

BRYAN ISD

SCHOOL BOARD PROCEDURES HANDBOOK

Revised: Dec. 2013

Table of Contents

Mission Statement	2
Ethics for School Board Members	2
Framework for Governance Leadership	3
Requesting Information about Meeting Agenda Items	5
Requesting Information Not Related to Agenda Items	5
Communicating with Team Members between Meetings	5
Visiting Campuses as a Board Member	6
Responding to Community or Employee Complaints	6
Communicating with the Media	7
Communicating with the Community	7
Preparing the Board Meeting Agenda	7
Participating in the Board Meeting as a Trustee	8
Participating as a Trustee in “Public Comment”	8
Closed Session Recording	8
Orientation of New Board Members	9
Expressing Concern about Another Member’s Performance	9
Goal Setting and Evaluation of the Superintendent	10
Election of Officers	10
Duties of Board Officers	10

Mission Statement

The mission of Bryan ISD, the community's center of learning, is to educate our youth to achieve their potential by providing a safe and challenging environment where standards are high and learning is the priority.

ETHICS for School Board Members

Board members shall adhere to the following ethical standards:

Equity in attitude

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

Trustworthiness in stewardship

4. I will be accountable to the public by representing District policies, programs, priorities and progress accurately.
5. I will be responsive to community members by listening and by communicating their priorities and concerns.
6. I will work to ensure prudent and accountable use of District resources.
7. I will make no personal promise or take private action that may compromise my duty to act in the best interest of the students.

Honor in conduct

8. I will tell the truth.
9. I will respect the majority decision as the decision of the Board.
10. I will base my decisions on fact and the best interest of the students rather than supposition, opinion, or public favor.

Integrity of character

11. I will refuse to surrender judgment to any individual or group at the expense of the District as a whole.
12. I will consistently uphold all applicable laws, rules, policies, and governance procedures.
13. I will keep confidential information that is privileged by law or that will needlessly harm the District if disclosed.
14. I will not request or accept special favors from District employees.

Commitment to service

15. I will focus my attention on fulfilling the Board's responsibilities and will avoid personal involvement in activities the Board has delegated to the Superintendent.
16. I will diligently prepare for and attend Board meetings.
17. I will seek continuing education that will enhance my ability to fulfill my duties effectively.

Student-centered focus

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

Framework for Governance Leadership (and School Board Development)

Adopted by the Texas State Board of Education, January 12, 1996 PREAMBLE: The Board of Trustees is the educational policy-making body for Texas public school districts. To effectively meet the challenges of public education, school boards and superintendents must function together as a leadership team. Each leadership team must annually assess its development needs as a corporate body and individually to gain an understanding of the vision, structure, accountability, advocacy, and unity needed to provide educational programs and services that ensure the equity and excellence in performance of all students. The Framework for School Board Development has been approved by the State Board of Education to provide the critical areas of development for all public school boards.

VISION

- The board ensures creation of a shared vision that promotes enhanced student achievement.
- The board keeps the district focus on the educational welfare of all children.
- The board adopts a shared vision based on community beliefs to guide local education.
- The board ensures that the vision supports the state's mission, objectives and goals for education established by law.
- The board ensures that the district vision expresses the present and future needs of the children and community.
- The board demonstrates its commitment to the vision by using the vision to guide all board deliberations, decisions, and actions.

