

System Charter Leadership Team  
12.02.08

Present:

Bruce Roaden  
Graneze Scott  
Phyllis Edwards  
Valarie Wilson  
Anthony Whatley  
Eve Wyatt  
Laconia Massaquoi  
Gloria Lee  
Mary Mack  
David Hughes  
Thomas Van Soelen  
Lauri Mckain-fernandez  
Allison Taylor  
Peg Bumgardner

6:30 pm                      Debra Golymbieski  
                                            Open Meetings Act

Debra Golymbieski, School Board Attorney

## **Open Meetings Act**

Charter requires SLT to comply with open meetings and open records  
Meant to ensure that government is conducted in the open

What constitutes a meeting?

- Quorum to conduct any official business

Few key items in the Act

- Meaningful notice (more than 24 hours, preferably)
- Agenda requirements
- Summary requirements\*
- Minutes requirements

\*CSD SLTs use the minutes as the summary if published within 48 hours of the meeting.

A few exceptions to public notice:

- Purchasing real property
- Employee discipline matters
- Attorney/client privilege regarding threatened or potential litigation

*We doubt these exceptions will apply to SLT situations.*

Scenarios

**What happens if we are all together?**

Community activities (i.e., student honors program, football game) where we are all together are acceptable under the spirit of the law. You can't get together with the SLT members at the event and conduct business.

If there is a particular event at your particular school where you think the SLT may all (or more than a quorum) may be going, go ahead and notice it.

*It is wise to post a meeting in which an issue is being discussed that could come before the SLT.*

**Can we go to a BOE meeting?**

Do we need to notice this as individual SLTs? No. SLT members could choose to speak during public comment at a Board meeting.

**When does email become a meeting?**

If a SLT member finds an article on an issue that the SLT has been discussing, if the SLT members commence talking back and forth over email and that issue is going to come forward as an actionable item, then the email exchange is really an attempt to conduct of a meeting.

Communicating with other individual SLT members is fine.  
Communicating with other interested parties is fine.  
Communicating with parents at your school is fine.

"I can't speak for the SLT; I'm only one member. I've been researching this, too, and find it interesting. If you find other information, please send it to me."

You don't want to "pre-vote" or "pre-decide" an issue over email.

**Can I post comments on group chatboards and listservs?**

SLT members are not prohibited from giving their opinions on issues. However, whether that is the best decision or not is another matter. Other members of the public may think that you are speaking for the SLT.

**Can I call other SLT members to find out how they will vote?**

Problematic. By asking others what they are voting, you are pre-judging the issue in a non-open forum. You certainly can talk to others about your opinion and can answer other's queries about your opinion.

**Can you tape record?**

Any public meeting can be audiotaped or videoed.

**How do I talk to a neighbor that wants to know what happened in a meeting and what's going on?**

You have every right to share what happened in a meeting and what your vote was. Best practice might indicate that criticizing the decision that was made could be problematic.

## **Open Records**

Any document that a SLT creates, maintains, or receives in the course of conducting business is an open record.

Please use the csdecatur.net account. If a personal email account is used, all email in that account is subject.

All records, pieces of paper should be included on eBoard. Scan, send to Katrina to attach to meetings.

### **If a community member brings a document, does that need to be entered in eBoard?**

No, not a public record – not created and maintained by the school.

### **If a SLT member keeps notes in a meeting, is that a public record?**

There is an argument that would say that personal notes are a personal memory aid and are not a public record.

## **Comments**

### **How can we help the community understand what the SLT role is?**

The three-column chart can help people understand.

This is first time to do this work. Analogy: People know what a mayor does because there has always been one. People know what a school board does because there has always been one. SLTs don't have that history.

SLT members are not lobbying groups to the Board of Education.

### **Can a school have a different kind of meeting?**

Sure, for instance, SLTs could hold a public hearing with comments about a particular topic, provided the topic is something they hold purview.

7:30 pm

Dr. Edwards  
Budget Process for 2009-2010  
Reconfiguration Efforts

Dr. Edwards briefed the SCLT on communication efforts regarding the 2009-2010 budget, reconfiguration, and annexation.