Sierra Blanca ISD

BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Board Approved: November 4, 2024

PREFACE

It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees, as a body corporate, to create policy for the school district, and ensure that the policies adopted by the Board function as a "Team of Eight." The Sierra Blanca Independent School District Board Operating Procedures provide guidance to the Board and the Superintendent in the operation of this "Team of Eight" so it may function as a cohesive and effective unit in its mission to accomplish the goals and priorities of the school district. The Board of Operating Procedures serve as standard operating procedures that supplement the local policies of the school district.

BA Board Legal Status
BAA Board Legal Status - Powers and Duties
BBA Board Members - Eligibility/Qualifications
BBB Board Members - Elections
BBC Board Members - Vacancies and Removal from Office
BBD Board Members - Training and Orientation
BBE Board Members - Authority
BBF Board Members - Ethics
BBFA Ethics - Conflict of Interest Disclosures
BBFB Ethics - Prohibited Practices
BBG Board Members - Compensation and Expenses
BBI Board Members - Technology Resources and Electronic Communication
BDAA Officers and Officials - Duties and Requirements of Board Officers
BDB Board International Organization - Internal Committees
BE Board Meetings
BEC Board Meetings - Closed Meetings
BED Board Meetings - Public Participation
BJCD Superintendent - Evaluation
BQ Planning and Decision-Making Process

Ethics for School Board Members

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 be fair, just, and impartial in all my decisions and actions.
- I will give others the respect I wish for myself.
- I will encourage expressions of different opinions and listen with and open mind to others' ideas.
- I will not take things personally.

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 in District resources.
- I will make no personal promise or take private action that may compromise my performance of my responsibilities.
- I will keep all confidential information shared by the Superintendent private and not disclose it to a third party.
- I will communicate complaints/ concerns to the Superintendent in a respectful manner.

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.
- I will express my thoughts and decisions in a professional manner.
- I will listen to all Board members' thoughts/opinions.

Integrity of character

- I will refuse to surrender judgement 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 keep confidential information that is privileged by law or that will needlessly harm the district if disclosed.
- I will uphold the district's reputation through my actions, words, and decisions.

Commitment to service

- I will focus my attention on fulfilling the Board's responsibilities of goal setting, policy making, and evaluation.
- I will diligently prepare for and attend Board meetings.
- I will seek continuing education that will enhance my ability to fulfill my duties effectively.
- I will avoid personal involvement in activities the Board has delegated to the Superintendent.
- I will not use my position for professional/personal gain or profit.

Student-centered focus

- Most importantly, I will continuously guide the district by what is best for all students.

Sierra Blanca ISD Board of Trustees Operating Procedures

The Sierra Blanca ISD Board of Trustees adopts these Operating Procedures to guide the organization, logistical, and role-specific activities related to the work of the Board.

1. Election of Board Members
2. Role, Responsibility, and Authority of Board Members
3. Board Meetings
4. Developing Board Meeting Agendas
5. Role of Board in Executive Session
6. Conduct During Board Meetings
7. Voting
8. Evaluation of the Superintendent
9. Communications
10. Individual Board Member Requests for Information or Reports
11. Citizen or Employee Request/ Complaint to Individual Board Member
12. Media Inquiries to the Board
13. Board Member Visits to a School Campus
14. Board Training Requirements
15. Travel Reimbursement
16. Reviewing the Board Operating Procedures

OPERATING PROCEDURES

I. Election of Board Members

A. The Board is composed of seven members elected by the community. Board members serve staggered terms of four years.

B. Board elections are usually held biennially in November in conjunction with county elections.

C. A meeting will be held not later than the 14th day after the election to canvas returns for new members to file the Statement of an Elected Officer, swearing-in of new members and to elect the following Board Officers: President, Vice-President, and Secretary.

D. For specific policies related to Board Member Elections, see District Policy BBB (LEGAL) and BBB (LOCAL) available on-line.

