



# **BOARD OF TRUSTEES OPERATING PROCEDURES**

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# ETHICS FOR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

As a member of the board, I shall promote the best interests of the district as a whole and, to that end, shall adhere to the following ethical standards:

## Equity in attitude

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

## Trustworthiness in stewardship

- I will be accountable to the public by representing district policies, programs, priorities and progress accurately.
- I will be responsive to the community by seeking its involvement in district affairs and by communicating its priorities and concerns.
- I will work to ensure prudent and accountable use of district resources.
- I will make no personal promise or take private action that may compromise my performance of my responsibilities.

## Honor in conduct

- I will tell the truth.
- I will share my views while working for consensus.
- I will respect and support the majority decision as the decision of the board.
- I will base my decisions on fact rather than supposition, opinion, or public favor.

## Integrity of character

- I will refuse to surrender judgment to any individual or group at the expense of the district as a whole.
- I will consistently uphold all applicable laws, rules, policies, and



governance procedures.

- I will keep confidential, any information that is privileged by law or that will needlessly harm the district if disclosed.

### **Commitment to service**

- I will focus my attention on fulfilling the board's responsibilities of goal setting, policy making, and evaluation.
- I will diligently prepare for and attend board meetings.
- I will seek continuing education that will enhance my ability to fulfill my duties effectively.

### **Student-centered focus**

- I will be continuously guided by what is best for all students of the district.



# BOARD MEETINGS

## Board of Trustees Meetings

Denton ISD board meetings generally take place the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month in the Board Room of the Administration Building, 1307 North Locust in Denton, Texas. Meetings begin at 6 p.m. and are open to the public. During months where holiday breaks occur (March, July, November, December, for example) fewer meetings may be scheduled. Meetings to set agendas are posted separately and usually occur within the first week of each month. Called meetings are scheduled on an as-needed basis; Texas law does allow the board to call an emergency meeting in a crisis situation.

In accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, the board has the privilege to meet privately in closed session to discuss matters related to personnel, student discipline, security, land acquisition or consultation with legal counsel. No action, however, may be taken during a closed session.

## Developing the Board Meeting Agenda

### Agenda

- A draft of the agenda is prepared by the superintendent for approval by the board of trustees at agenda setting meetings.
- Any trustee may request that an item be placed on the agenda.
- At each regularly scheduled agenda setting meeting, the superintendent will review upcoming meeting dates and major agenda items. Trustees may request items to be placed on the agenda for future meetings.
- All trustee-related topics submitted at least six business days prior to the meeting shall be included unless the president and the superintendent agree to postpone the item until a certain date.
- Meeting agendas will be determined for the month to allow timely discussion and adequate preparation time for staff.
- No item can be placed on the agenda less than 72 hours in advance of a meeting unless an emergency or urgent public necessity exists.
- Staff members and members of the public will be notified of the



posting of a board meeting agenda through the DISD website and the required posting at the DISD Administration Building.

### **Timely Notification and Information**

- Trustees shall be notified of a meeting at least 72 hours prior to a regular or special meeting, and at least two hours prior to an emergency meeting.
- Trustees will receive relevant supporting documents for the upcoming meeting at least 72 hours prior to the meeting; information requested by one trustee will be provided to all trustees at the same time.
- Trustees will read and study the documents prior to each meeting. Requests for information or questions about any agenda item will be made at least one business day prior to the scheduled meeting.
- Members should request information not related to a meeting agenda item directly from the superintendent. In the event the request requires a special report that will divert staff time from established priorities, the superintendent will notify the requester and the president.
- Information will be available to each trustee online and by hard copy on request. Questions regarding supporting documents should be directed to the superintendent or designee prior to the meeting if possible.
- The superintendent will prepare and disseminate information as needed to address emerging issues or to provide follow-up.

### **Consent Agenda**

- The consent agenda includes items of routine and/or recurring nature, grouped together under one action item.
- The board and superintendent shall determine which items qualify for inclusion in the consent agenda during the agenda setting meeting.
- Background materials for each agenda item will be furnished to the board in the meeting's supporting documents.
- A trustee may request that an item be withdrawn for individual consideration.
- All consent agenda items shall be acted upon by one vote without



separate discussion.

- Voting results for all consent agenda items will be specified in the minutes.

