



Eanes Independent School District Board Operating Procedures

Note: In the event there is any conflict between Eanes ISO Board Policy and these procedures, Board Policy shall prevail.

MEETINGS OF THE BOARD

1. Developing Board Meeting Agendas

- a. Board Calendar
 - i. The Superintendent **will** develop a Board Calendar annually that **will** include regular Board Meetings and Study Sessions. This calendar will include those agenda items that are of a cyclical and/or recurring nature.
 - ii. The Board Calendar and meeting agendas will be made available to the Board and the public via appropriate communication methods and posted in accordance with Board policy.
- b. Agendas
 - i. A preliminary agenda for monthly Board Meetings, Special Meetings, and Study Sessions will be prepared by the Superintendent for approval by the Executive Committee of the Board. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Board President, Vice President, and Secretary.
 - ii. Items for agenda not on the preliminary agenda can be added. For instance, items discussed at previous Board Meetings which are proposed for inclusion at a future meeting **will** be included on the agenda when appropriate.
 - iii. Any two Trustees may submit a request to the Superintendent, Board President, or member of the Executive Committee for an item

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to be placed on the agenda for a future meeting. (See BE (Local)). The date of the inclusion of the item is at the discretion of the Superintendent and Executive Committee. Trustees will be notified within two weeks of each request submitted. The notification will include the names of the trustees making the requests.

c. Timely Notification and Supporting Information

- i. Unless there are emergency circumstances, Board Members shall be notified of a meeting at least 72 hours prior to a Special Board Meeting, and at least one hour prior to an Emergency Board Meeting.
- ii. All reasonable attempts will be made to provide Board Members with supporting information at least 72 hours prior to a Regular or Special Board Meeting or a Study Session, and at least one hour prior to an Emergency Board Meeting. If more time is needed by staff to prepare supporting information prior to a Meeting, the Board shall be notified about when the information will be available.
- iii. Questions regarding agenda items or requests for supporting documents should be directed to the Superintendent (copying the Board President) prior to the meeting.

d. Consent Agenda

- i. The consent agenda shall include items of a routine and/or recurring nature, grouped together under one action item. (See BE (Local)).
- ii. The Executive Committee shall determine which items qualify for inclusion in the consent agenda. (See BE (Local)).
- iii. Any Board Member may request that any item on the consent agenda be pulled for individual discussion and consideration. (See BE (Local)).

2. Conducting Board Meetings

a. Meetings

- i. Regular Board Meetings will be held monthly except for the month of July and the date, time, and location of each regular Board meeting shall be posted on the District's website. (See BE (Local)).

b. Quorum

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- i. Any time a majority of the Board Members are gathered to discuss District business, it is considered a meeting, and must be posted as such according to Board policy and the Texas Open Meetings Act.
 - ii. Unless a quorum (majority of the Board Members) is established, no business of the Board can be conducted.
- c. Closed Session
 - i. The Board may elect to meet in closed session as provided for in the Texas Open Meetings Act, Government Code, Chapter 551, Subchapters D and E. (See BEC (Legal)). The Board President will determine when a closed session is required pursuant to the above-referenced laws.
 - ii. In accordance with legal requirements, the posted agenda shall identify the section or sections of the Act authorizing the closed session and the general topics or subjects to be discussed.
 - iii. Before any closed session is convened, the presiding officer will publicly identify such section or sections and such topics and subjects. (See BEC (Legal)).
 - iv. All final votes, actions, or decisions regarding closed session action items will be taken in an open meeting. (See BEC (Legal)).
- d. Participation of Superintendent
 - i. The Superintendent shall attend all meetings of the Board, both public and closed, except when the Board is considering the Superintendent's contract, evaluation, or performance; or is resolving conflicts between individual Board Members.
 - ii. In the event of the Superintendent's illness or Board approved absence, the Superintendent's designee shall attend such meetings.
- e. Public Participation/Open Forum
 - i. At all Board Meetings, the public may address the Board during the Open Forum portion of the meeting. Open Forum shall occur before any discussion and/or action portions of meetings.
 - ii. Each speaker will be allocated three minutes, unless this time has been increased or decreased by the Presiding Officer in accordance with Board Policy. (See BED (Local)).

