



TOGETHER, WE EMPOWER STUDENTS

**ERA ISD**

Era Independent School District

Board Operating Procedures

# ERA ISD BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

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## VISION STATEMENT

Together, We Empower Students

## MISSION STATEMENT

**A Community Dedicated to Equipping and Empowering Students for a Lifetime of Success**

### IN ERA ISD WE BELIEVE...

- Students are at the center of our work and will be instructed in a way that maintains the flexibility to engage in a variety of programs, and with that freedom, the student shall accept the responsibility of maintaining the integrity of Era ISD.
- Parents and Families should be the greatest of advocates for their children, flexible, involved, encouraging, and seek to partner with, and support our teachers as an investment in the future success of our students.
- Faculty and Staff are respected role models in our community who challenge themselves and our students to be continual learners in a way that supports them in and out of the classroom to equip our children for success in life.
- Campus Leaders are trustworthy, committed and invested in our students and community, and hold themselves and others accountable in a way that inspires and empowers.
- The Superintendent and Central Office Staff are servant leaders who demonstrate integrity, transparency, and open communication in a way that values diversity and directs resources towards the overall mission while maintaining accountability to all stakeholders.
- The School Board members are trusted leaders with integrity who are actively involved in the community while providing checks and balances, adherence to the chain of command, strong financial stewardship and always acting in the best interest of Era ISD students.

## 1. ERA ISD BOARD OF TRUSTEES CODE OF ETHICS (BBF LOCAL)

As a member of the Board, I shall promote the best interests of the District as a whole and, to that end, shall adhere to the following ethical standards:

### EQUITY IN ATTITUDE

- ✓ I will accord others the respect I wish for myself.
- ✓ I will encourage expressions of different opinions and listen with an open mind to others' ideas.
- ✓ I will be fair, just, and impartial in all my decisions and actions.

### TRUSTWORTHINESS IN STEWARDSHIP

- ✓ I will be accountable to the public by representing District policies, programs, priorities, and progress accurately.
- ✓ I will be responsive to the community by seeking its involvement in District affairs and by communicating its priorities and concerns.
- ✓ I will work to ensure prudent and accountable use of District resources.
- ✓ I will make no personal promise or take private action that may compromise my performance of my responsibilities.

### HONOR IN CONDUCT

- ✓ I will tell the truth.
- ✓ I will share my views while working for consensus.
- ✓ I will respect the majority decision as the decision of the Board.
- ✓ I will base my decisions on fact rather than supposition, opinion, or public favor.

### INTEGRITY OF CHARACTER

- ✓ I will refuse to surrender judgment to any individual or group at the expense of the District as a whole.
- ✓ I will consistently uphold all applicable laws, rules, policies, and governance procedures.
- ✓ I will not disclose information that is confidential by law or that will needlessly harm the District if disclosed.