II. Role, Responsibility, and Authority of Board Members

A. The Role, Responsibility, and Authority of Board Members, including officers, is fully addressed in Governance Process and Board/ Superintendent Relations (Section B: Local Governance) Policies.

III. Board Meetings

A. The SBISD Board of Trustees holds one regular meeting per month. Generally, the meeting shall take place on the third Monday of each month, and shall convene in public at 6:00 p.m. Regular meetings must be outside of typical work hours. When determined necessary and for the convenience of Board members, the Board President and members may change the date, time, or location of a regular meeting with proper notice. Additional meetings on specific topics shall be scheduled by the Board as needed, and may be held as a special meeting or training session according to policy.

B. Four members present constitute a quorum for a meeting.

C. If a closed meeting (i.e., executive session) is called prior to or during regular meetings, these meetings must be called in compliance with Chapter 551 (Open Meetings) of the Texas Government Code.

D. The Board President shall call an emergency meeting when it is determined by the President or two (2) of the members of the Board that an emergency or

urgent public necessity, as defined by Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, warrants the meeting.

E. Regular board meetings must be recorded.

F. For specific policies related to Board Meetings, see District Policy BE (LEGAL) available on-time.

IV. Developing Board Meeting Agendas

A. The Superintendent shall prepare the agenda for all Board meetings. The Board President will receive a draft copy of the agenda for review prior to being posted.

B. Before finalization of the agenda for any meeting, the Superintendent shall consult the Board President to ensure the agenda and topics meet the Board President's approval. The Board President shall not remove an item from the agenda requested by a Trustee without that Trustee's specific authorization. The Board President shall ensure that Trustee's requested board agenda items are placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled board meeting. Agenda items must be submitted for consideration 10 calendar days before a meeting.

V. Role of Board in Executive Session

A. The Board can only discuss those items listed on the executive session agenda as prescribed by law. See Section IV of these Operating Procedures or District Policy BEC (LEGAL) available on-line.

B. During executive sessions, the Board can deliberate properly posted items but may not take actions related to those items. All Board actions, including voting, must occur in open session under Chapter 551 (Open Meetings) or the Texas Government Code.

C. Discussions and information shared during executive sessions shall remain **CONFIDENTIAL.**

D. The Board must convene in open session with proper postings prior to the presiding officer announcing a recess into executive session. The posted agenda for the executive session must be read aloud indicating the items to be discussed in executive session under Chapter 551 (Open Meetings) of the Texas Government Code.

E. According to a Texas Attorney General's opinion, the Board shall keep a certified agenda with minutes of the proceedings of each executive session. Only members of the Board of Trustees (whether present at the executive session or not)

can review the minutes of an executive session with a court order. A Board member wishing to review an agenda of an executive session should contact the Board President to submit the official request for a date, time, and place for review of specified agenda(s). Minutes are to be sealed, kept confidential, and stored in a locked place.

VI. Conduct During Board Meetings

A. Citizens' Conduct

1. Board Meetings are held in public to conduct the business of the district, as distinguished from public meetings. The Board shall not tolerate disruption of the Board meeting by members of the public. If, after at least one warning from the presiding officer, any person continues to disrupt the meeting by words or actions, the person shall be removed from the meeting by board members or local police.
2. Signs or placards brought to a Board Meeting shall not block the vision of those attending the meeting or the district's cameras used to televise the meeting.
3. Members of the public wishing to display a sign at a Board meeting must sit at the back of the Board room. No more than ten (10) members of the public sit at any time may bear a sign at any meeting. All imagery and language on signs must address a matter related to the Sierra Blanca Independent School District and listed on the Board agenda for the meeting taking place, except that no sign may contain imagery or language that involves a complaint about an individual District employee, a personal action, a student disciplinary matter, a complaint about a particular student, pending litigation, defamatory language, obscene language and/or fighting words.

