

# **Board Operating Procedures Mansfield Independent School District Modified on April 22, 2024**

In effective school systems, the Superintendent and the Board function as a "TEAM OF EIGHT." A structured approach to developing a vision for the district and setting goals is enhanced by first developing a system of standard operating procedures. The School Board is the corporate policy-making body for the district, and the Superintendent and staff provide the leadership to cause Board policies to be implemented. Therefore, the Mansfield ISD Board of Trustees and Superintendent function as a "TEAM OF EIGHT" to provide open communication to the staff and patrons of the district.

The Mansfield ISD Board of Trustees adopts these guidelines as Standard Operating Procedures to set the expectations of the Board of Trustees and to effectively communicate with staff and patrons of the district.

## **I. CODE OF ETHICS BBF(LOCAL)**

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 recognize that decisions must be made by the Board as a whole and make no personal promise or take private action that may compromise my performance or my responsibilities.

### **Honor In Conduct**

- I will tell the truth.
- I will express opinions and views during the discussion of motions, working for consensus, but following the vote shall respect the majority decision as the decision of the Board.
- I will refrain from using social media, texting or other forms of electronic communication during a board meeting. All are subject to open records requests, and therefore prohibited during board meetings.

### **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 hold confidential all matters and information that is privileged under applicable laws or will needlessly harm employees, individuals or the District if disclosed.
- I will not discuss any information or express opinions in public when the District is involved with third party negotiations.
- I will keep District business completely separate from personal social media accounts.

### **Commitment to Service**

- I will focus my attention on fulfilling the Board's responsibilities of goal setting, policymaking and evaluation.
- I will diligently prepare for and attend Board meetings.
- I will study the material in the Board packet and when possible, present or resolve questions beforehand by contacting the Superintendent or administrative staff.
- I will avoid personal involvement in activities the Board has delegated to the Superintendent.
- I will seek continuing education that will meet legal requirements and 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.
- I will make decisions in terms of the educational welfare of all children in the District based on fact rather than supposition, opinion or public favor.

The Board, and each member, shall adhere to this commitment to act in an ethical manner at all times when conducting the business of the board and when interacting with the District's stakeholders. Board Members understand that a failure to do so, may result in the Board implementing an internal or external reprimand.

## II. ROLE AND AUTHORITY OF BOARD MEMBER AND/OR BOARD OFFICERS BDAA(LOCAL)

- A. **Board Officers:** The Board shall elect a Board President, a Vice President and a Secretary who shall be members of the Board. The Board may assign a District employee to provide clerical assistance to the Board. Officers shall be elected by majority vote of the members present and voting. [Education Code Sect. 11.061\(c\)](#) requires the selection of officers at the first meeting after each election and qualification of trustee.
- B. **Vacancy:** A vacancy among officers of the Board shall be filled by majority action of the Board.
- C. **Terms and Duties:** Board officers shall serve for a term of one year or until a successor is elected. A minimum of one-year board experience is required before serving as an officer, unless two-thirds (5) of the board have less than one (1) year experience. Officers may succeed themselves in office without limit with the exception of the Board President who may succeed himself or herself once. Each officer shall perform any legal duties of the office and other duties as required by action of the Board.
- D. **President:** In addition to the duties required by law, the Board President shall:
1. Preside at all meetings of the Board unless unable to attend.
  2. Have the right to discuss, make motions and resolutions and vote on all matters coming before the Board.
  3. Call special meetings of the Board. [See BE]
  4. Sign all legal documents, warrants, vouchers and reports, as required by statute, state or federal regulations or Board policy.
  5. Decide all questions of order in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, as modified by Board policy.
  6. Act as the spokesperson for the entire Board.
  7. Receive official correspondence addressed to the Board.
  8. Assist in the development of the agenda for each meeting.
  9. Represent the Board and the District at certain ceremonial occasions and events.
  10. Lay before the Board from time-to-time whatever matters and suggestions he or she may consider to be within the best interest of the public schools.
  11. Perform all other duties which may be prescribed by law, authorized by the Board or mandated by a court of competent jurisdiction for the chief officer of the Board.