STRUCTURE

- The board provides guidance and direction for accomplishing the vision.
- The board recognizes the respective roles of the Legislature, State Board of Education, the Texas Education Agency, and Local Boards of Trustees in the governance of the public schools.
- The board fulfills the statutory duties of the local board of trustees and upholds all laws, rules, ethical procedures, and court orders pertaining to schools and school employees.
- The board focuses its actions on policy making, planning, and evaluation.
- The board adopts a planning and decision making process consistent with state statute that uses participation, information, research, and evaluation to help achieve the district's vision.
- The board ensures that the district planning and decision making process enables all segments of the community, parents, and professional staff to contribute meaningfully to achieving the district's vision.
- The board develops and adopts policies that provide guidance for accomplishing the district's vision, mission and goals.
- The board adopts a budget that incorporates sound business and fiscal practices and provides resources to achieve the districts vision, mission and goals.
- The board adopts goals, approves student performance objectives, and establishes policies that provide a well-balanced curriculum resulting in improved student learning.
- The board approves goals, policies, and programs that ensure a safe and disciplined environment conducive to learning.
- The board oversees the management of the district by employing a superintendent and evaluating the superintendent's performance in providing education leadership, managing daily operations and performing all duties assigned by law.
- The board adopts policies and standards for hiring, assigning, appraising and compensating school district personnel in compliance with state laws and rules.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- The board measures and communicates how well the vision is being accomplished.
- The board ensures progress toward achievement of district goals through a systematic, timely, and comprehensive review of reports prepared by or at the direction of the superintendent.
- The board monitors the effectiveness and efficiency of instructional programs by reviewing reports prepared by or at the direction of the superintendent and directs the superintendent to make modifications that promote maximum achievement for all students.
- The board ensures that appropriate assessments are used to measure achievement of all students.
- The board reports district progress to parents and community in compliance with state laws and regulations.
- The board reviews district policies for effective support of the district's vision, mission and goals.
- The board reviews the efficiency and effectiveness of district operations and use of resources supporting the district's vision, mission and goals.
- The board evaluates the superintendent's performance annually in compliance with state laws and regulations.
- The board annually evaluates its performance in fulfilling the board's duties and responsibilities, and the board's ability to work with the superintendent as a team.

ADVOCACY

- The board promotes the vision.
- The board demonstrates its commitment to the shared vision, mission, and goals by clearly communicating them to the superintendent, the staff, and the community.
- The board ensures an effective two-way communication system between the district and its students and employees, the media and the community.
- The board builds partnerships with community, business, and governmental leaders to influence and expand educational opportunities and meet the needs of students.
- The board supports children by establishing partnerships between the district, parents, business leaders and other community members as an integral part of the district's educational program.
- The board leads in recognizing the achievements of students, staff, and others in education.
- The board promotes school board service as a meaningful way to make long-term contributions to the local community and society.

UNITY

- The board works with the superintendent to lead the district toward the vision.
- The board develops skills in teamwork, problem solving and decision making.
- The board establishes and follows local policies, procedures, and ethical standards governing the conduct and operations of the board.
- The board understands and adheres to laws and local policies regarding the board's responsibility to set policy and the superintendent's responsibility to manage the school district and to direct employees in district and campus matters.
- The board recognizes the leadership role of the board president and adheres to law and local policies regarding the duties and responsibilities of the board president and other officers.
- The board adopts and adheres to established policies and procedures for receiving and addressing ideas and concerns from students, employees, and the community.

- The board makes decisions as a whole only at properly called meetings and recognizes that individual members have no authority to take individual action in policy or district and campus administrative matters.
- The board supports decisions of the majority after honoring the right of individual members to express opposing viewpoints and vote their convictions.

Requesting Information About Meeting Agenda Items

- 1) Members are encouraged to ask for information from the superintendent or his/her responsible administrator before the board meeting so that the administration is prepared with information that will address those questions.
- 2) Any questions about agenda items or requests for additional information about them will be directed to the superintendent or his/her designee (or administrator responsible for the agenda item) noted in agenda packet.
- 3) If the information requested is readily available, the superintendent (or designee) will provide it to the requesting members and report it to the board at the meeting. If the requested information cannot be gathered prior to the meeting, the superintendent (or designee) will make every attempt to provide the answers or requested information at the meeting.
- 4) If a written report is provided in response to the request, all members will receive a copy.
- 5) Board members should refrain from requests which require extensive staff time and/or documentation unless: a) the request relates to an emergency, or b) the request has been approved by the board at a prior reading.

Requesting Information Not Related to Agenda Items

- 1) Members should request information not related to a meeting agenda item directly from the superintendent with a copy of the request to the board president.
- 2) The superintendent will determine if the information requested is available from existing sources or records or if it requires that a special, one-time-only report be developed.
- 3) If the requested information can be provided from readily available data then it will be provided within five business days.
- 4) In the event the request requires a special report that will divert staff time from established priorities, the superintendent will notify the requestor and the board president of this fact.
- 5) The board president will place the request for information on the next meeting agenda to determine if a majority of the board agrees the requested information is important for its future decision-making.
- 6) If the board does agree that the information is important for future decision-making, then the superintendent will direct that a report be developed and provided as requested by the board.
- 7) All team members will receive a copy of any report generated by a board member's request in accordance with this procedure.