- iii. When necessary for effective meeting management or to accommodate large numbers of individuals wishing to address the Board (twenty (20) or more persons), the Presiding Officer may make adjustments to public comment procedures, including adjusting when Open Forum will occur during the meeting, reordering agenda items, continuing agenda items to a later meeting, providing expanded opportunity for Open Forum, or establishing an overall time limit for public comment and adjusting the time allotted to each speaker. However, no individual shall be given less than one minute to make comments. (See BED (Local)).
- iv. Speakers with specific complaints may be referred to the administrative resolution processes established in Board Policy. See BED (Local)).
- v. Public participation at a Board meeting is limited to the public comment portion of the meeting designated for that purpose. At all other times during a Board meeting, the public shall not enter into discussion or debate on matters being considered by the Board, unless requested by the Presiding Officer. (See BED (Local)). Comments or questions on topics not on the agenda may be referred to the Superintendent for consideration and response at a later date, if appropriate.
- vi. The presiding officer may terminate the time of any speaker who does not adhere to the established rules.
- vii. The Board shall not tolerate disruption of the meeting by members of the public. If, after at least one warning from the presiding officer, any person disrupts the meeting by his or her words or actions, the presiding officer may request assistance from law enforcement officials to have the disruptive person removed from the meeting. (See BED (Local)).
- f. Response to Public Comments
 - i. Board Members will carefully consider comments made during the Open Forum.
 - ii. Board Members will not respond to or enter into discussions with the speakers or any audience members during the meeting. Items on

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the agenda will be discussed as appropriate and scheduled on the agenda. Discussions of items not on the agenda are not legally permitted; however, specific factual information or recitation of existing policy may be furnished in response to inquiries. (See BED (Local)).

- iii. Board Members, after being recognized by the Presiding Officer, may ask clarifying questions only of speakers and/or the Superintendent during the Open Forum.
- g. Board Meeting Procedures
 - i. The Board shall be guided by Board Policy, parliamentary procedure as detailed in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, or as adopted in this Board Operating Procedure. (See BE (Local)).
 - ii. The Board President will act as the Presiding Officer during all meetings of the Board of Trustees. In the event that the Board President is absent, the Board Vice President or Secretary, as appropriate, will act in this capacity.
 - iii. The Presiding Officer has the responsibility to keep the discussion focused on the adopted agenda items or motion before the Board and shall limit any discussion that does not apply to such items or motions.
 - iv. Except in the event of an absence or legal or ethical conflict of interest, each Board Member shall vote on all action items.
- h. Use of Electronic Devices by Board Members at Board Meetings
 - i. The Board recognizes that communicating electronically (e.g. email, social media, text messaging) is an efficient and convenient way to exchange information on school matters. However, the Board also recognizes that the use of such electronic means to communicate during public meetings, by Board Members, may create the impression that Board Members are deliberating regarding issues that are the subject of the Meeting, contrary to the spirit of the Open Meetings Act. Thus, during Board Meetings, Board Members shall not communicate electronically except in the event of an emergency or family matter.
 - ii. This provision shall not be interpreted to preclude the integration of technology at Board Meetings to support Board Member

participation; thus, the Board encourages the use of electronic devices (including but not limited to laptop computers, iPads, tablets, and/or notebook computers) by Board Members at Board Meetings as a resource so long as Board Members do not utilize those devices to communicate electronically during the Meeting.

i. Transacting Business

- i. When an agenda item is presented, a discussion shall be held and a decision reached through voting in accordance with the above prescribed procedures.
- ii. Although there may be dissenting votes, which are a matter of record, each Board decision shall be an action by the whole Board, binding upon each Member.

j. Grievance Hearings

- i. Grievances will be handled according to the administrative resolution processes in Board Policy.
- ii. Issues not resolved adequately at the administrative level may be appealed to the Board for consideration at an appropriate time in the near future.
- iii. When hearing grievance matters, the following rules of procedure shall apply:
 1. No new evidence can be considered.
 2. No new complaints, points of contention, or arguments can be considered.
 3. Generally, the Board will not substitute its judgment for that of the Administration unless the Administration's findings and rulings are contrary to law or policy, or are not supported by substantial evidence.