### **Meeting Dates**

- The superintendent will develop a board calendar that will include meeting dates of the board of trustees.
- The calendar will include those items that are cyclical and/or recurring for consideration at board meetings.
- The calendar and agenda items will be made available for the board and public using appropriate communication methods and posted in accordance with board legal policy.
- The calendar will be reviewed monthly for updates and revisions.
- Standard meeting dates will include an agenda setting usually within the first week of the month and regularly scheduled board meetings on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month as deemed necessary and as holidays allow.

## **Conducting Board Meetings**

### **Attendance**

- Attendance by trustees at board meetings provides effective dissemination of information.
- While all meetings are important, critical ones that trustees should make every effort to attend include:
  - The superintendent's initial evaluation (June)
  - The superintendent's formative evaluation (January)
  - The superintendent's summative evaluation (April)
  - Campus Improvement Plans (October)
- Missing a meeting requires the superintendent or other staff to spend time informing the trustee(s) of information missed as well as a missed opportunity for board discussion.

### **Quorum**

- Any time four or more trustees are gathered to discuss school



district business, it is considered a meeting and must be posted as such according to board legal policy.

- If less than four trustees are present, school district business cannot be conducted.
- Social functions, conventions, ceremonial events, forums, and similar functions are not considered meetings so long as formal action is not taken.
- Even though only a quorum is needed to conduct business, trustees should commit to attending all board meetings, including agenda setting meetings.

### **Opening Meeting**

- The board will open each regular meeting by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. and Texas flags. The pledges may be led by a trustee, staff or guests invited for this purpose.
- Cell phone usage should be limited to such a degree that it is not distracting to others at the dais, members of the audience or the board member or staff member communicating.
- Board etiquette restricts board members from external communications during meetings.
- Board members should remember that communications regarding district business, even if done through a personal device, are subject to the Public Information Act and may be requested by members of the public.
- District staff members and meeting presenters are to be treated with dignity and respect as experts in their subject matter.

### **Executive/Closed Meeting**

- The board may meet in closed session as provided in the Texas Open Meetings Act, Government Code, Chapter 551, Subchapters D and E.
- The posted agenda shall identify the applicable section(s) of the Texas Open Meetings Act authorizing the closed meeting.
- Before any closed meeting is convened, the presiding officer will publicly identify each applicable section(s) of the Texas Open Meetings Act.



- The superintendent attends all meetings of the board, both public and closed, except when the board is considering the superintendent's contract, evaluation or performance or resolving conflicts between individual trustees.
- All final votes, actions, or decisions regarding the closed meeting items will be taken in open meeting.
- In the event of the superintendent's illness or board approved absence, the superintendent's designee attends such meetings.
- The board may invite individuals to address a topic during closed meeting.
- A certified agenda is required for all closed meetings and will be signed by the president. Certified agendas must be kept locked and confidential for at least 2 years after the meeting date and are only legally accessible to current trustees.
- Only topics related to the cited section of the Texas Open Meetings Act prior to convening in closed meeting may be discussed in closed meeting.
- Given the legal and sensitive nature of closed meetings, trustees understand that all such meetings are strictly confidential.
- Trustees should refrain from using cell phone for personal correspondence or personal use during closed meetings.

### **Public Participation**

- At regular meetings of the board, the president shall allot time to hear persons who desire to make comments to the board.
- At regular meetings of the board, the procedures for public comment will be printed on the agenda beside the open forum item, or the board president may announce the rules for public participation.
- Any person may address the board at a regular board meeting during Open Forums on the agenda. A citizen must register to speak using the appropriate forms and policies prior to the opening of the board meeting. At the direction of the president, public comments relating to a specific agenda item may be postponed until that item is discussed.
- The president, upon reviewing the requests to speak and determining that several persons wish to speak on the same topic, may direct those persons to combine their points and appoint one



person to represent their concerns on that topic.

