



BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Belton Independent School District

The Superintendent and the Board function as a team. A structured approach to developing a district vision and setting goals is enhanced by first developing a system of standard operating procedures. The Board of Trustees is the corporate policy making body for the District. The Superintendent and staff provide the leadership to strive toward the District's vision and accomplish annual goals, through policy implementation. The Belton ISD Board Operating Procedures have been established based on legal policies and policies adopted by the Board of Trustees.

The Belton ISD Board of Trustees annually reviews these Operating Procedures to effectively communicate with staff and patrons of the District.

TRUSTEES

Manuel Alcozer, Board President

Chris Flor, Vice President

Erin Bass, Secretary

Janet Leigh, Trustee

Suzanne M. McDonald, Trustee

Jeff Norwood, Trustee

Rucker Preston, Trustee

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Malinda Golden, Superintendent

Dr. Michael Morgan, Deputy Superintendent

Gabi Niño, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning

Todd Schiller, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

Vacant, Assistant Superintendent for Operations

Melissa Lafferty, Chief Financial Officer

Shad McGaha, Chief Technology Officer

Jennifer Bailey, Executive Director of Communications & Community Engagement

OPERATING PROCEDURE REVIEW

The Board Operating Procedures will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees.

BOARD ETHICS

Board members shall promote the best interests of the District as a whole and shall adhere to the following ethical standards:

Respect

- Be fair, just, and impartial in all decisions and actions.
- Accord others respect.
- Share views while working toward consensus.
- Respect the majority decision as the decision of the Board.
- Encourage expressions of different opinions and listen with an open mind to other's ideas.

Accountability

- Be accountable to the public by accurately representing District policies, programs, priorities, and progress.
- Work to ensure prudent and accountable use of District resources.
- Diligently prepare for and attend Board meetings.

Communication

- Be responsive to the community by seeking its involvement in District affairs and by communicating District priorities and concerns.
- Avoid personal involvement in activities the Board has delegated to the Superintendent.

Integrity

- Make no personal promise or private action that may compromise the Board members' performance or responsibilities.
- Tell the truth.
- Do not disclose information that is confidential by law or that will needlessly harm the District if disclosed.
- Seek continuing education that will enhance the Board members' ability to fulfill their duties effectively.
- Be continuously guided by what is best for all students of the District.
- Fairness
- Base decisions on fact rather than supposition, opinion, or public favor.
- Refuse to surrender judgment to any individual or group at the expense of the District as a whole.

Lawfulness

- Uphold all applicable laws, rules, policies, and governance procedures consistently.
- Focus attention on fulfilling the Board's responsibilities of goal setting, policymaking, and evaluation.

BOARD MEETINGS

Agenda Preparation

- The Board President and the Superintendent jointly create the agenda with input from the rest of the Board.
- Three standing agenda items will be at the end of each meeting agenda:
 - “Board Highlights” is a standing item on the agenda and notice of regular Board Meetings. This item allows Board members to highlight announcements of or attendance at school and community events; visits to campuses; recognitions of outstanding performance by district staff and students; recognition of new programs and special activities; and committee updates.
 - “Superintendent’s Report” is a standing item on the agenda and notice of regular Board Meetings. This item allows for the Superintendent of Schools to highlight recognition of student academic achievements, outstanding performance by district staff, accolades, district events, programs, updates, and priority focus areas aligned with the District’s vision, values & beliefs, goals and Journey of a Graduate competencies.
 - “Board Requests for New Information and/or Reports.”

Workshops

- Any workshops involving a quorum of Board members or more will be posted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

Opening of Regularly Scheduled Meetings & Maintaining Decorum

- 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, any person continues to disrupt the meeting by his or her words or actions, the presiding officer may request assistance from the administration and/or law enforcement officials to have the person removed from the meeting. Notwithstanding, a single outburst or incident may be so disruptive that the individual may be removed without an initial warning. All individuals attending meetings will be expected to comply with applicable guidelines from the District regarding emergency procedures and/or in accordance with executive order issued by duly authorized local, state, and/or federal authorities.
- At the beginning of each regularly scheduled meeting, the Board President will open the meeting by stating, “Please rise for a moment of silent prayer or meditation and remain standing for the pledge of allegiance and honors to the Texas flag.”
- Typically, after the Board President opens the meeting, the Board will allow Public Comments.