3. Conducting Board Study Sessions

No Policy

a. Purpose

- i. Board Study Sessions may be scheduled each month. Study Sessions are intended to allow the Administration to present information to the Board and provide opportunities for more in-

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depth discussion of matters well in advance of requested action by the Board that is:

1. Time sensitive and/or discussion intensive;
 2. Required by law, rule or policy; or
 3. Is necessary for the efficient and effective operation of the District.
- ii. As a general practice, items will be first presented and discussed at a Study Session prior to being placed on the agenda for action at a Regular or Special Board Meeting.
 - iii. Because of the purpose of Study Sessions, members of the public are encouraged to share opinions and comments on the discussion items during the Open Forum portion of the meeting.
- b. Dates and Agendas
- i. Study Sessions will be scheduled with appropriate spacing between Regular Board Meetings.
 - ii. The Superintendent will develop a preliminary Study Session agenda in collaboration with the Executive Committee.
 - iii. The Superintendent will use discretion in determining the nature and extent of background materials specific to each agenda item. All reasonable efforts will be made to have background materials available for Board Members three days prior to the Study Session.

4. Election of Board Officers

- a. Officers
 - i. Board Officers (President, Vice President and Secretary) will be nominated and elected annually at the next scheduled Board Meeting following a Trustee Election. (See BDAA (Legal)).
 - ii. The President shall conduct the election of all Board Officers and then shall relinquish the chair to the new President (if the new President is a different Board Member). If the President is not reelected to the Board, the Vice-President or Secretary shall conduct the election.

- iii. A nomination for an Officer position requires a second.
 - iv. If necessary, the Board may discuss the merits of nominees for a given office in closed session before voting in open session.
 - v. To conduct voting of Board Officers, the Board shall use the *Viva Voce* method, as outlined in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised. If there is more than one nominee for an office, candidates are voted on in the order nominated. The chair asks for all in favor of a particular nominee, then for all opposed, before moving on to the next nominee. If the first nominee does not receive a majority of affirmative votes, the second name is announced and the votes called for. Voting continues for each nominee until one receives a majority. When one has received a majority, the remaining nominees need not be announced and voted on.
- b. Vacancies
 - i. A vacancy among Officers of the Board shall be filled by majority action of the Board.
 - ii. The Board will hold an election to fill an Officer vacancy at the next regularly scheduled Board Meeting after the vacancy occurs.
- c. Board Subcommittees: Trustees can serve on Board Subcommittees or as liaisons. Trustees shall submit their preferences to the Board President and the Board President shall notify the administration and trustees of the assignments no later than June 30 of each year.

ANNUAL EVALUATIONS

1. Superintendent Evaluation

- a. Evaluations of the Superintendent will be conducted in accordance with law. One formative evaluation will be scheduled each year, targeted to occur in April. A summative evaluation will be conducted in closed session, targeted to occur in September-October, and may include a discussion of the Superintendent's contract.
- b. The agenda for the formative evaluation shall be developed by the Superintendent and Board President to address such things as Superintendent performance issues, current and future challenges faced by

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the Board and Superintendent team, litigation updates, operating procedures, and any other matters deemed necessary to promote the effective functioning of the leadership team. All discussions will be held in a manner not to violate the Texas Open Meetings Act. The Board may discuss the Superintendent's contract at any formative evaluation.

- c. The Board will use a summative evaluation document developed by the Board President in accordance with Board Policy. A copy of the evaluation document **will** be completed in advance by each Board Member and brought to a closed meeting to discuss the Superintendent's performance. All comments and ratings **will** be compiled into a single document to be given to the Superintendent for discussion during a closed meeting with the Superintendent.
- d. The Board shall strive to accomplish the following objectives during each evaluation:
 - i. Clarify to the Superintendent his or her role, as seen by the Board.
 - ii. Clarify to Board Members the Superintendent's role, according to the Board's written criteria, as expressed in the Superintendent's job description and the District's goals and objectives.
 - iii. Foster an early understanding among new Board Members of the evaluation process and the Superintendent's current performance objectives and priorities.
 - iv. Develop and sustain a harmonious working relationship between the Board and the Superintendent.
 - v. Ensure administrative leadership for excellence in the District.

2. Board Team Building

No Policy

- a. An evaluation of the Board/Superintendent team will be conducted along with a team building exercise each June or at other times as agreed to by the Board and Superintendent.
- b. This evaluation/exercise may include:
 - i. Review of Board Operating Procedures.
 - ii. Board Member training.
 - iii. Conflict resolution.

