

# MESQUITE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### Standard Operating Procedures

March 4, 2024

As members of the Board of Trustees of the Mesquite Independent School District (“MISD” or the “District”), we are dedicated to serving the children, staff, and citizens of our school district. Our goal is to provide a high-quality public education system that meets the needs of our students and our community.

We believe that the District’s success hinges on a shared vision among the Board of Trustees, MISD staff, parents, and the community. We commit to doing our utmost to uphold these aspirations.

These procedures, which are written and agreed upon, serve to:

- Clarify expectations
- Ensure accountability and transparency
- Minimize confusion
- Maximize efficiency and effectiveness
- Detail the who, what, when, where, and how of various situations and practices
- Improve working relationships
- Facilitate the transition process of new trustees
- Keep agreements clear to all
- Identify best practices for effective teamwork
- Share procedures with community and staff
- Align Board operations with District policy, and local, state, and national law

We adopt these operating procedures to guide our actions and guide us in our role as trustees. We also commit to reviewing these procedures annually and to update, adopt, or reaffirm them as appropriate. These procedures are designed to align with the local policies adopted by the Board to govern District operations. In the event of a conflict between these procedures and any legal or local Board policy or applicable law, the applicable Board policy or law shall prevail.

# Table of Contents

I. Board Meetings	Page 3
II. Communications	Page 9
III. Board Development	Page 15
IV. Governance	Page 17
V. Activities Related to Elections	Page 19
VI. Events	Page 21

## I. **Board Meetings**

### A. *Board Officers/Members*

#### 1. Process for Selecting Board Officers

- a. Election of board officers will be held during the first regular board meeting following the official canvassing of the board election results, traditionally, the June regular board meeting.
- b. To maintain an orderly board meeting during the election of board officers, the following procedures are to be observed:
  1. Newly elected board officers will begin serving their roles at the end of the meeting in which they were elected.
  2. Board officers serving in the current academic year will conclude their tenure at the graduation ceremony of the same year.

These procedures are rooted in tradition and aim to ensure a seamless transition of responsibilities.

#### 2. Role and Authority of Board Members and Board Officers

- a. Board members have no authority to take action outside the Board meeting.
- b. No Board member can direct employees regarding the performance of their duties.
- c. The presiding officer shall certify that an agenda kept under Texas Government Code section 551.103, of the Texas Open Meetings Act (“Act”) is an accurate record of proceedings.
- d. President
  - (1) Shall preside at all Board meetings
  - (2) Shall appoint committees of the Board
  - (3) Shall call special meetings
  - (4) Shall sign all legal documents as required by law
- e. Vice President
 

Shall serve in the capacity of President in the absence of the President.
- f. Secretary
  - (1) Shall ensure that accurate records are kept
  - (2) Acting in the absence of the President and Vice President, the Secretary shall serve as President Pro-Tem.

(3) Shall sign all legal documents as required by law

*B. Board Agenda*

1. Preparation of Board Meeting Agenda
  - a. A draft agenda will be developed by the Superintendent and presented to the Board President for approval at least one week in advance of the meeting for which the agenda is being prepared.
  - b. The draft agenda will include items from the Board Agenda Calendar as scheduled in advance by the Board as well as actions required by law.
2. Request for an item to be placed on Agenda
  - a. Any Board member may request that an item be placed on the agenda for Board consideration by contacting the Board President or the Superintendent no less than six days prior to the meeting.
  - b. Items requested later than six days prior to the meeting may be deferred to a later meeting at the discretion of the President and the Superintendent, depending on the time needed to prepare background information to accompany the item for decision-making, unless:
    1. A delay in acting or discussing an added agenda item could seriously affect the operations of the District, or
    2. An emergency or urgent public necessity exists.
  - e. Any agenda item added to the agenda after the original posting shall comply with state laws.

*C. Board Member Preparation for Meetings*

1. The administration will ensure that all information needed for informed decision-making is supplied to each member in agenda packets delivered, via electronic means or hardcopy, at least one week prior to a regularly scheduled Board meeting. Otherwise, if extenuating circumstances arise, materials will be delivered to Board members at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance.
2. Each Board member will prepare to address the agenda by reading agenda packet materials in advance of the meeting.
3. Board members should ask agenda-related questions of the Superintendent prior to the scheduled Board meeting.