Board Member Response in Public Participation Section of the Board Meeting

- Public Comments will be posted on the Board’s meeting notice twice as separate agenda items. Public Comment on agenda items will occur at the beginning of the meeting and Public Comment on non-agenda items will occur at the end of the meeting. At Regular Meetings, the Board shall permit public comment, regardless of whether the topic is an item on the agenda posted with notice of the meeting. At Special Meetings, public comment shall be limited to items on the agenda posted with notice of the meeting. An individual’s comments shall not exceed three (3) minutes per meeting except as permitted by Board Policy. See BED(LEGAL) and (LOCAL).
- The Board President may limit time and adjust placement of Public Comments if there is a large number of speakers or topics on the agenda. It is within the discretion of the presiding officer to reduce the amount of time allotted to individual speakers. Below is a sample of a sliding scale

that may be used by the Board President for effective meeting management:

Number of Speakers	Minutes
1-15	3
16-30	2
31-40	1.5
41 or more	1

- Individuals needing translation services may be allotted additional time in accordance with BED(LEGAL).
- The Board President will share specific expectations/guidance with the Board and the public prior to the public participation segment of the board meeting. The Board President shall inform the audience that the Board cannot engage with the audience during Public Comments.
- Board members will be attentive to speakers who come before the Board in the public participation segment of the meeting.
- Board members will refrain from demonstrating negative non-verbal communications.
- The Board does not allow the use of video, slides, or other electronic presentations during Public Comments. Posters are not allowed at the speaker's podium.
- Speakers must be recognized by the presiding officer and will address the Board from the speaker's podium. No speaker will approach the dais.
- If citizens bring a written statement or support materials, they should provide enough copies for the seven Board Members and the Superintendent. Copies must be provided to the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent at the time the individual signs up to speak in Public Comment.
- When the Board conducts a public hearing during a regular board meeting, individuals may have the opportunity to address the Board during both the public comment portion of the meeting and during the public hearing. However, comments pertaining to the subject of the public hearing are to be reserved for the public hearing. Unless otherwise provided by law or speakers' time is adjusted by the presiding officer, an individual may address the Board for three minutes during a public hearing. Comments to the Board during a public hearing must be directly related to the agenda item for the hearing or the presiding officer will redirect the individual to the applicable topic of the public hearing.
- Citizens may also contact the Board at: Board of Trustees / Board Members (bisd.net)

Quorum

Generally, any time four or more members are gathered and discuss Board business, it is considered a meeting under the Texas Open Meetings Act. See BE(LEGAL).

A "walking quorum" occurs when members of a governmental body gather in numbers that do not physically constitute a quorum at any one time but who, through successive gatherings, secretly discuss a public matter with a quorum of the body with the objective of avoiding an open meeting. A governmental body may be subject to both civil and criminal liability for conducting business by a "walking quorum."

Consent Agenda

A consent agenda will be used for items of routine and/or recurring nature, generally requiring no discussion and grouped together under one heading. The Superintendent will automatically place the following items on the consent agenda.

1. Routine items;
2. Annual renewals (i.e., Region 12 and Texas Education Agency items);
3. Financial items to include, but not limited to, monthly financial reports, budget amendments, expenditures over \$50,000, gifts, grants and bequests, certification of annual tax roll, monthly, quarterly, and annual investment reports, and other financial reports as needed;
4. Minutes of regular and special Board meetings;
5. Updates of Board policy;
6. Routine personnel items; and
7. Routine bid recommendations.

A Board member can request an item be removed from the consent agenda for individual consideration and voting through notice to the Superintendent and Board President as soon as practical prior to the meeting, or in sufficient time, as determined by the Superintendent, to enable staff to present information at the meeting necessary to address a Board member's question or concern.

