roster, list of key volunteers/consultants, board documents referred to in this BPM, etc.). In addition, the board requests that the CEO maintain, as funding is available, a secure Internet web site for board members to allow them to access relevant data and reports on a timely basis. The CEO will notify board members as new key information is posted to the board web site.

## **5. Executive Parameters**

**5.1. General Guidance.** The purpose of the remainder of the BPM is to detail those executive parameters that will guide the CEO and the staff as they accomplish the mission and vision. These parameters are intended to free the CEO and the staff to make timely decisions without undue board directives. The board expects that the CEO will do nothing that is illegal, unethical, or imprudent. Beyond these general parameters, the board details its executive parameters in the major sections that follow.

**5.2. Finance Parameters.** The CEO must ensure that the financial integrity of the organization is maintained at all times; that proper care is exercised in the receiving, processing, and disbursing of funds; and that financial and nonfinancial assets are appropriately protected.

**5.2.1. Budgeting.** The budget during any fiscal period will not: deviate materially from the board's goals and priorities; risk fiscal jeopardy; or fail to show a generally acceptable level of foresight. Accordingly, the CEO may not cause or allow budgeting that:

- Contains too little detail to: enable accurate projection of revenues and expenses; separate capital items from operational items; monitor cash flow and subsequent audit trails; and disclose planning assumptions.
- Anticipates the expenditure in any fiscal year of more operating funds than are conservatively projected to be received for operations in that period.
- Reduces the current assets at any time to less than twice current liabilities or allows cash to drop below a safe reserve at any time.
- Is not derived from the strategic plan.

**5.2.2. Financial Controls.** The CEO must exercise care in accounting for and protecting the financial assets of the organization. To this end, the CEO will:

- Incorporate generally accepted accounting principles and internal controls in the financial systems that are employed.
- Properly account for all funds received and all expenses incurred in the operation of DSST Public Schools and the schools it operates.
- Expend funds consistent with the approved DSST Public Schools budget.
- Comply with all external reporting obligations.
- Provide financial statements and or budgetary status reports for every regularly scheduled board meeting.  
Seek approval of the board for commitments that encumber budgets in future fiscal years and exceed \$500,000 of expenditures in any future budget.

**5.2.3. Asset Protection.** The CEO may not allow assets to be unprotected, inadequately maintained, or unnecessarily risked. Accordingly, the CEO may not:

- Fail to insure against theft and casualty losses to at least 80 percent of replacement cost and against liability losses to board members, staff, or the organization itself beyond the minimally acceptable prudent level.
- Allow un-bonded personnel access to material amounts of funds.
- Subject equipment to improper wear and tear or insufficient maintenance.

- Unnecessarily expose the organization, its board, or its staff to claims of liability.
- Make any major purchase of over \$500,000 without competitive bids or some other demonstrably prudent method of acquisition of quality goods, or any purchase of over \$250,000 without a written record of competitive prices, or any purchase wherein normally prudent protection against conflict of interest has not been provided.
- Acquire, encumber, or dispose of real property without board approval.

5.2.4. **Investment Principles.** The CEO will invest or hold operating capital consistent with the DSST Public Schools Investment Policy.

5.2.5. **Reserve Policy.** The CEO will maintain financial reserves in accordance with the Reserve Policy approved by the Board of Directors.

**5.3. Program Parameters.** In general, the CEO is expected to establish, maintain, and eliminate programs and services to achieve the organization's mission and goals in the most effective and efficient manner. Any significant program executed in partnership with another organization will be disclosed to the board.

**5.4. Advancement Parameters.** The various efforts to represent the organization to the public (media, public relations, fund-raising, new member recruitment, etc.) will be integrated sufficiently that the organization's brand/positioning in the external world is positive and effective.

5.4.1. **Fund-Raising Strategy.** The CEO will develop and maintain a fund-raising plan that may include direct mail, major donor initiatives, planned giving, and web-based giving.

5.4.2. **Donor Rights.** The CEO will protect donor information to the extent permitted by law. The CEO may not represent to a donor that an action will be taken that violates board policies. Requests from a donor as to how her/his contribution is to be allocated will be honored and all donor receipts will be confirmed in a timely manner.

5.4.3. **Naming Rights.** The CEO has authority to establish and implement policy for naming classrooms, conference rooms and offices. The CEO will seek board approval for naming public spaces, significant facilities, buildings and programs.

5.4.4. **Gift Acceptance.** The CEO will obtain board approval prior to accepting donations that significantly impact and or risk the mission, vision and strategic plan of DSST Public Schools. Factors to be considered in measures significant impact or risk include, but are not limited to, reputation, advertising, brand, politics, affiliation, operations commitments, and intellectual property rights.

**5.5. Public Affairs.** The CEO will exercise care in representing that DSST Public Schools is a mission-centered, listening organization and will develop policies and procedures for communicating with primary stakeholders and the public at large in a way that reinforces that image.

5.5.1. **Communications Plan.** The CEO will develop and maintain a communications plan, shared with the board as appropriate, that describes how the organization will communicate with its various stakeholders. The plan will identify the stakeholder segments, how the organization will both speak and listen to each segment, and who is allowed to speak for the organization. The plan will also include the role of board members both as “listeners” and as “speakers” for the organization.

5.5.2. **Communications Restrictions.** To preserve the DSST Public Schools image, the CEO and any designee are the only spokespersons authorized to speak for the organization, and the Chair is the only spokesperson for the board. None of the spokespersons may represent the organization in any way that may be perceived as supporting a political party or platform; be the author of an article, book, or publication that includes classified or sensitive information about the organization; or engage in lobbying activities at any governmental level without prior permission from the board.

5.6. **Audit and Compliance Parameters.** The CEO will take the necessary steps to ensure the integrity of DSST Public Schools systems and procedures; to see that they comply with all pertinent legal, regulatory, and professional requirements; and to report to the board any material variations or violations. An independent auditor will be hired and supervised by the Audit Committee, after a careful selection and annual evaluation. The CEO will work with the auditor to gain a clean opinion on the annual financial statements and respond in detail to items in the auditor’s management letter concerning opportunities to improve systems and procedures related to financial controls. The CEO will meet all requirements for complying with federal, state, or local laws and regulations.

5.7. **Whistle Blower.** The CEO will ensure that a Whistle Blower Policy is in place for DSST Public Schools and personnel are informed of the policy.