### COMMITMENT TO SERVICE

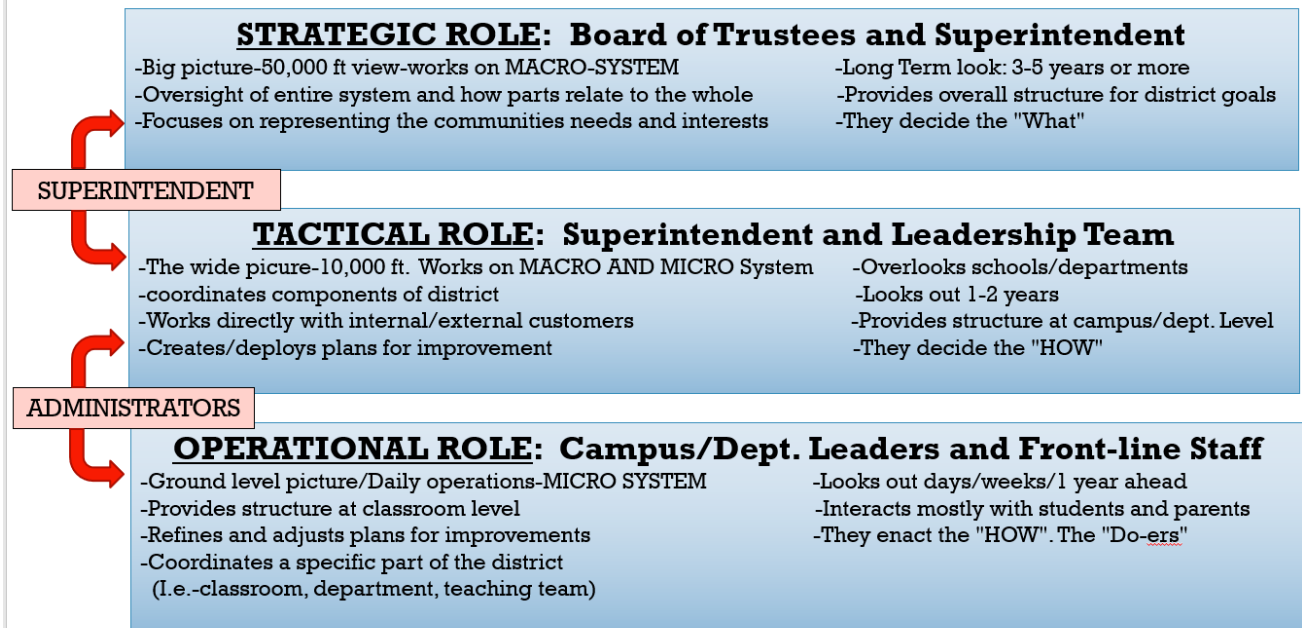
- ✓ I will focus my attention on fulfilling the Board's responsibilities of goal setting, policymaking, and evaluation.
- ✓ I will diligently prepare for and attend Board meetings.
- ✓ I will avoid personal involvement in activities the Board has delegated to the Superintendent.
- ✓ I will seek continuing education that will enhance my ability to fulfill my duties effectively.

### STUDENT-CENTERED FOCUS

- ✓ I will be continuously guided by what is best for all students of the District.

As a member of the Board, I shall adhere to the structure outlined below and ensure that I operate only in the Strategic Role.

## Where does the School Board Fit into the structure of the District?



Source: Moak, Casey & Associates-Continuous Improvement Consortium. Van Clay, Mark, & Soldwedel, Perry, The School Board Fieldbook:Leading with Vision. Solution Tree Press, 2008.

## 2. DEVELOPING MEETING AGENDA (BE LEGAL), (BE LOCAL), (BEC LEGAL)

### A. Placement of Items on the Agenda

1. In consultation with the Board President, the Superintendent shall prepare the agenda for all Board meetings. Any Trustee may request that a subject be included on the agenda for a meeting, and the Superintendent shall include on the preliminary agenda of the meeting all Trustee-requested topics that have been timely submitted
2. Before the official agenda is finalized for any meeting, the Superintendent shall consult the Board President to ensure that the agenda and the topics included meet with the President's approval.
3. The deadline for submitting items for inclusion on the agenda is the fourth business day before regular meetings and the fourth business day before special meetings.
4. Members of the Board shall be given notice of regular and special meetings at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled time of the meeting and at least one hour prior to the time of an emergency meeting.

### B. Open Session Agenda (BEC LEGAL)

1. All personnel issues must be discussed within guidelines established by the Texas Open Meetings Act.
2. Issues that violate an individual's right to privacy under the Texas Open Meetings Act, the Texas Open Records Act, or other applicable statute or regulation cannot be placed on the public portion of the agenda, unless specifically required to be conducted in Open Session by the Texas Open Meetings Act.

### C. Order of Business (BE LOCAL)

Notice of all meetings shall provide for the possibility of a closed meeting during an open meeting, as provided by law (See BEC).

The order of business for regular Board meetings shall be as set out in the agenda accompanying the notice of the meeting. At the meeting, the order in which posted agenda items are taken may be changed by consensus of Board members.

#### D. Individual Board Member Meeting Preparation

1. Board members will review agenda and all materials prior to the start of the Board meeting.
2. Board members will arrive at Board meetings in a timely manner.
3. Board members will direct individual requests for additional materials or information relating to agenda related questions to the Board President prior to the meeting.