    a. If a speaker fails to restrict his or her comments to the topic they identified when signing up, the Board President, or other member presiding over the meeting, shall immediately interrupt the speaker and issue a verbal warning that the comments remain on the identified topic. Should a speaker refuse to comply with this warning, he or she shall forfeit the remaining time allotment. Speakers who sign up to speak on non-agenda items, or who fail to indicate which topic they wish to speak on with signing up with the designee, shall not be allowed to address the Board.

    b. The Board will not hear comments during the Comments portion of the agenda, or any other time public comment occurs at a meeting, that involves a complaint about an individual District employee, a personal action, a student disciplinary matter, a complaint about a particular student, or pending litigation.

    c. To the extent this occurs, the Board President, or other member presiding over the meeting, shall immediately interrupt the speaker and, if applicable, direct the speaker to avail themselves of the applicable grievance policy or the other appropriate procedure for addressing

particular concerns or to ensure that further comments do not discuss any of the impermissible topics listed herein.

4. Decorum: The Board expects that each speaker will be courteous, respectful, and model for our students how one can conduct themselves in a professional manner even if one disagrees with another's views. Any person, whether speaking to the Board or not, who engages in disruptive action during a Board meeting will be asked to leave the meeting room after one warning. If necessary, the Board President or member presiding over the meeting may request assistance from Law Enforcement to remove a disruptive person from the meeting room.
5. Written Comments: Any person may have access to the Board at any time by submitting their written comments by mail to: 500 N. Sierra Blanca Ave, Sierra Blanca, Tx 79851. Even any person whose privilege to address the Board at a regular meeting has been revoked shall nevertheless have the ability to submit his or her concerns to the Board in writing at any time through the means in this paragraph. Such comments shall be subject to the same requirements made of those made during open meetings.
6. The Board President shall recognize persons who sign up to address the Board.
7. The Board President is responsible for setting the device that will keep track of the speakers allotted time.
8. The Board President will provide two warnings after the device has sounded to signal the end of the allotted time.
9. Persons shall request to the presiding officer any written handouts to the Superintendent for distribution to the Board.

B. Board response to persons addressing the Board during "Comments"

1. The Board will not engage in dialogue with the speaker during the Board meeting.
2. The Board shall not deliberate or make decisions regarding any subject that is not on the posted agenda.
3. The Board President shall recognize Board members prior to any member asking clarifying questions or making statements to the Board.
4. Board members may direct the Superintendent to investigate item(s) and report back to the Board as appropriate.

C. Public Hearings/Board Meetings

1. The Superintendent may schedule public hearings to address community issues on a particular issue.
2. During public hearings, the Board is assembled only to gather information, unless otherwise posted.

3. A person or representative of a group or organization who wishes to speak shall sign up prior to the beginning of the hearing. On the day of the hearing, sign-up sheets are located at the meeting location.
4. There may be a limit to the number of speakers who may speak during a public hearing.
5. The Board will designate the number of minutes allowed per speaker at each public hearing.
6. No person is permitted to sign-up for another person, or to exchange time or yield time to persons not signed up.
7. The Board will not answer questions or engage in a dialogue with the public during the public hearing. The Board may provide specific factual information or recite existing policy to clarify inquiries or issues raised.

D. Discussion of individual employees or students by the Board or audience.

1. Specific complaints about individual district personnel shall be processed through the district's grievance policy.
2. The Board requests that citizens not refer to students or employees by name during Comments or during a public hearing.

E. The Board shall observe the parliamentary procedure as outlined in Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.

1. All discussion shall be directed solely to the business currently under deliberation.
2. The Board President has the responsibility to keep the discussion to the motion at hand and shall halt discussion that is not relevant to the business before the Board.
3. The Board President shall recognize a Board member wishing to comment.

F. For specific policies related to public participation at Board meetings, see District Policy BED (LEGAL) available on-line.

VII. Voting

A. No item shall be acted upon by the Board unless the item is posted in the public notice for the meeting.
B. When an item for action on the agenda is reached, the following procedure will apply:

1. The Board President shall read/announce the item for action.
2. The Superintendent or appropriate staff member may make a comment, statement, recommendation or presentation regarding the item.
3. The Board may discuss the item and raise questions.