Board Member Requests for Information

Questions from Board members concerning non-agenda information will be answered, when appropriate, in an administrative report by the Superintendent OR:

- May be placed on a future Board meeting agenda.
- Updates will be provided as needed by the Superintendent. Board members will notify the Superintendent when answers to their questions are not forthcoming from the contact person in the time promised.
- Board members, acting in their official capacity, have the right to seek information through the Superintendent's office. Written questions and corresponding responses will be distributed to all Board members in a timely manner.
- A Board member shall not have access to confidential student records unless there is a legitimate educational interest as defined by Board policy FL(LEGAL) in the records and the member is acting in his/her official capacity.
- Board members shall make formal information requests directly to the Superintendent. The Superintendent may direct other administrators to respond.
- Board members can e-mail or call the Superintendent or executive staff to ask questions or make informal requests for information.
- If the request requires a material amount of time or resources, the Superintendent shall notify the Board President.
- Board members will keep the Superintendent informed.

Closed Sessions

Closed Meetings shall include only items allowed by law and policy.

- If a Closed Meeting is allowed, the Board shall not conduct the Closed Meeting unless a quorum of the Board first convenes in an Open Meeting for which proper notice has been given and in which the presiding officer has publicly announced the sections of the Open Meetings Act or other applicable law under which the Closed Meeting is held.
- A final action, decision, or vote on a matter deliberated in a Closed Meeting shall be made only in an Open Meeting for which proper notice has been given.
- The Board shall keep a certified agenda of the proceedings of each Closed Meeting.
- No Board member shall participate in a Closed Meeting that is not documented by a certified agenda or a tape recording.
- All information provided and opinions shared in Closed Meeting shall remain confidential unless otherwise agreed upon by the Board. Non-compliance may result in private and or public censure.

Parliamentary Procedures

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

BOARD ELECTIONS OR APPOINTMENTS

Five Board positions are by area and two are at large. In the event of a vacancy prior to the completion of a three-year term, the Board may appoint a replacement to complete the term or may order a special election to fill the vacancy in accordance with Board Policy BBC(LEGAL).

2024-2027

Erin Bass & Chris Flor

2022-2025

Manuel Alcozer, Suzanne McDonald & Jeff Norwood

2023-2026 At-Large

Janet Leigh & Rucker Preston

EVALUATION OF THE BOARD

- The Board shall conduct a self-evaluation annually.
- The evaluation shall consider such items as role recognition, relationship with others, performance at Board meetings, self-improvement activities and other issues consistent with the Framework for School Board Development.

EVALUATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

The annual evaluation of the Superintendent and review of the Superintendent's contract will typically be done in January.

- The Board President obtains input from all Board members, completes the appraisal document and reviews the document and comments with the Superintendent prior to the next regularly scheduled board meeting.
- The Superintendent's evaluation is generally conducted in closed session but can be conducted in open session at the request of the Superintendent.

SELECTION OF BOARD OFFICERS

- The Board shall elect a President, a Vice President, and a Secretary who shall be members of the Board. Each officer should have completed their annual required continuing education hours on time and completed one year of board service.
- Board officers shall serve for a one-year term or until a successor is elected. Officers may remain in the same office up to three (3) consecutive terms.

MEETING MINUTES

- The Secretary of the Board shall ensure that an accurate record is kept of the proceedings of each Board meeting in accordance with BDAA(LOCAL). Written minutes of each Board meeting will reflect the votes, orders, decisions, and other actions taken by the Board at each Board meeting in accordance with BE(LEGAL). Motions that die for lack of a second are not considered votes/orders/decisions/action and will not be recorded in the minutes.
- Minutes from previous Board meetings will be placed in the agenda packet for approval at the next Regular Board meeting. If extenuating circumstances exist, minutes will be provided in the following month.
- Approved Board minutes will be posted in BoardBook.