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- iv. Working relationships with the Superintendent.
- v. Conduct of Board meetings.
- vi. Long-range planning and goal setting.
- vii. Relationship with the community.
- viii. Analysis of communication styles and team dynamics.

3. Board Self-Evaluation

No Policy

- a. As needed, the Board may conduct a self-evaluation of its performance in governing, overseeing district management, and conducting its business. The meeting will be posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act. As appropriate, the Board may discuss issues involving the performance or evaluation of specific Board Members in closed session.
- b. The Board may use criteria contained in existing instruments or develop a local instrument to support the self-assessment process. Trustees will complete the chosen instrument in accordance with the instructions and either bring it to the meeting or send it to an identified point of contact for scoring prior to the meeting.
- c. During the meeting, the Board will focus its discussion on those items in the instrument where individual responses indicate either a comparatively weak performance or there is disagreement about the Board's current performance. The primary intent of the discussion is to identify areas requiring additional attention to improve Board performance. Additionally, areas of strength will be noted.
- d. After discussing the assessment results, the Board may identify priority areas for improvement and goals related to the identified areas. While these goals may relate to District priorities, their primary focus is to identify targets specifically for Board action.
- e. The Board may schedule a review of progress toward its goals each six months as part of a regularly scheduled meeting or workshop.

INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

1. Access to Information

- a. An individual Board Member, acting in his or her official capacity, shall have the right to seek information pertaining to District fiscal affairs, business

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transactions, governance, and personnel matters, including information that properly may be withheld from members of the general public in accordance with the Public Information Chapter of the Government Code. (See BBE (Local)). If the purpose of a request for information is unclear, the Board President shall determine whether a Board Member is seeking information in an official capacity.

- b. Individual Board Members shall not have access to confidential student records, unless the Member is acting in his or her official capacity and has a legitimate educational interest in the records in accordance with policies FL (LEGAL) and (LOCAL). If the purpose of a request for information is unclear, the Board President shall determine whether a Board Member is seeking information in an official capacity.
- c. Requests by Board Members for existing District information or documents should be made to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall provide the requested information to all Board Members.
- d. Individual Members shall not direct or require District employees to prepare reports derived from an analysis of information in existing District records or to create a new record compiled from information in existing District records. *

2. Authority

- a. Board Members as individuals shall not exercise any authority over the District, its property, or its employees. (See BBE (Local)).
- b. Except for appropriate duties and functions of the Board President, an individual Member may not act on behalf of the Board without the express authorization of the Board. Without such authorization, no individual Member may commit the Board on any issue. (See BBE (Local)).
- c. Board Members will avoid personal involvement in activities the Board has delegated to the Superintendent.
- d. Trustees are required to have twelve (12) months of service on the Board prior to being elected as a Board Officer.

3. General Communication

- a. To communicate about District business, Board Members should utilize the District's electronic mail server rather than personal electronic mail accounts.
- b. Communications about District business are subject to the Public Information Act, regardless of whether those communications are located on the District's network or on a Board Member's personal account.
- c. To ensure transparency in public information, Board Members should not utilize or encourage the "blind copy" feature in email communications regarding District business.
- d. Suggested guidelines about Board Member communications can be found in the attached document, *Communication Examples*.

4. Communication with Other Board Members

No Policy

- a. With regard to communication among Board Members (including communication through electronic mail or other social media):
 - i. Board Members may communicate with each other on a one-to-one basis, but must avoid four or more Board Members (individually or cumulatively) discussing District business.
 - ii. To avoid public speculation that the Open Meetings Act has been violated, Board Members must exercise extreme caution at social functions and avoid discussing District business.
 - iii. Communications should not be sent from one Board Member to more than two other Board Members, even if no reply is requested, expected, or received.
 - iv. Board Members who have received communications should not forward them if the result is that a quorum of Board Members might receive the message.
 - v. If a Board Member wishes to provide information to the entire Board, the information should first be submitted to the Superintendent, who will provide the information to all Board Members.

5. Communication with the Media

- a. The Board President serves as the official spokesperson for the Board on issues of interest to the media.
- b. It is inappropriate for a Board Member to state an opinion on an upcoming issue that is scheduled for discussion at a Board meeting. Only the Board President or his/her designee is to comment to the media regarding the Board's position on an item of interest to the media while the item is under consideration and has not been decided by Board action.
- c. So as not to deliberate issues before the Board in the media, calls to Board Members from the media must be directed to the Board President or Superintendent.