4. Action is taken by means of a motion and a second, followed by a vote of Board members present. The Board also has the option of not acting on an item. Any item approved is recorded with roll call voting.

VIII. Evaluation of the Superintendent

A. As outlined in Local Governance Policy BJCD (LOCAL), the Board will review the Superintendent performance annually.

IX. Communications

A. Board /Superintendent Communication

1. With respect to providing information and counsel to the Board, the Superintendent shall not fail to give the Board as much information as necessary to allow Board members to be adequately informed. The Superintendent will communicate information in a timely fashion to all Board member through:
a. Board meetings and executive sessions.
b. Board packet deliveries.
c. Voice-mail, text messages or email.
d. Telephone calls.
2. Board members will keep the Superintendent informed via telephone calls, voice mails, text, e-mails, personal visits, dialogue meetings and requests for executive sessions or open meeting discussions.
3. The Board's official communication to the operational organization is the Superintendent. However, to facilitate communication, the Superintendent may designate other staff as Board contacts.

B. Board Response to Contacts/ Correspondence

1. Individual Trustees may communicate with members of the community as they deem appropriate. While the Board strives to be responsive to stakeholders, it is not possible for them to respond to every inquiry.
2. Letters and faxes addressed to individual Trustees and received in the Superintendent's office are distributed to the Trustees in their Board meeting packet. If an item is urgent or time sensitive, the Trustee is contacted by email or telephone before the Board meeting.
3. Citizens may contact the Board members by email at their Sierra Blanca ISD designated email addresses. The Trustees should acknowledge receipt of the email and inform the sender that the message has been forwarded to the Superintendent's office. The Superintendent shall ensure that an appropriate response is provided on behalf of the Board. The Board will also receive a copy of the response.
4. If the Board President responds to an inquiry in writing, all Board members receive a copy of the response.

5. The Board of Trustees encourages input, and the confidentiality of individuals will be maintained to the fullest extent possible. Anonymous calls or letters will not receive a response and will not result in directives to the administration.

C. Administration Response to Contacts/Correspondence

1. All correspondence addressed to the Superintendent or Administration is routed to the appropriate staff members.
2. The appropriate staff members investigate the issues raised in the correspondence and will respond in a reasonable and appropriate manner. It is the goal of the administration to respond to the correspondence within 10 working days.
3. The Sierra Blanca ISD administration encourages input. Anonymous calls or letters, however, will not receive a reply from the administration.
4. Confidentiality of the person writing the correspondence is appropriately maintained.

X. Individual Board Member Requests for Information or Reports

A. Board members may e-mail or call the Superintendent to ask questions or request information.
B. The Superintendent may refuse to respond to requests that, in the Superintendent's opinion, would require a material amount of staff time or resources or which are disruptive or unreasonable. In such cases, the Superintendent will redirect the request to the full Board for authorization.
C. Written responses to information requests from the Board will be distributed to all Board members in a timely manner.
D. Individual Board members shall not issue formal written or oral requests for information directly to campus principals or another administrator.

XI. Citizen or Employee Request/ Complaint to individual Board Member

A. If parents, students, or other members of the public bring concerns or complaints to an individual Trustee, the Board member should listen to the complaint to better understand the critical issues unless it relates to a formal complaint or grievance already filed under District Policy FNG, DGBA or GF and upon which the Board may be requested to act. If a formal process is not underway, the Board member should take the following steps:

1. Refer the parent, student, or citizen to the appropriate employee or administrator(s) who are in the best position to assist in addressing the concern or complaint.
2. Make them aware of the district policies and procedures in place to address citizen concerns or complaints and remind them that Board members must remain impartial in case the matter requires Board action in the future. Know that board members will have to recuse themselves if aware of incident details prior to a formal complaint. Notify the Superintendent's office of the situation.