STANDING BOARD COMMITTEES

- The Board may divide into standing committees to best serve District needs. When applicable Board members have the option of which committee they wish to serve with up to two trustees serving on each committee. The Board President will not formally be appointed to a standing committee but may choose to attend any or all committee meetings.
- If a quorum of Board members is anticipated, the meeting will be posted and held in accordance with Special Board Meeting procedures.
- The Board President may create additional committees to address special topics.
- Standing Board Committees may be paused or dissolved upon Board action.

COMMUNICATION ON DISTRICT BUSINESS

In accordance with Policy BJA(LOCAL), the Superintendent will keep the Board informed of significant issues as they arise. The following items serve as agreed upon criteria and procedures for information dissemination:

- The Superintendent will determine the timing and means of communication depending upon the severity of the situation.
- Issues prompting timely communication from the superintendent may be fact or rumor, but must be important to the function of the District. Such information could be one of District liability, staff or student risk, safety, or other items of significant community interest.
- All information is to be shared equitably with all members of the team in an appropriate/ethical manner.

BOARD MEMBER COMMUNICATION WITH THE MEDIA

- The team strives to maintain a positive relationship with the media.
- The Superintendent or his/her designee shall be the official spokesperson for the District to the media on issues of media attention.
- The Board President or his/her designee shall be the official spokesperson for the Board to the media on issues of media attention.
- In speaking as an individual, the Board member should:
- Clarify that he/she is speaking as an individual and not for the Board, and
- Remind the media representative(s) of the position or the action of the Board or the issue in question.

BOARD DISSENTION

- Board members shall honor action taken by the Board when making any individual statement related to school business.
- Board members shall not communicate with any other Board members for purposes of soliciting votes with respect to Board business items.
- It is expected that Board members will attempt to informally work out any personal and professional conflicts with each other such that the members continue to work in a collaborative and effective manner.
- If disputes arise between Board members related to Board business or these Board Operating Procedures that cannot be resolved through communications between the members, the Board President will attempt to informally mediate the dispute and achieve resolution. In the event the dispute remains unresolved, the issue may be presented to the Board for resolution in a closed meeting if the item falls under accepted closed meeting topics. If the issue is not resolved during a closed meeting, the Board may take action as allowed by Board policy.

CITIZEN REQUEST/COMPLAINT TO INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

Parents and community members wishing to contact the School Board regarding a specific school, teacher, or child are encouraged to begin at the level closest to the concern. The Board requests students and parents discuss their concerns and complaints through informal conferences with the appropriate teacher, principal or other campus administrator. Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level.

1. Step One: Contact the teacher, coach, guidance counselor, etc.
2. Step Two: Contact the principal. (If a parent or community member has a school-wide concern, this becomes Step One.)
3. Step Three: Contact the District office responsible for the area of concern.
4. Step Four: Email the Superintendent of Schools, who may begin an investigation or refer the matter to an appropriate administrator.

When a Trustee is contacted with a complaint or concern from a citizen, they will recommend the item be addressed at the appropriate level noted above or will refer the matter to the Superintendent of Schools for an administrative response. As the Superintendent deems it appropriate, the matter may be assigned to a designated administrator to provide the administrative response. In such situations, the Superintendent of Schools (or designee) will respond in lieu of the Trustee.

If an informal conference regarding a complaint fails to reach the outcome requested by the student or parent, the student or parent may initiate the formal process described in the following policies:

- FNG(LOCAL)
- FNG(LEGAL)

Even after initiating the formal complaint process, students and parents are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their concerns, and they may withdraw a formal complaint at any time if a resolution has been reached.

Neither the Board nor any District employee shall unlawfully retaliate against any student or parent for bringing a concern or complaint.

Other Issues

Citizens wishing to express themselves regarding school district policy, boundaries, finances or other responsibilities of the Board which have not been placed on a regular agenda, are encouraged to use one or more of these alternatives.

- Contact the appropriate school department.
- Speak at the Public Comment section held during each regular board meeting.
- Board members discourage citizens from providing anonymous information and, in general, will not act upon it (except for fraud, unlawful or other questionable Belton ISD activities which can be reported in confidence).
- Writing or speaking to the Board in a disrespectful tone is considered unprofessional and is counterproductive.