### 3. CONDUCT DURING BOARD MEETINGS (BE LOCAL), (BED LOCAL), (BEC LEGAL)

#### A. Members of the Public Addressing the Board

1. At regular meetings the Board shall allot 30 minutes to hear persons who desire to make comments to the Board. Persons who wish to participate in this portion of the meeting shall sign up with the presiding officer or designee before the meeting begins and shall indicate the topic about which they wish to speak.
2. No presentation shall exceed five minutes. Delegations of more than five persons shall appoint one person to present their views before the Board.
3. Audience 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 audience shall not enter into discussion or debate on matters being considered by the Board, unless requested by the presiding officer.

#### B. Board Response to Patrons addressing the Board

1. Specific factual information or recitation of existing policy may be furnished in response to inquiries, but the Board shall not deliberate or decide regarding any subject that is not included on the agenda posted with notice of the meeting.
2. The presiding officer or designee shall determine whether a person addressing the Board has attempted to solve a matter administratively through resolution channels established by policy.

#### C. Discussion of Individual Employees and/or Students

1. The Board will not permit comments on individual personnel in public session which would violate Board policy.
2. The Board will not permit comments on individual students in public session which would violate Board policy.

#### D. Discussions and Limitations (BE LOCAL)

The Board President shall also halt discussion if the Board has agreed to a time limitation for discussion of an item, and that time limit has expired.

E. Parliamentary Procedures (BE LOCAL)

1. The Board shall observe the parliamentary procedures in *Robert's Rules of Order* (latest edition), except as otherwise provided in Board procedural rules by law.
2. Procedural rules may be suspended at any Board meeting by the Board.

F. Campaigning for Office

No trustee shall campaign for office for themselves or other candidates in any Board meeting.

G. Discussion of Motions: (BE LOCAL)

1. All discussions shall be directed solely to the business currently under discussion as posted agenda.
2. The Board President or meeting chair has the responsibility of keeping the discussion to the Motion at hand and shall halt discussion that does not apply to the business before the Board as posted on the agenda.
3. The Board President or meeting chair may recognize a Board member prior to the Board member giving his/her comments.
4. The Board President or meeting chair may also halt discussion if the Board has agreed to a time limitation for discussion of an item, and that time limit expires.

H. Voting (BE LOCAL):

1. The Board President shall have the right to discuss, make motions, and resolutions, and vote on all matters coming before the Board. (BDAA LOCAL)
2. No member shall discuss or vote on a motion if the action would violate state or federal law or Policies BBFA (LEGAL) or BBFB (LEGAL).
3. All votes, including, dissenting and abstaining votes, shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board meeting.



#### **4. INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER REQUEST FOR INFORMATION OR REPORT (BBE LEGAL), (BBE LOCAL)**

- A. Board members are entitled to the information they reasonably require to make informed decisions on the matters before them.
- B. Individual members shall seek access to records or request copies of records from the Superintendent or other designated custodian of records.
- C. When a custodian of records other than the Superintendent provides access to records or copies of records to individual Trustees, the provider shall inform the Superintendent of the records provided.
- D. If a member requests information that requires an excessive amount of staff time to compile, the Superintendent and Board President should consult with the member to find a reasonable solution.
- E. Information requested by a Board member will be provided to all Board members.
- F. If employees, parents, students, or other members of the public bring concerns or complaints to an individual Board member; he or she shall refer them to the Superintendent or another appropriate administrator, who shall proceed according to the applicable complaint policy.
- G. Because the Board is a body corporate, members can perform no valid act except as a body at meetings properly convened and conducted.

#### **5. CAMPUS VISITATION**

- A. Board members are encouraged to attend any school's events as often as possible as their time permits. However, Board members should use good judgment with regard to actions, discussions and frequency of visits.
- B. Board members may visit campus in her/his role of parent. However, if there is any doubt of the trustee's role, the trustee should notify the Superintendent prior to the visit.
- C. Board members must notify the Superintendent's office, in advance, of the time and purpose of an uninvited visit or any visit to a campus that is made in the role of trustee.
- D. Board members are not to go unannounced into teacher's classrooms. Classroom visits will be made by invitation only.
- E. Campus visits may not be made in conjunction with campaigning for reelection.