6. Issues of Concern or Complaints Expressed to Board Members

- a. Employees, students, parents or other members of the public who bring concerns or complaints regarding students or District personnel to an individual Board Member shall be referred to the administrative resolution processes outlined in Board Policy. (See DBGA (Local), FNG (Local), and GF (Local)).
- b. Board Members shall notify the Superintendent of such a complaint.
- c. When a complaint is received via e-mail addressed to "Trustees" or "Trustees" and the Superintendent, the Board President and Superintendent will determine the appropriate method for a response. If an administrative response is required, the Superintendent or designee will respond, as appropriate. If a Board response is required, the Board President will confer with the Superintendent and then respond on behalf of the Board. If appropriate, the same information may be provided to the other Board Members by the Superintendent. (See Communications Examples, attached).
- d. When a complaint is received via e-mail at a Board Member's individual e-mail address, the e-mail shall be forwarded to the Board President and Superintendent for assessment. The Board Member may notify the original sender that the communication has been referred to the Board President and

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Superintendent for a response.

- e. As necessary, the Superintendent, or designee, shall guide the complainant to the appropriate staff member, administrative procedure, or Board Policy.
- f. Anonymous calls, letters, or emails will not receive the Board's attention, discussion, or response. Similarly, communications that include profanity or abusive name-calling will not receive a response.

7. Meetings with the Superintendent and other District Employees No Policy

- a. Board Members shall respect the Superintendent's daily schedule.
- b. Meetings with the Superintendent shall be scheduled to allow for an adequate discussion of the topic or topics, but with due regard being given to the Superintendent's other time commitments.
- c. These same general rules apply when a Board Member wishes to meet with any other District employee. Meetings shall be approved by or scheduled through the Superintendent.

8. Board Communications with Staff No Policy

- a. Board Members have the same rights as others to communicate with District employees regarding issues involving their own children.
- b. Board Members have the right to communicate with District employees in personal conversation and social settings as long as such communication does not circumvent the role and authority of the Superintendent. Circumvention occurs when the Board Member's intent is to persuade employees, direct employees, elicit a position from employees, or obtain information from employees without the board's knowledge or Superintendent's knowledge and/or consent.
- c. Board Members shall route requests from staff for information or research through the Superintendent, copying the Board President. The Superintendent will forward to the appropriate staff. The Superintendent and Board President will forward information to the entire board when appropriate.
- d. A board member has the right to correspond directly with General Counsel (see Section 11, below).

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- e. Prior to visiting a campus or attending a District- or school-related meeting where District business may be discussed (i.e. booster club meeting, open house, etc.) in their official capacity, Board members should email the principal and any other applicable parties (ie. booster club president) and copy the Superintendent/Board President. This notification is not required for general community events (like sporting events) or for activities/meetings attended as a parent.

9. Reimbursable Expenses

- a. Board Members shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred for:
 - i. Carrying out the business of the Board at Board request.
 - ii. Attending meetings as official representatives of the Board.
- b. Registration fees for Board Members attending conventions/conferences in their official capacity within Education Service Center Region 13 will be paid for by the District.
- c. Registration fees for Board Members attending conventions/conferences in their official capacity outside of Education Service Center Region 13 will be paid for by the District, up to three per year.
- d. District reimbursement for travel and expenses related to conventions/conferences will be limited to six nights per year.
- e. In addition to Sections 9.b. and 9.c. above, the District shall pay all registration fees for one Board Member per year accepted to participate in Leadership TASB. Any travel and expenses for Leadership TASB exceeding the six reimbursed nights in Section 9.d. shall be paid for by the participating Board Member.
- f. District reimbursement for additional conventions/conferences and associated allowable expenses will require prior approval from the Board President.
- g. Arrangements necessary to register for a conference/convention and related accommodations (hotel, travel, etc.) shall be arranged through the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent.

10. Visits to Campuses

No Policy

- a. Board Members are encouraged to attend any and all school events as their time permits.
- b. Board Members must notify the Superintendent prior to visiting a campus in an official capacity.
- c. Board Members shall not visit a campus in an attempt to evaluate personnel.
- d. It is often difficult for staff members to view Board Members as parents rather than as Board Members. When visiting a campus or classroom as parents, Board Members shall:
 - i. Make it clear that they are acting as parents.
 - ii. Follow the same rules and guidelines for all parents regarding campus visits.
 - iii. Never request nor accept extraordinary consideration for their children.