XII. Media Inquiries to the Board

A. Individual Board members may respond to media inquiries as they deem appropriate, however, Board members are encouraged to speak to the Superintendent prior to the media.
B. The Board President generally serves as the official spokesperson for the Board. However, under special circumstances the Board may elect to appoint a different spokesperson for the Board.

XIII. Board Member Visits to a School Campus

A. Board members who wish to visit a campus to view a program or activity in their official capacity shall coordinate their visit with the Superintendent's office.
B. Board members who wish to visit a campus in any capacity other than their official capacity shall do so in accordance with District Policy GKC (LOCAL), which states that visits to individual classrooms during instructional time shall be permitted only with the Principal's and Teacher's approval, and such visits shall not be permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instructions or disrupts the normal school environment.
C. Board members will be invited to attend public events, receptions, groundbreakings, dedications, ribbon cuttings, and other campus events.

XIV. Board Training Requirements

A. The Board must meet minimum annual requirements for the period between January 1 and December 31. Training must be completed prior to November elections on election years.

For new Board members, the training requirements include:

As Soon as Feasible After Election

- **Certificate of Election**
  Get your Certificate of Election prepared by the presiding officer of the local canvassing authority in compliance with Texas Election Code section 67.016. See TASB Policy BBBB (LEGAL).*
- **Statement of Elected Officer**
  Read and sign the Statement of Elected Officer and take the oath of office in accordance with the Texas Constitution, Art. XVI, Section 1. See TASB Policy BBBB (LEGAL).*

Your First Week

- **Conflict of interest disclosure**
  File a conflict of interest disclosure form within your first week (if applicable). These requirements are ongoing and apply to all school officials as defined by state law and district policy.
- **Form CIS**
  File Form CIS from the Texas Ethics Commission website, with your district's records administrator (often the superintendent's secretary) if any of the following apply:
  - Within the last year, you or your first-degree family member have received taxable income of more than $2,500, or gift(s) with a value of more than $100, from a school district vendor.
  - You have a family relationship within the third degree of relation to a school district vendor. See TASB Policy BBFA (LEGAL), (LOCAL).*
- **Form CIQ**
  If you own, or are a representative of, an entity that does business with the district, you must also complete and file the vendor's questionnaire Form CIQ with your district's records administrator (pdf from the Texas Ethics Commission website). See TASB Policy CHE (LEGAL).*
- **Other disclosures**
  Other disclosures may be required of trustees in your district by state law or local policy. See TASB Policies BBFA (LEGAL) and (LOCAL).* If you are not sure what laws apply to your district, contact an attorney.

In Your First Two Weeks

- **Form to withhold personal information**
  Complete a form to withhold personal information—like your home address, phone number, emergency contact information, and family information—from the district's response to a request for public information. See TASB Policy GBA (LEGAL).*
- **TASB Resources**
  Receive introduction to TASB resources and set up your TASB login.

In Your First 90 Days

- **Open Meetings Act training**
  You must attend one to two hours of Open Meetings Act (OMA) training, per Tex. Gov't Code § 551.005. Options for OMA resources and training:
  - TASB Legal Services School Law eSource has online resources about the Texas Open Meetings Act.
  - The TASB Online Learning Center (OLC) offers an online OMA training that is customized for school board members.
  - The Texas Attorney General also offers free online OMA training that is available to all governmental bodies.

- **Public Information Act training (if applicable)**
  If it's required by your local policy, you'll also need to attend one to two hours of Public Information Act (PIA) training. Board member training on the PIA is recommended but not required if the district has delegated responsibility for the training to the superintendent or other administrator in TASB Policy BBD (LOCAL), per Tex. Gov't Code § 552.012. See TASB Policies BBD (LEGAL) and (LOCAL).*