- F. Board members are not to assume a supervisory role for staff or students during campus visits.
- G. Board members are required to abide by Local Policy Regulation GKC – All visitors to a campus must present a state-issued photo identification. A campus-designated staff member will scan the identification and conduct a check against the Registered Sex Offender Database. If no match is found, a badge indicating the date, time, and location of the visit will be provided to the visitor.

## 6. SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION (BJCD LEGAL, BJCD LOCAL)

### A. Evaluation Instrument

The instrument used to evaluate the Superintendent shall be based on the Superintendent's job description [see BJA (LOCAL)] and performance goals and shall be adopted by the Board.

### B. Written Evaluation

1. The Board shall prepare a written evaluation of the Superintendent at annual or more frequent intervals.
2. The Board shall furnish the Superintendent with a copy of the completed evaluation and shall discuss its conclusions with the Superintendent in closed meeting.

### C. Objectives

The Board shall strive to accomplish the following objectives in conducting the Superintendent's written evaluation:

1. Clarify to the Superintendent his or her role, as seen by the Board.
2. 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.
3. Foster an early understanding among new Board members of the evaluation process and the Superintendent's current performance objectives and priorities.
4. Develop and sustain a harmonious working relationship between the Board and the Superintendent.
5. Ensure administrative leadership for excellence in the District.

D. Informal Evaluation

The Board may at any time conduct and communicate oral evaluations to augment its written evaluations.

E. Annual Performance Report

1. The information in the annual report describing the educational performance of the District [see AIB] shall be a primary consideration of the Board in evaluating the Superintendent.

*Education Code 39.307 (3)(C)*

2. A document evaluating the performance of the Superintendent is confidential.

*Education Code 21.355*

**7. INQUIRIES, COMPLAINTS TO THE BOARD (BBE LOCAL)**

A. Board Authority

The Board has final authority to determine and interpret the policies that govern the schools and, subject to the mandates and limits imposed by state and federal authorities, has complete and full control of the District. Board action shall be taken only in meetings that comply with the Open Meetings Act. [See BE(LEGAL)]

B. Transacting Business

When a proposal is presented to the Board, the Board shall hold a discussion and reach a decision. Although there may be dissenting votes, which are a matter of public record, each Board decision shall be an action by the whole Board binding upon each member.

C. Individual Authority For Committing The Board

Board members as individuals shall not exercise authority over the District, its property, or its employees. Except for appropriate duties and functions of the Board President, an individual member may act on behalf of the Board only with the express authorization of the Board. Without such authorization, no individual member may commit the Board on any issue. [See BDAA]

D. Individual Access To Information

An individual Board member, acting in his or her official capacity, shall have the right to seek information pertaining to District fiscal affairs, business 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 GBA]

E. Limitations

Individual 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(LLEGAL) and (LOCAL).

F. Requests For Records

Individual members shall seek access to records or request copies of records from the Superintendent or other designated custodian of records. When custodian of records other than the Superintendent provides access to records or copies of records to individual Trustees, the provider shall inform the Superintendent of the records provided.

G. Requests For Reports

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.

H. Confidentiality

At the time Board members are provided access to confidential records or to reports compiled from such records, the Superintendent or other District employee shall advise them of their responsibility to comply with confidentiality requirements.

I. Referring Complaints

If employees, parents, students, or other members of the public bring concerns or complaints to an individual Board member, he or she shall refer them to the Superintendent or another appropriate administrator, who shall proceed according to the applicable complaint policy.

## 8. GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Board recognizes the responsibility of the news media to provide to the community accurate and timely information concerning the objectives, needs, and conditions of District schools and their educational programs.

A. Board Meetings

District officials shall cooperate with news media to ensure complete and accurate coverage of all Board meetings.

