

Litchfield Elementary School District No. 79
COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL FOR
SUPERINTENDENT/GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS
Approved January 2023

We will maintain an atmosphere of respect for one another, and attempt, at all times, to work together as a team, in order to operate as advocates for our students, parents and our District in alignment with Governing Board Policy.

Superintendent to Governing Board Communication

1. The Superintendent will update the Governing Board Members through weekly *Superintendent Friday Updates* (except during times of less frequent news, i.e., winter, spring and summer breaks); as well as through email updates and phone calls as necessary by the Superintendent as well as the Executive Assistant and Executive Team Members, individual meetings and the use of a Board autodial. - The *Update* is aligned with the Strategic Plan/Superintendent's Evaluation and is written to keep Governing Board Members apprised of ongoing progress regarding goal areas as well as other district work.
2. It is important that Board Members read the *Update* to stay current on upcoming calendar events, ongoing District happenings and areas of potential concern.
3. The Superintendent (or designee) will notify Board Members as soon as possible regarding incidents that are deemed as school or community emergencies (i.e., lockdowns). This is one part of "no surprises" (i.e., questions asked and comments made at the Governing Board Meeting or in any public meeting, rumors of which Administration and/or Board may need to be aware in the community, information about emergencies, and on-going District Business.)
4. The Superintendent will make every attempt to provide electronically by email, internet download or other electronic media, the Governing Board agenda and supporting information to Board Members by the Thursday prior to the Board Meeting.
5. Superintendent will, as much as possible, maintain the practice of "no surprises".

Governing Board to Superintendent Communication

1. Board Members are to contact the Superintendent directly with any questions or thoughts about the information in the *Update*.
2. Board Members with questions on agenda items should make every attempt to email or call the Superintendent by noon on Monday with the question(s) to be asked. This does not preclude the Member from asking the question at the Board meeting, but it does allow Administration the time to research the question and provide answers at the meeting.
3. Board Members with questions or concerns about any school or District operations shall contact the Superintendent rather than going directly to the staff members.
4. The Superintendent shall be emailed if the question involves a task or request for information. The task/information requested should be within the sphere of current Board work or the Strategic Plan. Given the limited resources and time staff has available, Board Member requests for information or tasks requiring extensive staff time to compile and complete will be brought to Agenda Review for direction prior to the staff doing the work. All Board Members will be copied on the completed task.
5. Governing Board Members will, as much as possible, maintain the practice of "no surprises."
6. Governing Board Members will not engage in unsubstantiated claims or anonymous complaints/concerns.
7. The Governing Board President will address privately any concerns about the lack of adherence to the protocols with the offending Governing Board member.

Governing Board to School Attorney Communication (Ref: [Policy BDG - School Attorney](#))

The Superintendent and the Board President shall be designated as the representatives of the District who may confer with counsel. The following are protocols for individual Board members who have a question for the school attorney:

1. Questions are to be emailed to either the Superintendent or the Board President who will then forward questions to the attorney.
2. Once questions have been answered by the attorney the following will occur:
 - a. If questions are time sensitive attorney's response will be forwarded to all Board members by the Superintendent when it is received.
 - b. Otherwise, the attorney's response will be added to the next Board Update.
 - c. If the attorney's response is that she is unable to answer these questions in an email then an Executive Session will be scheduled at the next available Board meeting or when the attorney is available.
3. The District will not be responsible for fees that accrue because of unauthorized individual Board member consultation with private counsel.

Governing Board Communication with Public and Staff Members (Ref: [Policy BHC - Board Communications With Staff Members](#)/[BHD - Board Communications With The Public](#))

The following are protocols in regards to Board communication with employees, public and media.

Employees:

1. An employee will first communicate on school- or employment-related matters at the administrative level. Any employee who exhausts the opportunity of discussing a matter at various administrative levels may then communicate in writing with the Board on the matter. No anonymous communication will be considered by the Board.
2. Official communications, policies, directives, Board concerns, and Board action(s), as appropriate, will be communicated to employees by the Superintendent.

Public:

1. Any community member who exhausts the opportunity of discussing a matter at the administrative level may communicate with the Board in writing. No anonymous communication will be considered by the Board.
2. A member of the community who wishes to address the Board in person may do so by following the procedures in [Policy BEDH - Public Participation at Board Meetings](#).
3. Official communications, policies, Board concerns, and Board action, as appropriate, will be imparted to the community by the Superintendent.

Media:

1. Governing Board members shall contact the Superintendent and Director of Community Relations before engaging with or responding to the media (including interviews, written statements, and "off the record" conversations).
2. Governing Board members shall immediately contact the Superintendent upon learning of potentially negative news items about the District.
3. The Governing Board President or designee shall be the spokesperson for the Governing Board.