Related Policies: BBE (LOCAL)

Communicating with Team Members Between Meetings

Board members may communicate with other individual members for purposes of asking questions, clarifying factual information, or socializing under circumstances that do not conflict with or circumvent the Texas Open Meetings Act.

Board members may 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.

Board members must take care to avoid discussion of any district business with a quorum of board members outside of a called meeting, even if less than a quorum is involved at one time.

Visiting Campuses as a Board Member

- 1) Board members are encouraged to attend as many school events or accept any invitations as their time permits.
- 2) Board members may visit any campus after checking with the principal about the best time to visit.
- 3) Board members are required to check in with the principal's office and to follow campus guidelines for visitors.
- 4) Board members may not give any direction to any staff or students, or express any judgments or promises on behalf of the board.
- 5) When visiting with teachers of their own children, board members will make it clear that they are acting as parents rather than as board members.

Related Policies: GKA (LEGAL), BBF (LOCAL) and BBFA (LEGAL)

Responding to Community or Employee Complaints

- 1) Listen briefly and respectfully. Remind the complainant of the board's responsibility to remain impartial and noncommittal because complaints may ultimately be brought to the board on appeal.
- 2) Determine if the complainant wishes to express dissatisfaction or desires some action be taken to resolve the issue.
- 3) Complainants who desire some action be taken should be directed or referred to the appropriate policy outlining grievance procedures (including deadlines for filing) and informed that the steps listed in policy are necessary to protect everyone's rights while following an orderly process.
- 4) Ask if the complainant has followed the "Chain of Command" outlined in district policy.
- 5) If the complainant does not know the district's "Chain of Command," provide the following information:
 - a) The complainant should first discuss the problem with the person in authority closest to the problem.
 - b) If not satisfied with the resolution of the problem, the complainant should go to the administrative supervisor of the person noted in "a."
 - c) If still not satisfied, the complainant may appeal to the superintendent or designee for resolution.
 - d) If the superintendent is unable to resolve the issue or the complainant is still not satisfied, the formal complaint is brought to the board following local policy.
- 6) Board members will inform the superintendent of complaints they feel might eventually reach his/her office from staff and community but will not direct the superintendent to take specific actions.
- 7) The superintendent shall inform the board of the resolution of complaints referred by board members.

Related Policies: DGBA (LEGAL and LOCAL) pertains to employees; FNG (LEGAL and LOCAL) pertains to parents and students; GF (LOCAL) is for public complaints

Communicating With the Media

All Board members who receive calls from the media should direct them to the Board President or Superintendent and shall notify both of the call. If at all possible, media inquiries to the Board President shall be directed to the Superintendent or the District's director of communications.

The board president or designee will serve as the primary board spokesperson to the media on issues regarding board actions; furthermore the superintendent or designee shall be the official district spokesperson to the media on other issues. Additionally, any board member receiving a call from the media requesting information, comments, or an interview may respond to the request, but should clearly identify personal opinion and avoid disparaging comments about actions taken by the majority. Also, Board members should refrain from discussing any information revealed in executive session if it was intended to remain confidential.

Communicating With the Community

- 1) Board members are encouraged to participate as liaisons between the public and the school district. When doing so, board members are expected to:
 - a) Clarify a trustee's limitations, obligations, and responsibilities as a member of the board.
 - b) Support board decisions.
 - c) Interact in a positive manner.
 - d) Listen politely and respectfully to comments.
 - e) Make no commitment on behalf of the board or district.
 - f) Not criticize district personnel or other board members.
 - g) Refer questions about specific district activities to the appropriate staff person when they do not know the answers.
- 2) The Board of Trustees encourages community input.
- 3) Letters addressed to the board or a board member will be forwarded to the president or the superintendent for inclusion in the board information packet.
- 4) The restrictions relating to executive/closed sessions apply to communications with the community as well as the media.