#### D. *Conducting Board Meetings*

*A quorum of Board members gathered and engaging in a regular, special, or called meeting are subject to the Texas Open Meetings Act (Act), Texas Government Code section 551.001 et seq. Informal meetings of a quorum of Board members are also subject to the Act.*

##### 1. Consent Agenda

The placement of items on the consent agenda will be at the discretion of the Board President and the Superintendent. Any Board member may ask questions or discuss an item on the consent agenda by asking the President to remove it from the consent agenda for individual consideration. The President will allow discussion on any item requested for removal from the agenda by a Board member. Items which usually do not require discussion or explanation prior to board action are non-controversial and/or similar in content or are those items that have already been discussed and/or explained and do not require further discussion or explanation, are often included in the consent agenda. The following are examples of items that may be included on a consent agenda for action together in a single vote without further discussion:

- a. Routine items as approved by the Board
- b. Monthly financial reports
- c. Minutes of regular and special Board meetings
- d. Gifts, donations, and bequests
- e. Minutes of joint meetings with city or other government units

##### 2. Consolidated action items

- a. The Superintendent may consolidate items on the agenda summary for possible group action, or any Board member may suggest group action on items to expedite the Board meeting.
- b. A request by any Board member shall remove any item from the suggested consolidated action list.

##### 3. Closed Meeting, according to the Act (listed on the agenda as “Executive Session”).

- a. Matters pertaining to personnel issues may be addressed in closed session, except when required by the Act. The exceptions are as follows: 1) The approval process for new hires shall be conducted as part of the consent agenda. 2) The renewal of contracts for leadership positions, with the exception of the superintendent, shall be managed within the regular meeting agenda.
- b. Anything that violates an individual's right to privacy should not be placed on the open agenda.
- c. The Board can only discuss items in closed session as authorized by law. Following is the current detailing of those items:
  - 551-071 Private consultation with the Board's attorney.
  - 551.072 Deliberate the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property.
  - 551.073 Deliberate negotiated contracts for prospective gifts or donations.
  - 551.074 Authorize certain deliberations about personnel or to hear complaints against personnel.
  - 551.076 Deliberate the deployment, specific occasions for, or implementation of security personnel or devices.
  - 551.0821 Deliberate a matter regarding a public school student if personally identifiable information about the student will necessarily be revealed by the deliberation.
  - 551.082 Deliberate in a case involving discipline of a public school child, or complaints or charges against personnel.
  - 551.083 Deliberate the standards, guidelines, terms, or conditions the Board will follow, or instruct its representatives to follow, in a consultation with a representative of an employee group.
  - 551.089 Deliberate regarding security assessments or deployments relating to information resources technology; network security information as described by Section 2059.55(b); or the deployment, or specific occasions for implementation,

of security personnel, critical infrastructure, or security devices.

- d. The Board must take formal action in an open public session.
  - e. Information discussed during the closed session must remain confidential.
4. Public Participation and Response to Patrons (see Policies BED(LEGAL) and BED(LOCAL))
- a. Audience participation at a Board meeting is limited to items posted on the agenda and is limited to the portion of the meeting designated to receive public comment under current policy.
  - b. Participation in public comment shall be limited to District students and their parents, District employees, residents of Mesquite ISD, or owners of businesses located in Mesquite ISD.
  - c. If the patron's request to address the Board specifically identifies an agenda item, the Board President shall ensure that the patron's comments are heard prior to action on the specific agenda item.
  - d. A patron wishing to address the Board regarding an item on the agenda shall complete the form provided for that purpose.
  - e. The Board cannot ask groups of people speaking on the same topic from the same viewpoint to designate a spokesperson.
  - f. Board members are encouraged to attentively listen to comments but should not engage in dialogue. The Board President or Superintendent may ask the speaker to provide clarification or factual information in response to inquiries or recite existing policy when necessary. Agenda items will be discussed at the appropriate time as scheduled on the agenda. Items not on the agenda do not permit Board members to respond or discuss, and Board members should refrain from engaging in dialogue with the speaker.
  - g. The Board President, with Board consensus, may direct the Superintendent to investigate issues brought forward by the public at this time and report to the Board at a later meeting.
  - h. The Board President will be the designated spokesperson for the Board should any response to the speaker be required. The President may