- 1st Open Forum – The first open forum is usually held prior to the Consent Agenda and New Business portions of the agenda. Time is set aside preceding the action agenda to allow citizens the opportunity to comment or raise issues concerning items that will be considered for action by the board. Persons desiring to address the board must complete the Online Speaker Registration Form. Speakers will be chosen on a first-come, first-serve basis with the exception of students who will always be allowed to speak first, and parents of current Denton ISD students who will be allowed to speak next, then followed by community members who reside in the Denton ISD school district. Individual time limits are a maximum of three (3) minutes. This time may be adjusted in order to accommodate a high number of speakers. Students are not required to communicate their home address, only the campus they attend.
- 2nd Open Forum – The 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Forum will be held later in the meeting. This agenda item allows citizens the opportunity to address the board on any subject. The Online Speaker Registration Form must be submitted and individual time limits are a maximum of three (3) minutes. This time may be adjusted in order to accommodate a high number of speakers. Speakers will be chosen on a first-come, first-serve basis with the exception of students who will always be allowed to speak first, and parents of current Denton ISD students who will be allowed to speak next, then followed by community members who reside in the Denton ISD school district. No action may take place in response, but the board may consider future action. Any complaints against employees must be made in closed session in accordance with Policy GF or Policy FNG (Local).
- Citizens who wish to file a complaint about specific employees will be directed to the district's grievance policy and made aware that public discussion of complaints against district employees may unduly prejudice the board if employees seek recourse through the formal grievance process.
- Questions asked by the public on topics posted on the agenda may be answered during the discussion of that agenda item. Comments or questions on topics not on the posted agenda may be referred to the superintendent for consideration and later



response.

- The board vests in its president or presiding officer authority to terminate the remarks of any individual when such individual does not adhere to the established rules.

### **Response to Citizens Addressing the Board**

- Trustees will listen attentively to comments.
- If a speaker brings a complaint about an individual district staff person, the president will stop the speaker and the speaker will be reminded of the formal grievance process available to them as outlined in policy.
- Trustees will not respond to or enter into discussion with the audience during the meeting since items on the agenda will be discussed as appropriate and scheduled. Items not on the agenda are not allowed in discussion.
- The board designates the president, superintendent, or staff member as its spokesperson if a response to the speaker is required. The president will limit responses to those allowed by law:
  - Statements of fact, and
  - References to board policy.

### **Board Meeting Parliamentary Procedure**

- The board shall be guided by parliamentary procedure as detailed in Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, or as spelled out in adopted procedure.
- The president has the responsibility to keep the discussion to the motion at hand and shall halt discussion that does not apply to the business of the board.
- Except in conflict of interest, as defined by law, or ethical conflict of interest, trustees are expected to vote on all action items.
- All trustees should be familiar with parliamentary procedures, including the proper way to make a motion.

### **Transacting Business**

- When an agenda item is presented, a discussion shall be held and a decision reached through voting in accordance with prescribed



procedure. Although there may be dissenting votes, which are a matter of record, each board decision shall be an action by the whole board, binding upon each trustee.

- Trustees shall not criticize any other trustee for the questions, comments, discussion, or vote taken by the trustee at the meeting. Differences of opinion, if respectfully submitted, are not to be construed as unacceptable behavior but rather as alternate views on a subject.

## **Hearings**

- The board will follow all state requirements for hearings related to the public, including time for public comment.
- The board will follow the district's established grievance policy procedures as identified in the district's Board Policy Manual on-line.



## Board Workshops

- The board will conduct board workshops at regularly scheduled meetings or as needed.
- The workshop format is intended to allow the administration to present information to the board that is:
  - Time sensitive and/or discussion intensive,
  - Required by law, rule, policy, and/or
  - Necessary for the efficient and effective operation of the district.
- The superintendent will use discretion in determining the nature and extent of background materials specific to each agenda item and whether those materials should be delivered to trustees prior to the workshops.
- When it is necessary to place an action item on the workshop agenda, the board will receive supporting documents in advance for review.
- The workshops are intended as an opportunity for the Team of Eight, along with pertinent staff members, to research and discuss topics in depth.

## Board Committees

- The board may, from time to time as it deems necessary, create committees to facilitate the efficient operation of the board.
- A committee that includes less than a quorum of the board is not subject to the Open Meetings Act if it serves a purely advisory function with no power to supervise or control public business. However, should the committee actually function as something more than an advisory body, having supervision or control functions, it must comply with the Open Meetings Act to avoid depriving the public access to the board's actual decision-making process.
- The board president may appoint a committee of up to three trustees to review Board Operating Procedures, preferably in the spring prior to board elections in May.