B. News Releases

1. The Superintendent or a designated staff member shall be the official spokesperson for the District on issues of media attention that relate to District operations.
2. A Board member who receives a call from the media requesting information, comments, or an interview regarding District business will direct the caller to the Superintendent's office at 940-665-5961.
3. A Board member retains the right to speak to the media as an individual, but must understand that any comment will likely be interpreted by viewers/readers as an "official" statement of the Board.
4. Routine news concerning athletic events, programs, and local campus activities shall be released to the news media by the activity supervisor.

C. Broadcast of School Events

1. The broadcast or telecast of school events shall be in accordance with UIL rules and shall not identify the schools with the promotion of any commercial or political enterprise. All such coverage shall be with the prior approval of the Superintendent.
2. Media activities shall not be allowed to disturb or disrupt the instructional program of the schools.

## 9. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN BOARD MEMBERS

Communication among Board members:

1. Board members should exercise good judgment when communicating with one another. Section 551.143 of the Government Code states the following:

Conspiracy to Circumvent Chapter; Offense; Penalty

- (a) A member or group of members of a governmental body commits an offense if the member or group of members knowingly conspires to circumvent this chapter by meeting in numbers less than a quorum for the purpose of secret deliberations in violation of this chapter.
- (b) An offense under Subsection (a) is a misdemeanor punishable by:
  - (1) a fine of not less than \$100 or more than \$500
  - (2) confinement in the county jail for not less than one month or more than six months; or
  - (3) both the fine and confinement.

Added by Acts 1993, 73<sup>rd</sup> Leg., Ch. 268, 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1993

2. To avoid public speculation that the Open Meetings Act has been violated, Board members must exercise extreme caution at social functions and not discuss any

public business.

3. Board members who receive messages, including email messages, regarding District business shall not forward the messages to other Board members.
4. 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.

## **10. BOARD COMMUNICATION WITH STAFF**

- 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 if 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, elect a position from employees, or obtain information from employees without the Board's knowledge or Superintendent's knowledge and/or consent.
- C. Communication with staff for professional and school business purposes must be initiated through the Superintendent's office.

## **11. BOARD REORGANIZATION/ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

- A. The election of Board officers is governed by Board Policies BDAA (LEGAL), BDAA (LOCAL), and this Board Operating Procedure and must be held at a properly noticed and posted meeting in compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code Chapter 551.001 et seq. The Board members shall comply with the requirements of the Board's Policies, Operating Procedures and the Texas Open Meetings Act in the selection of officers.
- B. Selection of Officers  
At the first meeting after each election and qualification of Board members, the members of the Board shall organize by electing a President, a Vice President, and a Secretary who shall be members of the Board. Officers shall be elected by majority vote of the members present and voting.
- C. Upon receiving notice that a Board member seeks election to be an officer, the Superintendent will promptly notify the other Board members of the intent of the Board member.
- D. A Board member may choose to withdraw his/her name from consideration for an officer's position during the Board officer election meeting or by notifying the Superintendent at any time prior to the Board officer election meeting.

- E. The Board will, in compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, consider nominations of members for officers. The Board will vote for each office in turn, beginning with the Board President. If there is more than one nominee for a position, candidates will be voted on in the order of their nomination.
- F. The Superintendent shall conduct the election for Board President and the newly elected President shall conduct the election of remaining officers.
- G. Newly elected officers will assume responsibility for their offices immediately upon completion of the entire election process.

**12. DUTIES AND REQUIREMENTS OF BOARD OFFICERS (BDAA LOCAL)**

**PRESIDENT** In addition to the duties required by law, the President of the Board shall:

- 1. Preside at all Board meetings unless unable to attend.
- 2. Have the right to discuss, make motions and resolutions, and vote on all matters coming before the Board.

**VICE PRESIDENT** The Vice President of the Board shall:

- 1. Act in the capacity and perform the duties of the President of the Board in the event of the absence or incapacity of the President.
- 2. Become President only upon being elected to the position.

**SECRETARY** The Secretary of the Board shall:

- 1. Ensure that an accurate record is kept of the proceedings of each Board meeting.
- 2. Ensure that notices of Board meetings are posted and sent as required by law.
- 3. In the absence of the President and Vice President, call the meeting to order and act as presiding officer.
- 4. Sign or countersign documents as directed by action of the Board.