- (1) Correct misstatements of fact presented by the speaker
  - (2) Refer the speaker to applicable Board policy, and/or
  - (3) Place the item on a future Board agenda for discussion if not listed on the current Board agenda.
- i. In accordance with Board policy the President will restrict each speaker's comments to a maximum of three (3) minutes. However, in instances where the number of speakers is substantial, the Board reserves the right to further limit the time allocated to each speaker, ensuring a minimum duration of one (1) minute per speaker.
  - j.
  - k. The Act protects public criticism. The presiding officer shall determine if the speaker addressing the Board has attempted to solve the matter administratively through the grievance process. If not, the presiding officer should refer the speaker to the appropriate policy to seek resolution. Trustees can mitigate potential problems by being courteous, respectful, and fair with each speaker, regardless of their opinions and comments.
  - l. The Board maintains a strict policy against disruptions during meetings by audience members. Should an individual persist in disrupting the meeting through their words or actions, despite receiving at least one warning from the presiding officer, the presiding officer is authorized to seek assistance from law enforcement officials to ensure the individual's removal from the meeting.
5. Personnel/Student Hearings
- a. The Board will not answer questions or enter into dialogue except with their attorney in the case of an employee hearing.
  - b. At the conclusion of the hearing or at a subsequent meeting, the Board will determine the results of the hearing.
  - c. The following rules for the hearing will be strictly adhered to:
    - (1) The Board will limit response to ten minutes per party (or as assigned/modified by the Board President, as allowed by Board policy).



(2) Testimony is to be presented orally or in writing, as detailed in Board policy.

(3) The Board will not allow duplicate testimony.

(4) The Board will not allow derogatory comments.

The President/hearing officer may ask the parties questions for clarification, as needed.

d. A hearing held in closed session follows essentially the same procedures, but a public audience is prohibited.

#### 6. Parliamentary Rules

a. The Board shall be guided by parliamentary procedure as detailed in *Robert's Rules of Order* or as spelled out in Board policy.

b. All discussion shall relate to the business currently under deliberation.

c. The Board President *or any other Board Member* shall halt inappropriate discussion.

d. The Board President shall

(1) Recognize members prior to them giving their comments, and

(2) Be responsible for asking clarifying questions during hearings.

#### 7. Motions/Voting

a. The Board President has the responsibility to keep the discussion to the motion at hand and shall halt discussion that does not apply to the business before the Board.

b. The President may enter into discussion.

c. The Board President may vote on all action items.

d. Board members should abstain from voting in the event of a conflict of interest.

## II. **Communication**

### A. *Superintendent*

#### 1. Administrative Report or Board Update

a. Any Board member may meet with the Superintendent to discuss issues of the District.

b. Requests for information to the Superintendent from a Board member will be communicated to all Board members.

2. Request for information about an agenda item
  - a. Members are encouraged to ask for information from the Superintendent before the Board meeting.
  - b. Any questions about agenda items or a request for additional information about them will be directed to the Superintendent.
  - c. Board members should make requests for information or answers as soon as possible prior to the Board meeting.
  - d. The Superintendent will determine if the information request is readily available or requires a report to be developed.
  - e. If a written report is provided in response to the request, all members will receive a copy.
  - f. Board members may discuss the provided information in the meeting if necessary.
  - g. Board members may ask additional questions about agenda items in the meeting.
3. Request for information not related to agenda item
  - a. Board members may make requests for information from the Superintendent.
  - b. The Superintendent will determine if the information requested is readily available or requires a report to be developed.
  - c. If a written report is given in response to the request, all members will receive a copy.
  - d. If the request for information is not granted, the requesting member may ask the President to place the request on a meeting agenda. The requesting member may then ask if a majority of the Board would like the Superintendent to generate a report on the requested information.

*B. Notification of Meetings*

1. Board members shall be notified of a meeting:
  - a. At least seventy-two (72) hours prior to a regular or special meeting, or
  - b. At least two (2) hours prior to an emergency meeting
2. Board members will be advised through the administrative reports, a board update, or during one-on-one meetings as the agenda summary and complex agenda items are being developed.