When a trustee serves on another committee within the district, the trustee should make every effort to attend meetings in person even if a virtual option is available. Trustees represent the district and need to be in attendance to develop connections within that group.



## Electing Board Officers

- At the first meeting after the annual board of trustees election and certification of trustees, the members shall organize by selecting:
  - A president, who must be a member of the board,
  - A vice-president, who must be a member of the board,
  - A secretary, who must be a member of the board, and
  - Other officers and committees the board considers necessary. The board may appoint, with the superintendent's concurrence, a member of his/her staff to serve as recording secretary of the board for the purposes of communications and administrative functions necessary for the effective operation of the board.
- A vacancy in the office of the president will be filled by majority election. The vice president becomes president only upon being elected to the position. However, the vice president will serve as temporary president until such an election takes place.
- The board will elect an officer to fill any vacancy.
- Duties and officer positions will be reviewed in preparation for nomination of trustees for board officer positions.
- It is recommended a trustee serve one full term before serving as a board officer as well as as well as attending TASB Board Officer training, including parliamentary procedure.
- Ideally board officer positions should be rotated.

### President

- The president presides at all meetings.
- The president or, in his or her absence, the vice president will serve as the board spokesperson to the media on issues regarding board actions.
- The president is responsible for signing a certified agenda of all closed meetings.
- The president is responsible for the new trustee orientation attendance and completion.
- The president is responsible for required annual Team of Eight training.
- The president and superintendent meet with the mayor and city



manager to prepare joint meeting agendas.

- The president may officiate at district events.

### **Vice President**

- The vice president will serve as the presiding officer in the absence of the president.
- The vice president, in the absence of the president, may officiate at district events.

### **Secretary**

- Along with the president, the secretary signs all required minutes, contracts, etc.
- The executive assistant to the superintendent is responsible for ensuring that minutes are recorded at each board meeting and workshop and that minutes are posted in a timely fashion on the district website.

## **New Trustee Orientation**

- All newly elected trustees are required to receive orientation within 60 days of being sworn onto the board.
- The superintendent's office is responsible for arranging this orientation.
- Suggested orientation topics include but are not limited to:
  - Board Operating Procedures,
  - Board Policy Manual,
  - District organizational chart and staff responsibilities,
  - Parliamentary Procedures, and
  - Regional, state, and national affiliations and activities.

## **Trustee Vacancies**

- Trustee vacancies will be filled within the guidelines of state law.



# ANNUAL EVALUATIONS

## Superintendent Evaluation

Evaluations will be conducted in closed meeting three times annually, approximately June, January and April. Evaluations will be conducted in closed session and all discussions will be held in a manner not to violate the Texas Open Meetings Act.

- An initial evaluation will be held in June with a focus on the superintendent's current performance, objectives, and priorities for the school year. Trustees and superintendent will collaborate to develop goals for upcoming year(s).
- Usually held during January, the formative evaluation will review current district progress toward goals and objectives set forth in the previous superintendent evaluation. The board will discuss with the superintendent areas of accomplishment, and areas in need of additional focus. The board may develop a document summarizing results of the formative evaluation. The document will be signed by the president and provided to the superintendent in a timely manner. The board may discuss the superintendent's contract at the formative evaluation; any modifications to the superintendent's contract require action of the board in open meeting.
- A summative evaluation will be conducted in closed meeting annually in April and will include discussion of the superintendent's contract.
  - The superintendent prepares a State of the District report for board review and possible action.
  - During the summative evaluation meeting, the board may determine any modifications to the superintendent's contract, including, but not limited to, contract term extensions, salary increases, and changes in benefits.
  - Modifications to the superintendent's contract require action of the board in open meeting.
  - Specific details of the superintendent's evaluation are to be kept confidential and are not subject to the Texas Freedom of Information Act. However, as part of the posted evaluation agenda item, the board may issue a public statement regarding the overall level of satisfaction of the board regarding the superintendent's performance.



- The board shall strive to accomplish the following during the summative evaluation:
  - Clarify to the superintendent his or her role, as seen by the board.
  - Clarify to trustees the superintendent's role, as expressed in the superintendent's job description and the district's goals and objectives.
  - Develop and sustain a harmonious working relationship between the board and the superintendent.
  - Identify accomplishments and areas in need of improvement for the superintendent and district.
  - Trustees and superintendent will collaborate to develop goals for upcoming year(s).