BUILDING TRUST BETWEEN ADMINISTRATION AND BOARD

- As much as possible, staff should be made aware of Board member questions in advance of the Board meeting.
- Care enough to privately address a fellow Board member if he/she is inappropriate.
- Provide the same information to all of the Board and the staff in an appropriate and timely manner.
- Board members will read their packet in advance.
- Staff will provide supportive data for Board decision-making.
- The agenda item cover memo will be used by staff to guide their work in supplying adequate and clear information on agenda items.
- The Board may table an item that does not have supportive data.
- The Board, Superintendent, and staff will be open and respectful of each other.

GUIDELINES FOR SKILLFUL TEAM DISCUSSION

- Allow equal voice.
- Listen to understand.
- Allow one speaker at a time.
- Be brief and to the point.
- Take responsibility for yourself.
- Strive for consensus.

BOARD MEMBER VISITS TO CAMPUSES

- Board members may be invited to attend public events, receptions, groundbreakings, dedications, ribbon cuttings, and other campus events. In such cases, notifying the Superintendent is not necessary.
- Board members who wish to visit a campus to view a program or activity in their official capacity shall notify the Superintendent and coordinate the visit with the principal.
- Board members visiting a campus in an unofficial capacity should adhere to campus rules.
- Board members are encouraged to interact with staff members but are never to give staff and other Employees any directives.

- The Superintendent may schedule group Board visits on topics of interest. There must be less than a quorum present.

BOARD MEMBER ATTENDANCE AT DISTRICT EVENTS

- The Board will be provided weekly updates of calendar events and sent calendar invitations when available.
- Board members will show support of key events through their attendance at those events as representatives of the Board.

BOARD TRAINING

Candidate workshops: The Board may conduct a training for interested school board candidates each year.

In the first year of service, a Board member shall receive at least 10 hours of continuing education in fulfillment of assessed needs. Up to 5 of the required 10 hours may be fulfilled through online instruction, provided that 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. Newly elected Board member training shall include, but not be limited to:

- Local District Orientation (within 120 days of taking the oath of office, at least 3 hours in length);
- Open Meetings Act (not less than 1 and not more than 2 hours within 90 days of taking the oath of office);
- Public Information Act (not less than 1 and not more than 2 hours within 90 days of taking the oath of office);
- Local Orientation to the Texas Education Code (within 1 year before or 120 days after taking the oath of office at least 3 hours in length); and
- Evaluating and Improving Student Outcomes (formerly SB 1566), within 120 days of taking the oath of office.

After the first year of service, a Board member shall receive at least 5 hours of continuing education annually in fulfillment of assessed needs. A Board member may fulfill the 5 hours of continuing education through online instruction, provided that 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. Experienced Board members are required to complete training to include:

- Team building with Superintendent including goal setting and review of the State Board of Education's governance framework distributed annually by the Board President to all Board members and the Superintendent (3 hours annually);
- Continuing education in assessed needs (5 hours annually);
- Evaluating and Improving Student Outcomes (formerly SB 1566), 3 hours training every 2 years);
- State Board of Education Safety Training (2 hours every 2 years);
- Post-Legislative Update to the Texas Education Code, following a legislative session;
- Child Abuse Prevention (1 hour every 2 years); and
- Cybersecurity (1 hour annually).

The Board must meet minimum annual training requirements for the period January 1 through December 31.

The Board President shall also receive continuing education related to leadership duties of the Board President as some portion of the annual requirement.

The Texas Education Code requires the President of the Board to announce the status of earned training credits for each member of the Board of Trustees annually. The announcement is a progress report on the training Board members have received to date. This announcement occurs at the last regular Board meeting prior to an election of trustees (typically April).

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.

The Board is committed to attend required training and will strive to annually attend a conference together with the goal of 100% participation by the Board and Superintendent.

REVIEW AND ADOPTION

These Operating Procedures were approved at a meeting of the Board of Trustees on the 17th day of June, 2024..

Manuel Alcozer, President

Erin Bass, Secretary