C. *Communication with Board Members between Board Meetings*

1. The Superintendent will communicate with each Board member, as needed, but no less than once during the interim, such as, in one-on-one meetings, telephone, and appropriate electronic means (email, text, etc.). Board information will include information such as
  - a. Agenda and/or Consent Agenda items
  - b. District, school, and community events,
  - c. Progress reports on Board goals and directives,
  - d. Follow-up information or reports in response to Board member requests or questions.
2. The Superintendent will communicate the requested information to all Board members in as timely a manner, as possible, without interfering with the daily operations of District business.
3. The Superintendent will meet with the Board President as needed, or communicate by telephone, and/or appropriate electronic means (email, text, etc.) to inform him/her of District issues that may need to come before the Board for information or action.
4. The Superintendent will disseminate any information requested by the Board President to each member of the Board.
5. The Superintendent will email, text, or phone all Board members regarding any urgent situations that cannot wait until the administrative update.
6. Board members may communicate with other individual members for purposes of asking questions, clarifying information, or socializing under circumstances that do not conflict with or circumvent the Texas Open Meetings Act.
7. Board members should not communicate with other individual members for purposes of soliciting votes in support of or opposition to items of business that may come before the Board.
8. Board members who wish to share information relevant to District business or issues before the Board should relay the information to the Board President or Superintendent for distribution to all members in the Board information packets.

#### D. *Contact with Campuses*

1. Board members are encouraged to attend and support as many school events and activities as their time permits.
2. Board members may visit any campus after checking with the principal about the best time to visit and after notifying the Superintendent. If invited by the school to attend an event or activity, they need only check in with the principal.
3. Board members will check in with the principal's office and follow campus guidelines, just as any other visitor.
4. Board members may interact with any staff member or student during free periods, lunch, or recess.
5. Board members, and other elected local, state, and federal officials will not visit unannounced any District facility or classroom in their official elected capacity.
6. Board members are not to go into teachers' classrooms or individual buildings for the purposes of evaluations.
7. Board members may not give any advice or direction to any staff or students except when safety or liability is an issue.
8. While School Board members have no authority as individuals, it is sometimes difficult for staff members to see them as ordinary parents; therefore,
  - a. When visiting with teachers of their own children, Board members will make it clear that they are acting as parents rather than as members of the Board, and
  - b. Board members will not request nor accept extraordinary consideration for their students.

#### E. *Community*

1. Communicating with Community
  - a. Board members are encouraged to participate in community activities as liaisons between the public and the school district. When doing so, Board members are expected to:
    - (1) Relay information about District goals, and/or

(2) Refer questions about specific District activities to the appropriate staff person when they do not know the answers.

- b. The School Board encourages community input; however, it will not respond to or act based on anonymous calls or letters.
- c. Signed letters addressed to the Board or a Board member will be forwarded to the President or the Superintendent for inclusion in the administrative report, board update, or Board information packet.
- d. The Board, as a body, will communicate to the community through District communication vehicles authorized by the Board in policy or the District communication plan.

## 2. Employee/Citizen Complaints

- a. Listen briefly and respectfully; remain impartial.
- b. Ask if the complainant has followed the “Chain of Command” outlined in District policy.
- c. Remind the complainant of the Board’s responsibility to remain impartial regarding complaints that may ultimately be brought to the Board on appeal.
- d. If the complainant does not know the District’s “Chain of Command,” provide the following information:  
 “Chain of Command”
  - (1) The complainant must first discuss the problem with the authority closest to the problem.
  - (2) If the problem is not resolved at that level, the Board member notifies the Superintendent’s office for appropriate referral.
- e. Board members should advise the Superintendent of substantial or significant complaints, as soon as practical.
  - f. The Superintendent will inform the Board of the resolution of complaints referred by Board members if they require Superintendent intervention.

## F. *Communication with Media*

- 1. The Superintendent (or Board President or his/her designee) shall be the official spokesperson for the Board to the media on issues of media attention.

2. A Board member who receives a call from the media requesting information, comments, or an interview regarding District business will direct them to the Superintendent (or Board spokesperson), and he/she will notify the Board President of the call.
3. Board members retain the right to speak to the media as individuals.
4. If speaking to a media representative, a Board member should clarify when speaking as an individual rather than as directed by the School Board. When speaking as an individual, the member will remind the media representative(s) of the position or action of the School Board as a body.