### **Board Evaluation/Team Building**

- The board is required to participate in a minimum of three contact hours of Board Team Building annually.
- Board Team Building may be used to review and modify board priorities that will be used to establish district goals and objectives that guide planning and budgeting.
- The board may also use this time to conduct a board self-evaluation. To the extent that the meeting does not violate the Texas Open Meetings Act, the evaluation may include:
  - Board operating procedures,
  - Trustee training,
  - Conflict resolution,
  - Working relationships with the superintendent,
  - Trustee conduct during board meetings,
  - Long-range planning and goal setting,
  - Relationship with the community, and
  - The board's role in achieving district goals and objectives.
- In the months before the discussion, each trustee shall:
  - Review the board's goals for the current year to ensure that all trustees are familiar with board priorities,
  - Reaffirm the purpose of the self-evaluation so that all trustees understand the desired outcomes of the evaluation, and



- Review any information or materials collected by the superintendent that the board might need in conducting its self-evaluation. This material might include documentation on district goals for the current year, reports of the board's successes and progress in meeting these goals, records of board meetings and community participation, and media/newspaper clippings.



# INDIVIDUAL TRUSTEES

## Expectations for Trustees

- A trustee's presence is important. Virtual options should be used sparingly, realizing that meeting district and campus staff is important.
- Trustees are expected to read their board packets prior to board meetings in order to be well-informed.
- A trustee should refrain from micromanaging and should not visit campuses or offices without prior invitation. Any invitation extended should have clear parameters and should not be considered open-ended. Trustees should respect the boundaries of daily district operations and allow staff to perform their duties without interference.
- A trustee should be receptive to staff input, but it is important to avoid frequent direct contact with the superintendent or other district officials. Instead, trustees should compile a list of concerns or ideas and then request a meeting to discuss them.
- When a trustee is contacted by a member of our community, the trustee should first direct that individual to the appropriate school personnel rather than contacting staff members, including the superintendent and legal council.
- Trustees should dress appropriately when attending board meetings, agenda-setting meetings, school activities, or conferences, whether at a campus, district offices, or other events. As representatives of the district, trustees are encouraged to choose attire that reflects the professionalism of their role. For example, casual clothing like shorts or torn jeans may not be suitable for these occasions.
- Trustees are encouraged to attend athletic, fine arts, and academic events.
- Trustees are encouraged to join at least one Denton ISD PTA in support of the advocacy for public schools.

## Access to Information

- An individual trustee, acting in his or her official capacity, shall have the right to see information pertaining to district fiscal affairs, business transactions, governance, and personnel matters, including information that properly may be withheld from members of the general public in accordance with the Public Information Chapter of the Government



Code.

- Individual trustees shall not have access to confidential student records unless there is a legitimate educational interest in the records in accordance with board policies.
- All requests by a trustee for compilation of data, other than copies of existing records, shall be directed to the superintendent. The superintendent will prepare requested reports and distribute them to the entire board. If the preparation of the requested report is expected to consume excessive staff time and resources, the superintendent will confer with the president to determine whether the requested report should be placed on an upcoming agenda for possible action.
- In general, requests for information made by one trustee that require compilation of a written report shall be shared by the superintendent with all trustees.
- A family member (related by consanguinity “blood” within the third degree or by affinity “marriage” within the second degree) of a trustee should not serve on district committees. Appointment of a family member diminishes the perception of transparency as well as trustee access to information which should be equal and timely for all trustees.
- Trustee participation in organizations as a representative of the board of trustees should be the president or the president’s designee. If a trustee cannot regularly attend, a new trustee should be designated. Information from these meetings is reported to the board during Board Calendars.

## Authority

- Trustees as individuals shall not exercise authority over the district, its property, or its employees.
- Except for appropriate duties and functions of the president, an individual member may not act on behalf of the board without the express authorization of the board. Without such authorization, no individual member may commit the board on any issue.
- Trustees will avoid personal involvement in activities the board has delegated to the superintendent.

## Communication with Other Trustees

- Communication with other trustees (in any forum other than a meeting



duly posted, in which a quorum is present) regarding district issues/items should be avoided to ensure compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.

- Board electronic and written communications regarding district issues should be routed through the superintendent's office so that information can be disseminated and/or questions can be addressed in this manner, rather than among and between trustees.
- Trustees shall be cognizant of The Texas Open Meetings Act responsibilities to avoid walking quorums.

