

**MESD Board**  
**Public and Media Communication Guidelines**  
**2022-2023**

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**It is** The goal of the board to ensure the community and agency have accurate, timely, and consistent information regarding Board actions, deliberations, policies, and strategies. The guidelines below serve to support this goal.

**Media and Press Inquiries**

1. The Board Chair shall be the official spokesperson for the Board to the media and press on issues of media concern.
2. If a Board member receives an inquiry from a member of the ~~press or~~ media concerning Board action, deliberation, policy or strategy, the Board member shall indicate that they cannot comment and ~~the Board~~ **its** Chair is the official spokesperson ~~for~~ **on behalf of** the Board.
3. If a Board member receives an inquiry from a ~~member of the press~~ media representative concerning MESD agency programming or services, the Board member shall indicate ~~that~~ they cannot comment and the Director of Strategic Engagement is the official spokesperson for the agency.
4. The Board member who received the media inquiry shall notify the Superintendent, **Communications Senior Program Administrator**, and the Board Chair ~~as soon after the inquiry as practical~~ **as soon as possible**, but no later than 24 hours after the inquiry.

5. The Board member ~~who received the media~~ receiving the press inquiry shall also provide contact information for the correct spokesperson to the ~~media representative or member of the press~~ individuals from the media outlets.
6. The Board Chair shall work with the Communications Senior Program Administrator to develop a strategy around ~~any press or~~ media inquiries.
7. Depending on the inquiry, the Board Chair or the full Board may need to engage Board Committees and or agency staff before responding.
8. Individual board members shall not ~~represent~~ disclose personal opinions as the opinion of the ~~entire~~ Board.
9. Individual board members may submit media publications, ~~or~~ engage in media interviews, ~~and identify viewpoints~~ and shall identify such publications or viewpoints as a personal opinions rather than the opinion of the Board. Board members shall notify and provide a copy of the submission or topic of the interview to the Superintendent and Board Chair ~~prior to submitting media publications or conducting the interview~~ before providing interviews with TV, radio stations, and publications.

## Public/Community Engagement

### Email

1. When the Board receives an email communication from a community member or ~~member of the~~ general public, the Board Chair will respond or ~~will~~ delegate that responsibility to another Board member.
2. A “footnote” statement will be added to the bottom of the Board Chair’s email ~~so that patrons understand that it is the practice of the Board that the Chair will be responding on behalf of the Board. The footnote will state,~~ with the following information “The Board Chair responds to emails sent to the ~~full~~ Board. School Board members only deliberate when gathered as a quorum as outlined in the Public Meeting Law. To assure that Board conversations and deliberations do not occur ~~on~~ via email, the Board Chair will respond on behalf of the Board. All Board members receive communications ~~that come~~ from the community and ~~the~~ responses given by the Board Chair.”
3. All Board members will be included in responses made by the Board Chair. Following the communication from the Board Chair, other Board members may also respond if they wish. The ~~full~~ ~~entire~~ Board should be included in communications ~~with~~ sent to the public.

4. When a single Board member receives an email communication from a ~~member of~~ the public, they may respond to that patron only as an individual and not on behalf of the Board. The Board member may elect to forward the email and their response to the Board Chair or ~~full~~ entire Board if they wish.
5. Board responses to community emails ~~s communications~~ should occur within 48 hours of receipt of the communication. The Board Chair will delegate if they are unable to meet this timeframe.
6. To ensure we are not violating any open meeting law violations, Board members should never use “reply all” or engage in back-and-forth exchanges of viewpoints in emails or text messages to Board members during meetings.

### Phone

6. If a single Board member is contacted by phone, they may respond to that patron only as an individual and not on behalf of the Board.

### Meetings

7. Board members are encouraged to meet with community members. If an individual requests a meeting with a Board member, they may have that meeting at their convenience, but only as an individual and not on behalf of the Board unless authorized by the Board.

## **Staff Engagement**

### Email

1. When the Board receives a written or electronic communication from a staff member or members, the Board Chair will respond or ~~will~~ delegate that responsibility to another Board member.
2. A “footnote” statement will be added to the bottom of the Board Chair’s email ~~so that staff member or members understands that it is the practice of the Board that the Chair will be responding on behalf of the Board. The footnote will state~~ with the following information: “The Board Chair responds to emails sent to the ~~full~~ entire board. School board members only deliberate when gathered as a quorum as outlined in the Public Meeting Law. To assure that Board conversations and deliberations do not occur ~~on~~ via email, the Board Chair will respond on behalf of the Board. All Board members receive communications that

come from the staff member or members and the response given by the Board Chair.”

3. All Board members will be included in responses made by the Board Chair. Following the communication from the Board Chair, other Board members may also respond if they wish. The ~~full~~ entire Board should be included in communications with a staff member or members.
4. When a single Board member receives an email ~~communication~~ from a Staff member or members they may respond to that staff member or members only as an individual and not on behalf of the Board. The Board member may elect to forward the email and their response to the Board Chair or ~~full~~ entire Board if they wish.
5. Board responses to staff member email communications should occur within 48 hours of receipt of the communication. The Board Chair will delegate if they are unable to meet this timeframe.

#### Phone

6. ~~If a single~~ Should a Board member ~~is contacted~~ **get notified** by phone, they may respond to that staff member only as an individual and not on behalf of the Board.

#### Meetings

7. Board members are encouraged to contact the Board Secretary and Superintendent to schedule meetings with staff members and organize visits to programs. If a staff member requests a meeting with a Board member, they may have that meeting at their convenience, but only as an individual and not on behalf of the Board unless authorized by the Board.

#### Complaints and Grievances

8. ~~With regard to~~ Concerning complaints or grievances from ~~a~~ staff members, or members, the Board shall refer to MESD Policy GMB-AR which outlines the complaint procedure. When in doubt, the Board member who receives the complaint or grievance shall contact the Superintendent.

#### **Social Media Postings**

Individual Board members may publish content regarding MESD actions on **their own Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or other** social media ~~channels, including their own personal. Facebook or other social media~~ pages. If Board members express ~~opinions and~~ viewpoints they shall identify them as ~~a~~ personal opinions rather than the opinion of

the Board. If Board members have questions about content or positioning, they should contact the Communications Senior Program Administrator ~~prior to~~ before posting.

### **Sample Response to Inquiries to Single Board Members**

Thank you for your inquiry, I'm happy to speak to you ~~in my personal capacity~~ as a Board member; however, comments on behalf of the Board are made by the Board Chair.

The Board Chair's contact info is Denyse Peterson: [dpeterson@mesd.k12.or.us](mailto:dpeterson@mesd.k12.or.us).