

BOARD MEMBERS
AUTHORITY

BBE
(LOCAL)

Board Authority

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

**Transacting
Business**

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

**Individual Authority
for Committing the
Board**

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

**Individual Access to
Information**

An individual Board member, acting in his or her official capacity, shall have the right to seek information pertaining to District fiscal affairs, business transactions, governance, and personnel matters, including information that properly may be withheld from members of the public in accordance with the Public Information Chapter of the Government Code. [See GBA]

Limitations

If a Board member is not acting in his or her official capacity, the Board member has no greater right to District records than a member of the public.

An individual Board member shall not have access to confidential student records unless the member is acting in his or her official capacity and has a legitimate educational interest in the records in accordance with policy FL.

A Board member who is denied access to a record under this provision may ask the Board to determine whether the record should be provided or may file a request under the Public Information Act. [See GBAA]

Requests for
Records

An individual Board member shall seek access to records or request copies of records from the Superintendent or other designated custodian of records, who shall respond within the time frames required by law. When a custodian of records other than the Superintendent provides access to records or copies of records to an individual Board member, the provider shall inform the Superintendent of the records provided.

In accordance with law, the District shall track and report any requests under this provision, including the cost of responding to one

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or more requests by any individual Board member for 200 or more pages of material in a 90-day period.

Requests for
Reports

No individual Board member shall direct or require District employees to prepare reports derived from an analysis of information in existing District records or to create a new record compiled from information in existing District records. Directives to the Superintendent or other custodian of records regarding the preparation of reports shall be by Board action or by request of an individual Board member made in a Board meeting after discussion by the Board as a whole.

Confidentiality

At the time a Board member is provided access to ~~confidential~~ records or ~~to reports~~ that are confidential or otherwise not subject to public disclosure [see GBA], compiled from such records, the Superintendent or other District employee shall advise the Board member of the responsibility to comply with confidentiality requirements and the District's information security controls.

**Referring
Complaints**

If employees, parents, students, or other members of the public bring concerns or complaints to an individual Board member, he or she shall refer them to the Superintendent or another appropriate administrator, who shall proceed according to the applicable complaint policy. [See (LOCAL) policies at DGBA, FNG, and GF]

When the concern or complaint directly pertains to the Board's own actions or policy, for which there is no administrative remedy, the Board member may request that the issue be placed on the agenda.

**Visits to District
Facilities**

A Board member shall adhere to any posted requirements for visitors to first report to the main office of a District facility, including a school campus. Visits during the school or business day shall not be permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or District operations. [See also GKC]

Constituent Service

Purpose

The purpose of the District's constituent service policy is to define standards and outline processes for Board members to provide service to constituents without involving themselves in problem resolution or management.

Overview

It is the intent of the Board that constituent service is provided through well-defined protocols, which facilitate the administration's ability to resolve problems effectively and to identify opportunities for systems improvement to meet standards and follow identified processes.

Compliance with
State Law

The Board shall follow all state laws and policies regarding the prohibition of Board involvement in management.

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Definitions

As elected officials and Board members acting on behalf of the public, the Board shall have the obligation to be accessible to the public and assist citizens with suggestions, questions, or complaints regarding the District. The following definitions are important for constituents to understand District roles and responsibilities.

Constituents

1. For the purposes of this policy, constituents are residents of the community who are represented by an elected Board member. Constituents are receivers of public services and provide public funds for those services.

Governance

2. For the purpose of this policy, governance shall be the primary role of the elected Board members. Governance involves ensuring the delivery of required educational and support services in the District by providing oversight and policy to the Superintendent regarding those services and desired results. Governance is strategically based guidance and policy focused on affecting system improvement.

Management

3. Management shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent, who is an employee of the Board and operates within District policy established by the Board and all applicable state and federal laws and regulations. Management includes directing staff, allocating resources, administering programs, and providing support services to improve school system effectiveness and to successfully achieve District academic objectives.

