

Document Status: Draft Update

BOARD OF EDUCATION

2:140 Communications To and From the Board

The Board of Education welcomes communications from staff members, parents/guardians, students, and community members. Individuals may submit questions or communications for the School Board's consideration to the Superintendent or may use the electronic link to the Board's email address(es) that is posted on the District's website. In accordance with the Open Meetings Act and the Oath of Office taken by Board members, individual Board members will not (a) reply to an email on behalf of the entire Board, or (b) engage in the discussion of District business with a majority of a Board-quorum.

The Superintendent or designee shall:

1. Ensure that the home page for the District's website contains an active electronic link to the email address(es) for the School Board, and
2. During the Board's regular meetings, report for the Board's consideration all questions or communications submitted through the active electronic link along with the status of the District's response. Provide the Board, such as in the Board meeting packet, with all emails that are received and any feedback regarding them. [PRESSPlus1](#)

If contacted individually, Board members will refer the person to the appropriate level of authority, except in unusual situations. Board members' questions or communications to staff or about programs will be channeled through the Superintendent's office. Board members will not take individual action that might compromise the Board or District. There is no expectation of privacy for any communication sent to the Board or its members, whether sent by letter, email, or other means.

Board Member Use of Electronic Communications

For purposes of this section, *electronic communications* includes, without limitation, electronic mail, electronic chat, instant messaging, texting, and any form of social networking. Electronic communications among a majority or more of a Board-quorum shall not be used for the purpose of discussing District business. Electronic communications among Board members shall be limited to: (1) disseminating information, and (2) messages not involving deliberation, debate, or decision-making. The following list contains examples of permissible electronic communications:

- Agenda item suggestions
- Reminders regarding meeting times, dates, and places
- Board meeting agendas or information concerning agenda items
- Individual emails to community members, subject to the other limitations in this policy

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act and the Oath of Office taken by Board members, individual Board members will not (a) reply to an email on behalf of the entire Board, or (b) engage in the discussion of District business through electronic communications with a majority of a Board-quorum. [PRESSPlus2](#)

LEGAL REF.:

5 ILCS 120/, [Open Meetings Act](#).

50 ILCS 205/20, [Local Records Act](#).

CROSS REF.: 2:220 (School Board Meeting Procedure), 3:30 (Chain of Command), 8:110 (Public Suggestions and Concerns)

[ADOPTED: April 8, 2015](#)

PRESSPlus Comments

PRESSPlus 1. Amended in response to Press Advisory Board feedback that having questions or communications go only to the superintendent OR through the electronic link to the Board's email address(es) can be problematic and may not entirely comply with the 2014 requirement.

Directive #2 is optional and adds a step to increase efficient responses to communications concerning the operation or management of the district or a school. Adding this text allows a board to (1) monitor its compliance with 50 ILCS 205/20, (2) ensure that all board members stay informed of all questions and communications to the board, (3) align with IASB's *Foundational Principles of Effective Governance*, and (4) mirror a School Code requirement (105 ILCS 5/10-16) for the

superintendent to report any FOIA requests during the board's regular meetings along with the status of the district's response.

Before adoption of this text, each board may want to have a conversation with the superintendent about the difference between "staff work questions or communications" that do not need to be submitted to the board and "questions or communications submitted for the school board's consideration" that do need to be submitted to the board. If the board does not wish to adopt Directive #2, strike the text and select "Adopted with Additional District Edits" as the Save Status.

Issue 101, June 2019

PRESSPlus 2. This paragraph is moved from above, and the phrase "through electronic communications" is added for clarity. **Issue 101, June 2019**