#### G. *Board Members Relations*

*The purpose of this section is to outline the steps that a Board Member can take regarding a serious or specific concern about the performance of another Board Member.*

1. If a Board Member has a serious, specific concern about the performance of another Board Member, which appears to be in violation of Board of Trustees Standard Operating Procedures or policies the recommended process for addressing such concerns shall be the following, in this order:
  - The concerned Board Member shall have a private conversation with the Board Member in order to work out the differences or resolve the issue.
  - If the concern remains, the concerned Board Member will meet privately with the Board President and outline the specific issue. The Board President and the concerned Board Member will meet with the Board Member and attempt to resolve the issue. If the concern is with the performance of the Board President, the Vice President will be notified and will meet with the concerned Board Member.
  - If the issue is still not resolved, the President and Vice President, will hold a conference (or the Vice President and Secretary only if the concerns regard the President) to develop a plan of action to resolve the concerns-

2. When a Board Member with concerns about another Board Member's performance has gone through the outlined steps above and the issue remains unresolved, the concerned Board Member will, through the Board President, request that an item be placed on a regularly scheduled agenda, posted utilizing appropriate language under the Texas Open Meetings Act. See Preparation of the Agenda regarding the steps to follow when placing an item on the agenda.
3. Should the Board determine that reprimand or censorship is warranted, such action may only be taken in a duly posted public meeting.
4. No action may be taken that would conflict with the Texas Open Meetings Act. Nothing in this operating procedure shall be construed to limit a Board Member's legal rights.

### III. **Board Development**

#### A. *New Member Orientation*

1. Upon election, new members shall participate in a local orientation session within sixty (60) days before or after their election or appointment. The purpose of this orientation is to familiarize new Board members with local Board policies and procedures and District goals and priorities.
2. Effective January 1, 1997, all newly elected members shall receive orientation to the Texas Education Code within the first year of service. The orientation shall be delivered by regional education service centers and shall be three hours in length.
3. The Board President will appoint a mentor for new Board members for one year.

#### B. *Annual team building session/assessment of team continuing education needs*

1. Board members, upon completion of the initial training required in paragraph A. 2 above, shall annually participate in an assessment of their training needs.
2. Continuing education for Board members includes orientation sessions, an annual team-building session with the Board and the Superintendent, and specified hours of continuing education based on identified needs.

3. Following each legislative session, each Board member shall participate in a session identifying major changes in the Education Code.
4. ***Twice each year, a report will be mailed to the entire board, indicating the progress and status of each board member in fulfilling the necessary training hours and sessions.***

C. *Annual Board/team self-evaluation and establishment of team goals*

1. The Board and Superintendent participate in an annual team-building activity focused on self-assessment.
2. A Board self-evaluation should be conducted triennially, to be completed prior to the team-building activity.
3. The process will be facilitated by the Board President or designee unless a majority of the Board Members feel the process would be better served by using an independent facilitator.
4. The review will, in general, measure the following:
  - Planning and governance,
  - Oversight of management, and
  - Board-Superintendent team operations.
5. Team goals will be set following the annual self-evaluation.
6. Team building activity concludes with written plans and priorities for continuing education by the Board and by individual trustees.
6. Effectiveness of the team building activity and review of continuing education plans will be reviewed six to ten months following the activity as indicated on the Board Calendar.

D. *Training opportunities*

1. Board members will be notified by various state-approved organizations (TASB, TASA, Region 10, etc.) for training opportunities.
2. Board members will be notified by and assisted by the Superintendent's office regarding training opportunities.
3. Board Members will participate in sexual harassment training session regularly, but in no event, not less than every two calendar years, that includes appropriate conduct and ethical responsibilities in their role as a Board Member. However, newly elected Trustees shall complete sexual harassment training within one year of election to office.



## IV. **Governance**

### A. *Planning*

The following actions are included in the planning process:

1. Establishment of the District's vision, mission, annual goals, and strategic plan.
2. An Annual Planning Session for the development and review of District goals as designated on the Board Calendar and conducted by the Superintendent and Board.
3. Approval of District and campus performance objectives.
4. District and campus improvement plans.
5. A review of District progress toward goals and accomplishments as indicated on the Board Calendar.
6. Review of the instructional program.
7. Review of programs other than instruction including goals, standards, and benchmarks used for assessing effectiveness as designated on the Board Calendar.
8. Development and adoption of budget based on funding priorities consistent with board-adopted goals.