Appropriate Service

4. Appropriate constituent service shall be defined as each Board member collaborating with the District administration to help citizens receive the services that TEA intends the District to provide via appropriate District processes and resources. The administration shall work to resolve citizen concerns to ensure fairness and equity. This shall not be the role of the Board.

Inappropriate Service

5. Inappropriate constituent service shall be defined as Board member involvement in the day-to-day decision making that may lead to favoritism being shown to an individual outside of recognized processes. Board members outside of a quorum cannot award or grant special advantages to employees, parents, students, vendors, or any other person or entity outside regular District administrative decision-making processes established by policy or administrative directive.

System

Recognizing the need to provide quality service to constituents, the Board and the Superintendent shall put into place a system for tracking and responding to constituent inquiries in a timely manner.

The goal of the District is to respond promptly and professionally to any questions or concerns of the public. To this end, the public is encouraged to use published telephone numbers to contact the appropriate District personnel regarding issues or questions. Another valuable resource is the [District's website](#),¹ which contains policy, procedures, and the status of various ongoing programs that will often answer many questions. The Web site also provides access to those who want to send questions and comments directly to the Superintendent using electronic mail.

If the above information sources do not provide answers, community members may contact Board members directly. Board members shall provide community members with the Superintendent's or designee's contact information. The Superintendent or designee shall track inquiries using a system with the following features:

- A protocol for handling constituent requests for information or assistance;
- A primary contact person on the Board who shall refer constituent service issue requests to the Superintendent as directed by the Board member;
- A feedback system so that Board members know the resolution of requests;
- An information management system for storing, tracking, categorizing, and analyzing requests;
- Periodic reports to the Superintendent and the Board on constituent requests, their resolution, and patterns in requests;
- Periodic reports on District system improvements made, in whole or part, as a result of constituent service requests; and
- Oversight of the system by the Superintendent's designee.

Protocol

The District's constituent service flow chart shall track the recommended process flow for constituent service requests. [See BBE(EXHIBIT)]

*Managing
Requests*

Protocol is based on a reliable information network between the Board and the Superintendent for referring, tracking, and resolving constituent inquiries.

Electronic management of these requests shall be done via e-mail or other electronic means as the preferred method of communication and recordkeeping in the system. The Superintendent shall manage the tracking system and coordinate with appropriate District staff. Requests shall be tracked by the Superintendent by the

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category of request, the person assigned the lead for responding, the date of inquiry, and the date of response. This information shall be maintained in a consolidated database until reviewed by the Superintendent or the Board but for no less than three years.

The District's response shall be forwarded to the Board liaison for response to the constituent. The Board liaison is responsible for ensuring that the respective Board member is advised of action on the constituent requests, as well as keeping the constituent advised of the status of the request.

As appropriate, and when requested by the Board, the Superintendent or appropriate District staff member may respond directly to the constituent and copy the Board office on the response. This shall be noted in the tracking system maintained by the Board.

*Guidelines for
Response to
Requests*

Responses to constituent requests shall be managed on a priority basis. The Board liaison and District staff shall set priorities considering all requests. The priority in which requests are answered shall be based on the urgency of the specific issue and not the importance of each request. The Board considers all requests to be important and warranting an expedient response. In cases where extensive staff work is required to collect data or research information to respond, an interim response shall be provided to the constituent by the Board.

Database
Management

Constituent request data shall be managed by the Superintendent. As described above, statistics shall be collated for further review by the Superintendent.

Constituent responses shall be maintained in an electronic database for a one-year period from the date of the response or until a briefing to the Board is complete.

Reporting and
System
Improvement

Monthly, or as directed by the Board President, the Superintendent shall present a summary to the Board, which will include constituent request data, trends, conclusions, and recommendations for improvement. The Superintendent's report to the Board shall be in a suitable electronic document and shall include data and graphs portraying the results and processes involved. This report shall contain the most current information and shall also include comparative data and trend analyses.

Annual reports shall be presented to the Board on or about June of each year.

Communications
Plan

The Board shall delineate processes for conveyance of constituent services with all stakeholders. [See BBE(EXHIBIT)]

¹ District's website: www.ectorcountysd.org