## Communication with the Public

- Trustees are encouraged to participate in community activities as liaisons between the public and the district. When doing so, trustees are expected to:
  - Relay information about district goals,
  - Clarify a trustee's limitations, obligations, and responsibilities as an individual member of the board,
  - Support Board of Trustees decisions,
  - Interact in a positive manner,
  - Listen politely and respectfully to comments,
  - Make no commitment on behalf of the board or district,
  - Avoid criticizing district personnel, and
  - Refer questions about specific district activities to the appropriate staff person who can best answer the questions.
- Upon receiving communications such as emails, a trustee should refrain from responding directly to the sender, except to inform them that the email will be forwarded to the appropriate administrative authority and the superintendent. If the correspondence is sent to all trustees, the president will forward it to the superintendent to avoid unnecessary duplication.
- Trustees should be mindful of their comments on social media. Trustees should remember they are perceived to represent the district at all times.



## Communication with the Media

- The president or, in his or her absence, the vice president will serve as the board spokesperson to the media on issues regarding board actions.
- The superintendent or, in his or her absence, a specified designee shall be the official district spokesperson to the media on district issues.
- Trustees asked for individual comments or opinions by the media/press are to qualify those statements as being the opinion of the individual trustee and not representative of the board as a whole or of the district.
- Trustees should notify the superintendent or chief communications officer any time a request for comment or interview is made by members of the media in order for interviews to be coordinated and scheduled.
- Upon receipt of communications such as emails, a trustee should not respond to the sender directly, except to let the sender know that the email is being forwarded to the appropriate administrative authority. If correspondence is sent to all trustees, then the president will forward to the superintendent in order to avoid unnecessary duplications.

## Complaints or Concerns to Trustees

- 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.
- Determine if the complainant wishes to express dissatisfaction or desires some action be taken to resolve an issue.
- Complainants who desire some action be taken should be directed or referred to the appropriate policy outlining grievance procedures and informed that the steps listed in policy are necessary to protect everyone's rights while following an orderly process.
- Employees, students, parents, or other members of the public who bring concerns or complaints to an individual trustee shall be directed by that trustee to the district's chain of command process to insure active, effective communication.
  - The complainant should first discuss the problem with the person in authority closest to the problem.
  - As Trustees, we want to help, but by becoming involved early in the process, we risk endangering our responsibility of serving in a Level III Grievance should the issue progress.



- Trustees should notify or forward to the superintendent any complaint received.
- As necessary, the superintendent or designee shall guide the complainant to the appropriate staff member as outlined in the board policy complaint process.
- When the concern or complaint directly pertains to the board's own actions or policy, for which there is an administrative remedy, the trustee may request that the issue be placed on the board meeting agenda.
- Anonymous calls or letters will not receive the board's attention, discussion, or response and will not be referred to the administration for action.
- When a complaint regarding the superintendent is received by a trustee, the trustee may forward the complaint to the president. If the receiving trustee and/or president deem the complaint worthy of further consideration by the board as a whole, the complaint should be discussed at the next board meeting if urgent or during the superintendent's next evaluation.

## Continuing Education

- Trustees are required to complete training as specified in the Texas Education Code; training requirements may be adjusted by the Texas Legislature, by the State Board of Education, or by the Texas Education Agency.
  - A newly elected or appointed trustee, having served less than 12 months, is required to complete training on a variety of topics, including, but not limited to:
    - Local orientation,
    - Introduction to the Texas Education Code (TEC),
    - Texas Open Meetings Act,
    - Cybersecurity,
    - Child Abuse Prevention,
    - Evaluating and Improving Student Outcomes (EISO),
    - Team Building, and
    - An additional 10 hours of continuing education in topics of choice.



- An experienced trustee, serving more than one year, is required to receive the following training, including but not limited to:
  - Update to the TEC following a legislative session,
  - Cybersecurity,
  - Child Abuse Prevention,
  - EISO training,
  - Team Building, and
  - An additional 5 hours of continuing education in topics of choice.
- The president of the board of trustees shall receive continuing education related to leadership duties of a president.
- To the extent possible, the entire board shall participate in continuing education programs together.
- Annually, as prescribed by law, each trustee's training hours will be read into the minutes, announcing the name of each trustee who has completed the required continuing education, who has exceeded the required hours, and who is deficient in the required hours.
- Trustees may share information from continuing education programs/conferences during allotted time at board meetings or by written report, as appropriate.