### B. *Policy*

1. A review of the District policies process will be a continuous event, coordinated by the Superintendent.
2. Development of District policies:
  - a. New LOCAL policies may be developed by the Superintendent, Board Members, school personnel, or community citizens. All new policies must be relevant and adhere to all local, state, and federal laws and guidelines. Before policies are presented for adoption to the Board, the District's legal counsel reviews all content.
  - b. Any newly proposed LOCAL policy will be submitted to the Superintendent.
    - If the Superintendent receives a request from a member of the public or any Board Member proposing a new policy, the Superintendent will forward that request to the entire Board.

- Requests for policy changes are reviewed by the Superintendent's Cabinet. If the Cabinet supports the changes, the Superintendent's designee will draft the revision and submit it for legal review prior to the first reading for consideration by the Board.

### 3. Traditions of the Board

a. Former Board Members may, at their option, hand a high school diploma facsimile to a family relative, while in dress attire. It will be the responsibility of the former Board Member to let the Superintendent and current Board President know that they would like to participate in the graduation ceremony.

b. Board Members who served during the current school year and are not returning will complete their term by participating in the graduation ceremony.

## C. *Evaluation*

### 1. Superintendent

- a. The summative evaluation will generally be conducted in December and a formative assessment mid-year.
- b. The Board President obtains input from all other members on the approved evaluation instrument and indicators.
- c. Evaluation is conducted by consensus in closed session.
- d. The Board's evaluation of the Superintendent's performance in District operations areas focuses on the Superintendent's success in establishing appropriate measures and standards for performance; putting effective plans, programs, procedures, or systems in place; monitoring success; and using data for improvement in addressing Board-adopted goals.

### 2. Board

- a. Ongoing assessment of the status of the Board/Superintendent team will exist.
- b. Evaluation is conducted in executive session on a schedule determined by the Board. The following areas may be included in the process:
  - (1) As Board members are we following the code of ethics for school board members?

(2) As a Board and board members are we following operating procedures?

(3) Is the team of eight functioning?

(4) Were goals effective?

### 3. Review Team Operating Procedure

a. District Vision, Mission, and Goals will be reviewed during the strategic planning process by all Board members and Site-Based Decision-Making Committee members as indicated in Board Calendar. They will determine if the vision statement still represents a shared picture of the basic ideal for the District.

b. As designated on the Board Calendar, the Board will annually reaffirm the code of ethics statement for Board members.

c. The Board's Standard Operating Procedures are reviewed and updated annually according to the following procedures:

1. In January of each year, the Board will appoint a subcommittee, as proposed by the Board President.

2. The subcommittee's task is to review the Board's Standard Operating Procedures and suggest changes if needed.

3. These proposed changes will be discussed and adopted no later than April of the same year.

4. The subcommittee will consist of the immediate past president, who will act as the committee chair, the vice president, and a non-officer board member recommended by the Board President.

These procedures ensure that our operations remain effective and up to date.

d. The Board will review reports (e.g. effectiveness, audit, safety and security, etc.) annually, as indicated in the Board Calendar, and determine which reports will be needed for the next year.

## V. **Activities Related to Elections**

### A. *Election Activities*

1. Board Members will follow all applicable laws in all campaign activities.

2. Neither the Board, as a body corporate, nor any Board Member individually, will use district funds nor other resources of the District to electioneer for or against any candidate, measure on a ballot, or political party. *Texas Education Code 11.169.*

#### B. *Endorsements*

1. Seeking Endorsements - No Board Member seeking re-election to the Board will solicit district employees for endorsement during such employee's work hours or at any time while on district property, or through district resources (e.g., email, phone, etc.).
2. Providing Endorsements
  - a. The Board, as a body corporate, will not endorse any candidate running for any public office.
  - b. Board members strive to govern the District in a nonpartisan manner and to work with all elected officials in the other governmental entities with which MISD interacts. To support that goal, individual Board members will not publicly endorse any candidate running for a local municipal or school board public office. Individual Board members may participate in the electoral process according to their consciences but should refrain from using their influence as a Board member as a forum and exercise heightened caution when privately supporting any local municipal or school board candidates running for elected office, including all social media.
  - c. Board Members are encouraged to consider such impact, as well as the influence their elected position may elicit in the political process. As such, if an individual Board Member chooses to provide an endorsement to a candidate for any county, state, or federal legislative elected office, no reference to the Trustee's role as a Mesquite ISD Board Member will be used. Any reference made by the endorsee to the Board member's position on the Board of Trustees will be considered a "failure to communicate" on behalf of the board member and thus considered a violation of this SOP.

