The governance of the college under Michigan Law is the responsibility of the Board. Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the College is an integral part of our community and serves ever-changing needs. Trustees are accountable to the community for the performance and welfare of the College.

Effective boards consist of people who come together to form a cohesive group and represent the public interest, establish a climate for learning, and monitor the effectiveness of the institution. Boards do not do the work of their institutions; they ensure that colleges have outstanding presidents. They establish standards for the work through the policies they set.

A. Standards of Good Practice

In support of effective community college governance, the Board of Trustees of West Shore Community College believes:

1. That it derives its authority from the community and that it must always act as an advocate on behalf of the entire community;
2. That it must clearly define and articulate its role;
3. That it is responsible for creating and maintaining a spirit of true cooperation and a mutually supportive relationship with its President;
4. That it always strives to differentiate between external and internal processes in the exercise of its authority;
5. That Board members should engage in a regular and ongoing process of in-service training and continuous improvement;
6. That Board members come to each meeting prepared and ready to debate issues fully and openly;
7. That Board members vote their conscience and support the decision or policy made;
8. That its behavior, and that of its members, exemplifies ethical behavior and conduct that is above reproach;
9. That it endeavors to remain always accountable to the community; and
10. That it honestly debates the issues affecting its community and speaks with one voice once a decision or policy is made.

B. Board Roles and Responsibilities

To be effective the trustees and Board must:

1. Represent the common good
   a. Know community needs and trends;
   b. Link with the community;
c. Seek out and consider multiple perspectives when making policy decisions;
d. Debate and discuss issues in public;
e. Serve the public good;
f. Set the policy direction;
g. Be proactive, visionary, and future-orientated;
h. Learn about and communicate with many different groups;
i. Focus on community needs and trends; and
j. Establish the vision, mission and broad institutional goals as policy.

2. Act as a unit
a. Integrate multiple perspectives into board decision-making;
b. Establish and abide by rules for conducting board business;
c. Speak with one voice; support the decision of the board once it is made;
d. Recognize that power rests with the board, not individual trustees;
e. Create a positive climate;
f. Model a commitment to learning and to students;
g. Focus on outcomes;
h. Support professional growth;
i. Seek consultation in developing policy; and
j. Be ethical and act with integrity.

3. Employ, evaluate and support the President
a. Select and retain the best President;
b. Define clear parameters and expectations for performance;
c. Conduct periodic evaluations; provide honest and constructive feedback;
d. Act ethically in the relationship with the President; and
e. Support the President, create an environment for success.

4. Define policy standards for college operations
a. Define expectations for high quality educational programs;
b. Define expectations for student achievement and fair treatment of students;
c. Require wise and prudent use of funds and management of assets; and
d. Set parameters to attract and retain high quality personnel and ensure fair treatment of employees.

5. Monitor performance
a. Monitor progress toward goals;
b. Monitor adherence to operational policies;
c. Use pre-established criteria for monitoring; and
d. Schedule a timetable for reports.

6. Support and be advocates for the College
a. Promote the College in the community;
b. Foster partnerships with other entities in the community;
c. Advocate the needs of the College with government officials;
d. Support the foundation and fundraising efforts; and
e. Protect the College from inappropriate influence.

7. Lead as a thoughtful, educated team
   a. Engage in ongoing learning about board roles and responsibilities;
   b. Be curious and inclusive;
   c. Be positive and optimistic; and
   d. Support and respect each other.

Authority: MCL, §389.103