## Meetings with the Superintendent and other District Employees

- Meetings and the topics to be discussed with the superintendent should be scheduled with the executive assistant to ensure that the superintendent is available, that adequate time is set aside for the meeting, and that appropriate information and materials are available for discussion.
- When a trustee wishes to meet formally with any other district employee, the trustee will inform the superintendent. The superintendent will schedule the meeting and contact the trustee, as these meetings have the potential to divert staff time from established priorities.
- Trustees may attend district staff meetings when invited.
- Trustees, as a general rule, may not serve on district committees without prior approval of the board.
- Trustees should not be involved in the daily operations of the district. Trustees should avoid going to campuses or district offices without an invitation.
- Trustees should contact the superintendent (as outlined previously) but only periodically with an appointment. Contact includes correspondence (emails, texts, etc.) as well as in-person.

## Reimbursable Expenses

- Trustees shall be reimbursed for reasonable and allowable expenses incurred for:
  - Carrying out the business of the board, and
  - Attending meetings as official representatives of the board (ex: NTAASB North Texas Area Association of School Boards, NSBA National School Board Association, TASB Texas Association of School Boards).
- Reimbursement for additional conventions/conferences and associated allowable expense will require prior board discussion. A trustee should ensure the decision to attend a conference, even if the registration is covered, is discussed and approved by the board.
- Priority shall be given to attending conferences as a group.
- Arrangements necessary to register for a conference/convention and related accommodations (hotel, travel, etc.) may be arranged through the executive assistant to the superintendent.



- Late registration will be allowed for any trustee whose professional schedule may be unpredictable.
- Itemized receipts required for all reasonable expenses are defined to mean:
  - Hotel - not to exceed the standard negotiated rate available through the conference sponsor. If no standard negotiated rate has been established, the reimbursement rate shall not exceed the rate in accordance with the General Appropriation Act (77th Legislature),
  - Parking – Self parking charges of the hotel in which the trustee is a guest, unless no self-parking is available,
  - Mileage – not to exceed the allowable IRS rates for use of a personal car or the actual cost of the reasonable fare for commercial transportation plus parking, and
  - Meals – must provide itemized meal receipt. Per diem or reimbursement is permitted only when meals are not included at the conference.
- No reimbursement will be made for:
  - Non-district fax or phone calls,
  - Entertainment or in-room movies,
  - Alcohol,
  - Souvenirs, or
  - Spouse/family expenses.
- Cancellation of conference registration, hotel and travel accommodations, etc. must be completed within the allowable “cancellation” timeline established by the vendor or sponsoring entity. Every attempt must be made by the trustee to notify the executive assistant to the superintendent of such cancellation plans as soon as plans need to be changed. **For cancellations not completed within the designated timeline, the loss of reimbursement eligibility and/or monetary commitment of the district shall be borne by the individual trustee responsible for the cancellation, unless the cancellation is the result of personal illness, family emergency, or a professional emergency.**
- Accounting records shall accurately reflect that no state or federal funds were used to reimburse travel expenses in excess of those authorized.
- Trustees shall submit a statement of all authorized expenses incurred, including receipts to the extent feasible, documenting actual expenses



and in accordance with procedures applicable to trustee expense reimbursement.

- Conference priorities are TASB Summer Leadership Institute, TASB/TASA txEDCON, and NTAASB. Other conferences such as MASBA and Governance Camp may be considered as the district budget allows.