11. Board Communications with Legal Counsel

- a. The Board shall retain an attorney or attorneys, as necessary, to serve as the District's legal counsel and representatives in matters requiring legal services. (See BDD (Local)).
- b. Individual Trustees shall channel legal inquiries through the Superintendent or Board designee, as appropriate, when advice or information from the District's outside legal counsel is sought. An individual Trustee may contact the District's General Counsel with regard to issues relating to the Trustee's official duties; however, Trustees may not direct the General Counsel to take action or prepare information without following the procedures outlined in *Access to Information* above.
- c. A report of legal advice received shall be presented to the Board when deemed appropriate by the District's General Counsel, Superintendent, Board President, or Board designee, or upon request of the Board. (See BDD (Local)).
- d. Individual Board Members may contact TASB legal division for prepaid legal consultation as long as the District maintains their membership in that service.

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12. Concerns or Violation of Board Operating Procedures

No Policy

- a. Individual Board Members are encouraged to express their concerns about another Member's performance directly to that Member and the Board President.
- b. The Board President shall discuss the concern with the Board Member in question on behalf of the reporting Board Member, or shall moderate a discussion between the Members. If a quorum of the Board is involved, the meeting must be posted and conducted in accordance with the Texas Open Meeting Act.
- c. The President shall remind the Board Member whose behavior is **in** question about Board Policies, including the adopted Code of Ethics and Board Operating Procedures, and discuss how the questionable behavior may not comply with Policies, the Code, or Operating Procedures. The discussion also will identify more appropriate alternatives to the conduct at issue or refer the Board Member to policies or procedures that outline approved ways to deal with the issue that prompted the conduct and/or concern.
- d. If the Board Member in question does not believe his or her behavior is in conflict with District Policies, including the Board's Code of Ethics and/or Operating Procedures, an agenda item specifying "Evaluation of Individual Board Member's Performance" may be listed on the agenda for an upcoming Board Meeting.
- e. The matter will be discussed by the full Board in closed session **in** an attempt to clearly identify the conduct and/or concern and discuss possible solutions or alternative approaches that may have a more positive impact on team cohesion and effectiveness, up to and including private and public censure.
- f. If the concern involves the Board President, a member may discuss his or her concerns with the Board Vice-President, following the process outlined above to the extent possible.
- g. Generally speaking, when concerned about a Board Member's behavior, Board Members agree the best practice is to:
 - i. Not take concerns about fellow Board Members to the Superintendent.
 - ii. Not speak about concerns regarding individual Members with individuals outside of the Board and/or otherwise in compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.
 - iii. Not speak negatively about another Board Member, Superintendent, or

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staff in the community.

- iv. Follow the steps outlined herein and in Board Policy.

13. **Annual Review of Board Operating Procedures**

No

Policy

Board Operating Procedures **will** be reviewed annually and updated, **if** necessary, during a scheduled Board/Superintendent Team Building meeting.

Communication Examples

General Information:

- In general, if you have a question that you would like for someone in the Administration to research, please email the **Superintendent** and **cc: Board President**, so both will be aware of the request for more information.
 - The Superintendent will then forward to the appropriate administrator.
 - If the Superintendent and Board President determines that the correspondence will be valuable to the Board, it will be forwarded to the entire Board or included in a memo in a future board packet.
 - Exception: If the communication is regarding the Superintendent, correspond directly with General Counsel and the Board President.
- Prior to visiting a campus or attending a District- or school-related meeting where District business may be discussed (i.e. booster club meeting, open house, etc.) in their official capacity, Board members should email the principal and any other applicable parties (i.e. booster club president) and copy the Superintendent/Board President. This notification is not required for general community events (like sporting events) or for activities/meetings attended as a parent.

Indirect Communication



Event Attendance

Communication between Trustees outside of posted meetings?

Unless a district event is formally posted on the Board Calendar, no more than three Trustees may attend (social events are the exception, i.e. sport events, EEF events, etc.). When representing the Board at a function, it is recommended that Board members wear either Smart tags or nametags.