Preparing the Board Meeting Agenda

- 1) Any board member may place an item on the agenda for board consideration by contacting the board president or superintendent. However, the board member should consult with the president and/or superintendent about the timing and appropriateness of the item and honor all reasonable requests for changes or postponement.
- 2) A draft agenda will be developed by the superintendent and board president and presented to the rest of the board five business days prior to the meeting for which the agenda is being prepared.
- 3) Use of a consent agenda to present items for a single vote without discussion will conform to the following guidelines:
 - a) Placement of items on the consent agenda will be at the discretion of the board president and superintendent.
 - b) Any individual 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.
 - c) Following action on the consent agenda, the president will allow discussion on any item requested for removal from the agenda by a board member.
 - d) Examples of items that may be included on the consent agenda are as follows:
 - i) Routine items
 - ii) Minutes of regular and special board meetings

- iii) Acceptance of financial reports
- iv) Approval of personnel contracts that comply with district policies

Related Policies: BE (LEGAL and LOCAL), BJA (LEGAL and LOCAL)

Participating in the Board Meeting as a Trustee

- 1) Administration will ensure that supporting information required for informed decision-making is supplied to each member.
- 2) Agenda information will be distributed to board members a sufficient number of days in advance to allow adequate preparation.
- 3) All participants will be prepared to address items on the agenda.
 - a) Board members will read agenda materials before each board meeting.
 - b) Board members may ask agenda-related questions of the superintendent prior to the meeting.
 - c) Board members are not precluded from asking relevant questions about agenda items during board meetings. However, the right to question should not serve as an excuse for lack of preparation.
- 4) The board president shall follow and enforce Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised).

Related Policies: BE (LEGAL and LOCAL)

Participating as a Trustee in "Public Comment"

- 1) Persons wishing to address the board during open public comment will comply with the provisions of board policy that outline the specific times and procedures applicable to public comments during board meetings.
- 2) A copy of the pertinent policy will be available for public review at the posted meeting site.
- 3) During the "public comment" section of the meeting, board members will listen to comments but, as the designated spokesperson, only the presiding officer will normally respond if a response to the speaker is required. Those responses are limited to:
 - a) Statements of fact or correcting misstatements of fact presented by the speaker.
 - b) Referring the speaker to applicable board policy.
 - c) Placing the item on a future board agenda for discussion if not listed on the current board agenda.
- 4) With the approval of the board, the presiding officer may direct the superintendent to investigate matters brought forward during public comment and report findings to the board at a later meeting.
- 5) If comments reflect a complaint about an individual district staff or board member, the presiding officer will refer the speaker to the appropriate formal grievance policy and require the comments to be heard in executive session.
- 6) The board must bear in mind that persons who speak during public comments have First Amendment rights.
- 7) The presiding officer may limit the total time for public comments.

Related Policies: BED (LEGAL and LOCAL), FNG (LOCAL)

Closed Session Recording

The Board has the option to either keep a certified agenda or make a tape recording of the proceedings of each closed meeting.

Closed meetings may not be recorded by an individual board member against the wishes of a majority of the Board.

REFERENCE: Board Policy BEC (LEGAL)

Orientation of New Board Members

- 1) Local district orientation should be scheduled to take place within two weeks of the date a new board member takes the oath of office.
- 2) The superintendent and at least one incumbent board member will participate in the orientation. Additional administrative staff members may also be included to present specific information about the district.
- 3) Orientation will include but not limited to:
 - a) General district information such as
 - Geographic area included and number of square miles
 - Campus attendance boundaries
 - Number of students, teachers, and other employees
 - Number of campuses and their enrollments
 - Student demographics
 - Administrative structure and directory of key personnel
 - Ongoing issues of interest to patrons
 - b) Overview of district programs and operations such as:
 - District vision, mission, goals, and plans including,
 - (a) District planning and evaluation process and calendar
 - (b) Most recent AEIS report, campus report cards, and district annual report
 - District budget overview including,
 - (a) Current adopted budget summary
 - (b) Recent trends in revenue, appropriations, tax rates, property values
 - (c) Annual financial audit
 - (d) Development process and calendar
 - Overview of district curriculum objectives, standards, and instructional programs
 - Policy development and review process and location of manuals
 - Personnel hiring practices and salary schedule
 - Superintendent performance goals, current superintendent evaluation instrument, process and calendar
 - c) Team operations, including:
 - Overview of roles and responsibilities of the board and superintendent
 - Required continuing education and calendar of training opportunities
 - Current team improvement goals and continuing education targets
 - Annual board agenda calendar
 - Calendar of district and board events
 - Current team operating procedures