Before the End of Your First 120 Days

- **Local orientation**
  If you haven't attended a local orientation, make sure you receive orientation to your local district policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, an introduction to the following:
  - Current school board policy manual and any operating procedures
  - Policies governing board meetings and trustee responsibilities in policy manual Section B on Governance
  - District goals and priorities
  - District's budget calendar and process for board adoption of budget and tax rate
  - Superintendent evaluation instrument and process
- **Texas Education Code orientation**
  Attend a three-hour orientation on the Texas Education Code delivered by your regional education service center. See TASB Policy BBD(LEGAL).*
- **Evaluating student academic performance training**
  Attend a three-hour session on evaluating student academic performance and setting individual campus goals for early childhood literacy and mathematics and college, career and military readiness from your regional education service center or authorized provider. See TASB Policy BBD(LEGAL).*
- **Identifying and reporting child abuse**
  Attend a one-hour training session on identifying and reporting potential victims of sexual abuse, human trafficking, and other maltreatment of children from a registered provider. See TASB Policy BBD(LEGAL).*
- **School Safety**
  Attend an online course that provides trustees with research-based information on ensuring a safe learning environment that is conducive to improving student outcomes.

By the End of Your First Year

It doesn't end with the first 120 days. Before your whirlwind first year is over, make sure you do the following:

- **Team-building and continuing education needs assessment**
  Participate in a team-building session and assessment of continuing education needs with the rest of your district board of trustees and your superintendent.
- **Cybersecurity training**
  At least once each year board members must complete a cybersecurity training program from a state-certified provider or by your district. See TASB Policies CQB (LEGAL) and (LOCAL).
- **10 hours of additional continuing education**
  You'll need to attend at least 10 hours of additional continuing education, based on assessed needs and state-adopted Framework for School Board Development. Please note:
  - The one to two hours of Open Meetings Act training, and the one to two hours of Public Information Act training if required by local policy, count toward this requirement.
  - The required 10 hours may be fulfilled through online instruction, provided the training is designed and offered by a registered provider, incorporates interactive activities that assess learning and provide feedback to the learner, and offers an opportunity for interaction with the instructor. See TASB Policy BBD (LEGAL).*

B. For experienced Board members, the training requirements include:

Experienced Member Training Requirements (More than one year of service)

Note: *Required hours will vary year to year depending on how the Post-Legislative Update, Child Abuse, and Student Achievement and Accountability hours fall for an individual trustee.*

Annual
Cybersecurity 1 hour
Team Building 3 hours
Additional Required Training 5 hours (Up to 5 hours online; up to 1 hour using self-instructional materials)
Biennial (every other year)
Sexual Abuse, Human Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children (Child Abuse Prevention) 1 hour
Update to the Texas Education Code Sufficient length ~ 1–2 hours after each legislative session

Evaluation and Improving Student Outcomes 3 hours (By the second anniversary of completion of previous training)	
School Safety 2 hours	

C. The Texas Education Code requires the President of the Board to announce at the last Board meeting in December a report on the training board members have received to date and whether or not they have the required training.

D. In addition, to required activities, Board members are encouraged to join the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) and attend the TASB convention as well as other relevant conventions, conferences, or clinics.

E. For specific legal policies related to Board Member training see District Policy BBD (Local and Legal) available on-line.

XV. Travel Reimbursement

A. Reimbursement to Board members for reasonable travel expenses for attendance at regional, state, or national conventions, conferences, and workshops shall be made by the district when attendance is authorized and deemed by the Board to be necessary in the conduct of the public schools.

B. The district may not pay the travel expenses and other persons who have no responsibilities or duties to perform for the Board when they accompany a Board member to board-related activities.

C. As specified in District Policy BBG (Local), in the event that a Board member received a travel advance for which a balance is due to the district, the repayment shall take place promptly upon return of the travel.

E. All out of State board travel shall be approved by the Board.

F. For specific policies related to Board Member travel reimbursement, see District Policy BBG (LEGAL) available online.

XVI. Reviewing the Board Operating Procedures

A. Board of Trustees Operating Procedures will be reviewed and updated in November of each election year and will be a part of Board training.