## Visits to Campuses

- Trustees are encouraged to attend any and all school events as their time permits and to show support of school activities.
- Trustees are often invited to campus events throughout the district. Attending these events provides an excellent opportunity to become familiar with campuses and staff and school climate. These visits increase the depth of knowledge in the important decisions trustees make.
- It is important to remember these invitations indicate a level of trust and collaboration which are key to successful outcomes for students.
- Board etiquette restricts board members from cell phone usage during campus visits and other community engagements.
- Trustees will notify the principal prior to visiting a campus in an official capacity, include the nature of the visit, and sign in at the campus office.
- Individual classroom visits will be made by invitation only, and campus administrators will be notified in advance. Trustees shall not visit a campus in an attempt to evaluate personnel on that campus.
- Campus staff members may have difficulty viewing trustees as parents, rather than as trustees. Therefore, when visiting a campus or classroom as parents, trustees shall:
  - Make it clear that they are acting as parents,
  - Follow the same rules and guidelines for all parents regarding campus visits, and
  - Never request nor accept extraordinary consideration for their children.
- Trustees running for re-election shall not request or accept support from district employees during work time or make campus visits in conjunction with campaigning for a board position.
- New trustee candidates, after having declared their intention to run for election, will be provided information on guidelines for campus visits and restrictions related to trustees and campaigning.



## Conflicts of Interest

- Chapter 176 of the Texas Local Government Code requires a records administrator of a school district to file a conflicts disclosure statement if:
  - the school district has contracted with a person or is potentially conducting business with the person, and the superintendent, trustee or a family member of any of these is either an employee or has a business relationship with the person, and
  - receives taxable income or has been given by a person one or more gifts that have an aggregate value of \$250.00 in a year preceding the date the local government official became aware of the facts that trigger the filing requirement. The statement must be filed with the records administrator no later than 5:00 p.m. on the 7th day after the date the officer becomes aware of the facts that require the filing of a statement.

## Participation in District Commencement Exercises or as a Board Representative at District Activities

- Sitting trustees are encouraged to participate in district commencement exercises.
- Trustees retiring from board service at the end of their term may be allowed to participate in commencement exercises.

## Participation in Community Events

- Trustees are frequently invited to attend community events, such as chamber luncheons, banquets, and other similar events.
- Since the district pays for the tickets to such events, trustees who commit to attend should make every effort to be present.
- Should a Trustee show up at an event to which he/she has not previously indicated they will attend, there is no guarantee a seat or access to the event will be available. Trustees should notify the executive assistant to the superintendent if they plan to attend so that the district can ensure access to the event.
- When a trustee cannot attend an event, the trustee should notify the executive assistant to the superintendent as soon as possible so that a district employee can use the ticket. To ensure that the message is



received, the trustee should contact the executive assistant to the superintendent with a phone call or text message and confirm that the cancellation was received.

## **Election Activity**

- The Board as a whole shall not endorse any candidate campaigning for public office.
- For individual Trustees, prior to endorsing a candidate for public office, the Trustee shall consider that the Board operates as a non-partisan, elected body of trustees that works with elected officials of both political parties in exercising its duties, and the impact that an endorsement by the Trustee may have on the effectiveness of the Board in exercising those duties.
- If an individual Trustee chooses to provide an endorsement to a candidate for elected office, the endorsement shall not include any reference to the Trustee's role as a Denton ISD Board Trustee.
- An individual trustee's endorsement of a candidate shall not be made publicly, however, this does not prohibit trustees from attending candidate forums or events.
- Trustee support of a candidate for election to the board of trustees may have a negative impact on the ability of the Board to function cohesively and constructively.
- Trustee's shall consider the impact of their participation in the campaign of an individual seeking election to the Board, including the provision of an endorsement, prior to engaging in such a campaign or providing an endorsement.



## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Addressing the Board

The board encourages comments from citizens of the district and from district employees. Anyone wishing to address the board, either as an individual or as a representative of a group, may do so during the Open Forum portion of the meeting. The board asks that comments pertain to public education and be no longer than three minutes.

Persons who wish to participate in this portion of the meeting must complete a Public Comment form and submit it to the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent prior to the start of the meeting.

According to the Texas Open Meetings Act, the board may not discuss or act upon any issues that are not posted on the meeting agenda. If an issue mentioned is listed on the meeting agenda, the board will defer discussion of the issue until the appropriate time during the meeting.

### Complaints and Grievances

The board has adopted complaint policies that are designed to provide a prompt and equitable resolution of complaints and concerns.

- Students and/or their parents may file complaints in accordance with board policy FNG.
- Employees may file complaints in accordance with board policy DGBA.
- Other citizens may file complaints in accordance with board policy GF.

Copies of Denton ISD district policies about public participation in board meetings and filing complaints are available on the Denton ISD website, [www.dentonisd.org](http://www.dentonisd.org), and by contacting the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent at 940.369.0002.