Email (between Trustees)

At all times outside of Board Meetings, refrain from communicating on a topic (posted or pending posting) with more than two other Trustees. Any kind of communication on a district topic between four (quorum) or more Trustees at one time is illegal; nor is a traveling quorum allowed, wherein the cumulative number of Trustees engaging in conversation via multiple communication methods about one topic exceeds three. Do not copy the entire Board on emails or "reply all" to emails that including other Board Members.



Receipt of Email

Community member is a personal friend/acquaintance?

Board member **should** send an email in response that acknowledges the email, but lets them know that the Board President or Administration will be responding as practicable.

Community member is NOT a personal friend/acquaintance?

Board member **should not** send an email in response that acknowledges the email. The Board President or Administration will respond as practicable.

The Board President or Administration may inform Board Members that a response was sent to the community member and forward the response to the entire Board, as appropriate.



Email (one trustee)

Community member is a personal friend/acquaintance?

Board member **should** send an email in response that acknowledges the email, but lets them know that the Board President or Administration will be responding as practicable.

- Forward the email to the Board President and Superintendent.



Communication Examples

Community member is NOT a personal friend/acquaintance?

Board member **should not** send an email in response.

- Forward the email to the Board President and Superintendent. The Board President or Administration will respond as practicable.



Received Text/Social Media Messages

Text or other direct social media communication is from an identified community member, a personal friend or acquaintance?

Board member **may** send a text in response that acknowledges the message, but lets the sender know the Board President or Administration will respond through another communication method as practicable.

- Forwards the message to the Board President and Superintendent with the individual's contact information.

Text is from an unidentified individual who is NOT a personal friend/acquaintance?

Board member **may** ask the sender to identify him/herself. If the person does not, the board member **should not** respond further.

Direct Communication



Phone Call

Community member contacts board member – either personal friend/acquaintance or not?

Board member **may** guide them on next steps (if comfortable). If Board member doesn't know what the next step is, contact the Board President or Superintendent for guidance. In most cases, there is policy/chain of command that can be communicated to the community member.

If board member responds with guidance in a written form, copy Board President and Superintendent.



Face-to-Face

Community member contacts board member – either personal friend/acquaintance or not?

Board member **may** guide them on next steps. If board member doesn't know what the next step is, contact the Board President or Superintendent for guidance. In most cases, there is policy/chain of command that can be communicated to the community member.



Public Event

Community member(s) address board member in front of a public audience.

Board member **should** listen to comments or statements and provide clarification or suggest next steps. Board member should not speculate and should be clear he or she does not speak for the Board or school district if he or she cannot clarify or doesn't know answers to the questions. The Board member may invite individuals to speak personally following the event. In most cases, there is policy/chain of command that can be communicated to the community member(s) at a later time.

An Eanes ISD staff member has contacted me about an issue. Can I speak to him/her?

Beware: Never engage so deeply in any discussion that could possibly become a grievance hearing. If a board member does this, they will not be able to participate when the grievance comes before the Board.

Communication Examples

Social Media

Social Media is defined as any online forum in which multiple people interact with one another.

A district issue/question comes up on social media

Unless you are responding with factual information, alert the Board President and Superintendent **regarding** the contents of the social media post and let either the Board President or the Administration respond to the social media post as practicable.

You see a post on a social media outlet that misrepresents the District or a topic that you wish to “comment” on.

Any individual can “comment” on social media as an individual, but never as a representative of the District.

If hosting a social media presence specifically as a Board Member, the best practice is to remain factual and use that platform to convey District and school information. You can repost or link to information, as well as summarize Board action or activities. Do not provide opinions or speak on behalf of the Board. For more information, please consult General Counsel or see TASB guidance found [here](#).

FAQs

- **The media has contacted me for a comment. What do I do?**

An individual board member should never respond to the media on behalf of the board, unless specifically directed to by the Board President. The media can get quotes from attending a meeting or listening to the audio of the meeting. If the media desires a response from the Board, they should be directed to contact the Board President or Superintendent.

- **A friend/acquaintance has contacted me about an issue. What should I do?**

Beware: Never engage so deeply in any discussion that could possibly become a grievance hearing. If a board member does this, they will not be able to participate when the grievance comes before the Board. If possible, preface your conversation with a brief education of Board Policy so that it is clear to the person from the beginning what you can or cannot talk about or act upon.

- **I met with a community member and would like some closure on the conversation. What is permissible?**

If a meeting has occurred, a board member can provide some closure by sending a message thanking the individual for the meeting/conversation and keeping the line of communication open.