

## NEW BOARD MEMBER ORIENTATION

The Board of Education wishes to ensure that newly elected or appointed members of the Board have access to all the information necessary to function effectively as members of the Board. All newly-elected or appointed Board members will receive, and sign for, specific written materials and be invited to attend specific orientation meetings. A Board library of selected materials is available for new members.

### Written materials

The following written materials will be provided to new Board members:

- the Board policy book\*
- copies of current contractual agreements with all employee bargaining units\*
- copies of individual contracts with district office administrators\*
- copy of the agreement between Community Youth Activities, Inc. DBA Valley Stream Little League and VSUFSD #13
- the district's operating budget for the current school year and the two previous school years
- the most recent edition of School Law\*
- the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order\*
- copies of minutes of Board of Education meetings for past year
- the most recent Superintendent's annual report
- a copy of the oath of office
- a copy of the Annual Professional Performance Review Plan (APPR)

A file cabinet will be made available to each board member upon request, and returned at the conclusion of service.

\*To be returned upon the conclusion of service

### *Meetings*

New Board members will be invited to attend a meeting (or series of meetings) with the President of the Board and the Superintendent of Schools to discuss Board and district operations. New Board members will also be invited to visit each of the district's schools to meet with administrators and staff members. New Board members will be encouraged to attend workshops and conferences for new school board members conducted by the New York State School Boards Association and the State Education Department.

### Fiscal Awareness Training Sessions

New Board Members are required by law to complete the Fiscal Awareness Training sessions listed below. This MUST BE accomplished within the first year of office.

### **The five modules included in the required training are:**

1. **School District Finances: Roles and Responsibilities**  
Learn your board's financial stewardship role and its fiscal oversight responsibilities; the roles, responsibilities and qualifications of other key district finance officials; and who answers to whom for properly safeguarding, using and accounting for district resources.
2. **Revenue Sources and the Budget Process**  
Examine the principal sources of school district funds and major guidelines affecting disposition of funds from each source. Then learn why the district prepares a budget, a sound process for building and obtaining voter approval of that budget, and laws and rules affecting the budget process.
3. **Building School District Fiscal Fitness**  
Learn what questions to ask and how to assess the answers as you study financial management and

accounting practices that promote fiscal fitness. Get indicators of a district's sound financial condition and indicators of a financially stressed district. Learn how to accurately project cash flow, the proper way to execute budget transfers, and the encumbrance process. Understand fund balance and reserve funds, and discuss how mismanagement of these funds can impact your district.

4. **Monitoring School District Fiscal Fitness**

To properly oversee district finances, the board must acquire, assess and act upon factual information. Learn what information your board should receive regularly, in what form, and from whom. Identify elements of financial reports that warrant your special attention to ensure the district's financial health.

5. **Preventing Fraud, Waste and Abuse of District Resources**

Learn common types of fraud, waste and abuse of district resources, and the attitudes and conditions conducive to those diversions. Also examine the policy and oversight actions your board can take to set the example and protect precious resources. Explore what to do if the board or others suspect irregularities.

Once completed, the mandatory six hour training does not have to be repeated, however due to changing laws and regulations it is a good idea to re-take the course, especially if you are returning to board service.

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading & Adoption December 20, 2000

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading & Adoption December 22, 2009

1<sup>st</sup> Reading March 23, 2010

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading & Adoption April 27, 2010