



Boulder Valley School District

File: BAA

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Associated Regulation: BAA-R

BOARD OPERATIONS

Purpose of this Policy

The Board of Education and the Superintendent, working together, comprise the leadership team for the District. This team of eight sets the overall vision, policies, and goals for the district, creates the systems and plans needed to achieve those goals, and evaluates the performance of the District relative to the vision and goals, and relative to the willingness of the community to provide resources. The public expects this team to provide the best planning, decision making, communication, managerial, and educational expertise. The Board and Superintendent have specific formal roles and responsibilities as set out in state statute and in Policies BA, BBA and CBA. The Board understands that the day to day working relationships between individual Board members, and between individual board members and the Superintendent, play a critical role in the ability of the leadership team to fulfill those formal roles. This policy establishes some philosophical ideas and practical ways of working together that will allow each member to support the roles of the others and ensure the mutual success of all. The Board pledges to strive toward excellence in performance and expects the same from each individual who works in the Boulder Valley School District. This Policy establishes norms and expectations in the areas of Interactions, Individual Conduct, Communications, Decision Making, and Professional Development.

Interactions

The Board and Superintendent will endeavor to observe the following set of philosophical ideas, operating principles, and behaviors in order to create an open, productive environment for this team approach to District Leadership:

1. Positive Approach

Each member of the team is charged with the responsibility of working with the team to find the best way to meet the needs of our students and schools. Our approach is to work in an open, positive, and problem solving atmosphere toward designing, implementing, and assessing plans to achieve the goals of the organization.

2. Cooperation and Support

To develop an effective team process, we must support and cooperate with team members as a collective group and as individuals. This vital process will encourage our most creative and productive work. Each individual has some responsibility in the areas of policy and direction; each individual needs support and information from all others to carry out these responsibilities. If we contribute to the success of the ideas, activities, and products of each team member, we help assure our success as individuals in the organization as well as the success of the total effort. Cooperation, and support do not mean we will agree on every issue; dialogue, divergent thinking, and debate will encourage the best decisions.

Individual Behavior

Board members resolve to address business brought before the Board in an open, civil manner, respecting the rights of board and community members to hold differing views. All board members recognize that we share the common goal of making the District's educational system the best possible for all children; however, we may prefer different strategies to achieve that goal. We desire to take advantage of each of our strengths to work collaboratively and in a cooperative manner to identify common ground.

Communications

Channels of communication must be established between all members of the team, and must remain open to provide for the flow of information throughout the District.

Effective interpersonal communication requires a healthy communication climate with high levels of trust and respect for individuals and for the mission of providing an excellent and equitable education for all students. To achieve this trust, messages must be open, straightforward, and honest.

Channels have been established to provide continuous formal ways for all members of the team to communicate with each other. In addition there are innumerable informal channels used to keep people informed. These informal channels should also be nurtured. There are a few ground rules for using these channels to make sure that information is correct and consistent:

- a. The Superintendent and the Board will make deliberate attempts to share information and data with all members.
- b. It is hereby acknowledged that the School District's administration and staff report to the Superintendent and not to the Board.
- c. All communications between any member of the School Board acting in an official capacity and any member of administration or staff of the School District shall be coordinated through the Superintendent. This includes visits to schools in the capacity of Board

Member. If there is any doubt about contacting employees of the District, the Superintendent should be contacted first. Questions about operation, direction, etc., should be directed to the Superintendent.

d. Board Requests for Information

- i. All requests for records or documents by Board members shall be made to the Superintendent. Responses to such requests shall be done in a timely manner.
- ii. If a Board member requests school records, the Superintendent will provide copies of the documents requested to other Board members.
- iii. Individual Board members should not request employees or the Superintendent or his or her staff to engage in research projects or compilation of data requiring staff time which is estimated to require more than three hours. Only the Board itself may authorize such requests requiring more than three hours of staff time. Responses shall be provided within an agreed upon time period.

e. When an individual board member is contacted by a staff or community member, a board member should:

- i. Hear out the individual's concern.
- ii. Inquire if the individual has discussed the issue with the person immediately responsible. If not, have them discuss it and encourage them to find resolution at that level. Alert the inquirer to the complaint procedure.
- iii. Express concern about the issue and your desire to assist in a satisfactory resolution, while reinforcing the need to resolve the issue at the immediate administrative level. If unsuccessful, alert the inquirer to the complaint procedure (Policy [KE](#) and Regulation [KE-R](#)).

f. It is important to keep the Board and Superintendent informed of unusual happenings as quickly as they occur.

g. The Superintendent will communicate official District positions to the media. Board members may state personal positions as long as they make it known they are not speaking for the Board or the District. If board members are contacted by the media, they should inform the Superintendent's office.

- h. The Board sometimes functions in a judicial role for school staff members, students and the public with respect to fair implementation of Board policies. For this reason, Board members are cautioned to avoid seeking detailed and/or confidential information about pending matters involving staff members, students or community member concerns.

Decision-making

We must strive toward making consistent, impartial, and fair judgments in all situations. Combining information, involvement, and common sense will result in good decisions for our District and our children. There is a workable formula for researching problems and reaching decisions which should be followed before any decision or recommendation is made:

- a. **Define the problem.**
- b. **Define the criteria against which potential solutions will be evaluated.**
- c. **Gather the facts.** No decision will solve any problem without a full understanding of the situation and an analysis of the facts.
- d. **Involve representatives who are affected by the problem and who will be affected by the decision.** The fact finding process is a good way to involve people in gathering data, becoming knowledgeable about the problem, and becoming committed to the solution.
- e. Once the facts are in and the representatives involved, **analyze the data.** This analysis will vary greatly depending upon the particular problem. In some cases it may be useful to all people with expertise in specific areas to help analyze the data and prepare suggestions for solutions.
- f. Once the group has looked closely at the alternatives, it should then **make a recommendation.** This recommendation should include documentation of the process used to arrive at that recommendation.
- g. The decision-making process does not end with the decision or plan. **Once the decision is made, it must be communicated to those who are affected.** The decision then must be put into operation and responsibilities assigned. Plans must also include systematic review and evaluation procedures, including dates by which future decisions regarding continuation, modification, or discontinuance must be made.

Professional Development

We believe that excellence in education is achieved through excellence in our staff, administrators, and Board. We are committed to the idea of assisting each team member to plan for personal and skill development. Each team member, however, should take responsibility for professional development.

End of File: BAA