Related Policies: BBD (LEGAL)

Expressing Concern about Another Member's Performance

- 1) Individual board members are encouraged to express their concerns about another member's performance directly to that member.
- 2) If addressing the issue directly with the member does not resolve the concern, then discussion with the board president is appropriate.
 - a) The board president shall discuss the concern with the individual in question on behalf of the reporting board member or shall moderate a discussion between the members. If a quorum of the board is involved, the meeting must be posted and conducted in

accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.

- b) The president shall remind the board member whose behavior is in question about the adopted code of ethics and discuss how the questionable behavior does not comply with the code. The discussion also will identify more appropriate alternatives to the questionable behavior or refer the board member to policies or procedures that outline approved ways to deal with the issue that prompted the questionable behavior.
 - c) If the board member in question does not believe his or her behavior is in conflict with the board's code of ethics, an agenda item specifying "evaluation of individual board members' performance" may be listed on the agenda for an upcoming board meeting.
 - d) The matter will be discussed by the full board in closed session in an attempt to clearly identify behavior that may be inappropriate and discuss possible solutions or alternative approaches that may have a more positive impact on team cohesion and effectiveness.
- 3) If the concern involves the board president, a member may discuss his or her concerns with the board vice-president.
 - 4) Members will not take concerns about fellow board members to the superintendent unless there is a need for responsive action by the superintendent to support the district's best interest.
 - 5) Members shall refrain from speaking negatively about another member in the community.

Related Policies: BBFA (LEGAL), BBF (LOCAL)

Goal-Setting and Evaluation of the Superintendent

- 1) Goals for each school year shall be provided by the board to the superintendent on or before April 30. An instrument for evaluating the superintendent shall be approved by the same date.
- 2) The board will evaluate the superintendent during September with regard to goals set for the previous school year.
- 3) The superintendent shall provide the board with a quarterly progress report at least seven days prior to meetings scheduled during the months of November, February, and May for the purpose of reviewing the progress and possibly revising the goals.

Election of Officers

- 1) At least two business days prior to the meeting at which board officers are to be elected, each board member interested in being considered for one or more officer positions should provide a written statement to the other board members through the superintendent's secretary which reflects the member's credentials and willingness to serve. Failure to provide such a statement, however, does not disqualify a member from serving as an officer.
- 2) Board members shall not solicit votes or otherwise seek commitments from other board members outside of a called meeting. Board members should informally discuss the qualifications of all members interested in each office before any nominations are made. To the extent permitted by law, all discussions should be held in executive session and should remain confidential.
- 3) A candidate for board president should have served at least two years as a board member and received, or commit to receiving as soon as possible, formal training in the duties of a board president.

Duties of Board Officers

The duties stated below are for guidance and are not intended to be all-inclusive.

Board President

The president shall:

- 1) Conduct all meetings.
- 2) Appoint committee members.
- 3) Act as the primary board spokesperson.
- 4) Act as the primary communication contact between the board and superintendent.
- 5) Be primarily responsible for dealing with inappropriate board member behavior and disputes between board members.
- 6) Be primarily responsible, working with the superintendent, for calling meetings and setting the board agenda.

Board Vice-President

The vice-president shall:

- 1) Act for the president whenever the president is unavailable.
- 2) Be primarily responsible for dealing with inappropriate behavior by the board president and disputes between the president and another board member.

Board Secretary

The board secretary, working with the secretary to the superintendent, shall:

- 1) Ensure that all members are notified of meetings, deadlines, and training requirements.
- 2) Ensure that the board has met its duties with regard to goal setting, superintendent evaluation, and budget preparation.

All Officers

All officers serve to assist the board in operating as a team with the superintendent. When speaking for the board, they must honor the decisions of the majority. As with any board member, individual opinions must be clearly identified as such.