#### C. *Board Elections*

- 1 Board Members serve three-year terms that expire on a rotating basis. A Board election is held every year in May, or as otherwise required by law,

to fill seats that are contested or are or will become vacant. If all seats are uncontested, the election may be canceled. At the conclusion of an election, Board Members work together as a body corporate to govern the district in a cooperative manner.

- 2 Individually, Board Members may participate in the electoral process according to each Board Member's conscience. However, a Board Member's public support of candidates in a Board election can harm the ability to function cohesively and constructively as a corporate body. As a tradition and to support the goal of functioning cohesively and constructively, neither the Board as a whole nor individual members will publicly endorse any candidate running for the MISD Board of Trustees.

## VI. **Events**

### A. *Travel*

1. Registrations. All registrations will be paid by the District for all reasonable conferences, seminars, conventions, and education activities. Pre-registration is required at all events. Board members should use good judgment in determining the need for travel. Each board member will have a travel budget based on the designated rate set by the State Travel Reimbursement Guidelines of Key Officials. If additional funds are needed, the board member should make a request to the board president, giving justification for the additional funds. Board members who hold additional offices or membership in organizations such as TASB or other entities can arrange for additional funds by making a request to the board president and superintendent.
2. **Continuing Education Credit (CEC) Procedures:**
  - a. Accounting and Transparency: If the District covers the costs of registration, travel, and other expenses for training and conferences, board members are required to earn at least 75% of the possible CECs at such events. For example, if a conference such as the Summer Leadership Institute offers a maximum of 15 CECs, a board member should earn at least 11 CECs (75% of 15).

- b. Exceptions: Exceptions to this requirement can be made after a discussion with the Board President or another officer, if applicable. Exceptions may be granted due to circumstances such as illness, family issues, or committee service at the conference that could limit the number of CEC hours a member can earn.
- c. Reporting: Any approved exception will be documented in the annual report to the board on member training and expenses. This ensures transparency and accountability in the use of taxpayer dollars.

[please note that these procedures are subject to further discussion and revision as needed.]

- 3. Travel Advances. MISD will extend a travel advance for most conferences, seminars, and conventions or upon request by a Board member. Reconciliation of travel advances must occur within sixty (60) days of payment.
- 4. Submission. Submission of the “Travel Expense Report” (or an equivalent listing of expenses incurred) should be made to the Secretary of the Superintendent and Board at the Superintendent’s office. (See Addendum One).
  - a. Addendum One – Board Travel Expense Report[link to report on google docs]
- 5. Filing Deadline. All expense reports along with the various receipts and supporting documents must be submitted within sixty (60) days of the incurred expense. After 60 days, reimbursement of the board members’ expenses will be reduced by 50%. Travel advance checks will not be given to board members who have not complied with these reporting guidelines.
- 6. MISD Trustees. Pursuant to District Policy ‘BBG Local’ and BBG Regulation, MISD will reimburse Board members for all reasonable expenses incurred in meeting their expectations and in carrying out their duties. Board members are expected to show good judgment about travel expenses and have proper regard for economy while representing the School District.

7. Non-reimbursable Expenses. The following expenses apply as non-reimbursable:
- a. Spouse/guest travel
  - b. Additional accommodations charges beyond the single or double occupancy charges
  - c. Spouse/guest meals (unless participating in an MISD planned group activity)
  - d. Rental car expenses (unless other means of travel cannot be economically used and approved by the Board President and Superintendent)
  - e. In-room movie charges
  - f. Personal service charges
  - g. Laundry or cleaning charges
  - h. Health club charges
  - i. Amusement, entertainment, diversion, and social activities
  - j. Unsupported or undocumented charges which require a receipt unless authorized by the Board
  - k. Charges incurred for alcoholic beverages. Charges for any alcoholic beverages must not be included on tickets or receipts for other reimbursable items. In cases where food and beverage items are incurred in a bar and/or charged to a hotel room bill, the charges for alcoholic beverages must be clearly separated from other reimbursable charges.

*B. Deployment*

1. The Board will instruct staff to disseminate the Vision, Mission, Goals, and the Mesquite Promise throughout the District and community following the annual meeting as designated on the Board Calendar.