12. Appoint Board members to specific board committees at the first regular meeting following ~~an election~~ a reorganization of the Board. The Board president shall make every effort not to constitute a Board committee solely of Board officers. The Board president shall discuss with the entire Board if he/she would like to appoint a committee made up solely of officers.

E. **Vice President:** The Vice President of the Board shall:

1. Act in the capacity and perform the duties of the Board President in the event of the absence or incapacity of the Board President.
2. Become Board President only upon being elected to the position.

F. **Secretary:** The Secretary of the Board shall:

1. Ensure that an accurate record is kept of the proceedings of each Board meeting.
2. Ensure that notices of Board meetings are posted and sent as required by law.
3. In the absence of the Board President and Vice President, call the meeting to order and act as presiding officer.
4. Sign or countersign documents as directed by action of the Board.

G. **Board as One:**

1. Board members retain their free speech rights but should be sure to clarify that their statements are reflections of their own views and not the official position of the Board.

### III. Governance BE(LEGAL), BE(LOCAL)

**Board Meetings:** The Board may act only by majority vote of the members present at a meeting held in compliance with Government Code Chapter 551 (Open Meetings Act), at which a quorum of the board is present and voting. A majority vote is generally determined from a majority of those present and voting, excluding abstentions, assuming a quorum is present. *Education Code 11.051(a-1); Atty. Gen. Op. GA-689 (2009)*

- A. **Definition:** "Meeting" means a deliberation between a quorum of the Board, or between a quorum of the Board and another person, during which public business or public policy over which the Board has supervision or control is discussed or considered, or during which the Board takes formal action.

Except as otherwise provided below, a gathering:

1. That is conducted by the Board or for which the Board is responsible.
2. At which a quorum (e.g. four members of a seven-member board) of members of the Board is present;
3. That has been called by the Board; and
4. At which Board members receive information from, give information to ask questions of or receive questions from any third person, including an employee of the district, about the public business or public policy over which the Board has supervision or control.

- B. **Open to Public:** Every regular, special, or called meeting of the Board shall be open to the public. The Board may, however, exclude a witness from a hearing during the examination of another witness in a matter being investigated and may enter into a closed meeting, as provided by law. *Gov't Code 551.002, 551.084, Ch. 551, Subch. D, Subch. E. Education Code 26.007(a)* See BDB and BEC]

- C. **Social Function or Convention:** The term "meeting" does not include the gathering of a quorum of the Board at a social function unrelated to the public business that is conducted by the Board, the attendance by a quorum of the Board at a regional, state or national convention or workshop, ceremonial event or press conference, or the attendance by a quorum of a board at a candidate forum, appearance, or debate to inform the electorate, if formal action is not taken and any discussion

of public business is incidental to the social function, convention, workshop, ceremonial event, or press conference, forum, appearance, or debate.

- D. **Meeting Place:** The location of a board meeting shall be specified in the notice for the meeting, which is posted on the outside bulletin board of the Administration building and the district website. The notice for a Board meeting shall reflect the date, time, and location of the meeting. The notice will be posted at least 72 hours before the scheduled time of the meeting, except as provided at Emergency meeting or Emergency addition to the Agenda.
- E. **Meeting Time:** Regular meetings of the Board shall normally be held on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. When determined necessary and for the convenience of Board members, the Board President may change the date, time, or location of a regular meeting with proper notice. The notice for that meeting shall reflect the changed date or time.
- F. **Meeting Attendance:** Attendance at all Board meetings, both Regular and Called, is generally expected. Attendance will be reported at the last regular Board meeting of the calendar year.
- G. **Special or Emergency Meetings:**
  - 1. The time and place of special and emergency meetings shall be as set out in the notice for the meeting.
  - 2. The Board President shall call special meetings at the Board President's discretion or on request by three members of the Board.
  - 3. The Board President shall call an emergency meeting when it is determined by the Board President or three members of the Board that an emergency or urgent public necessity, as defined by law, warrants the meeting.
  - 4. A Teleconference or Videoconference meeting is only allowed when an emergency meeting is necessary per statute. See BE(LEGAL)
- H. **Agenda:**
  - 1. **Deadline:** The deadline for submitting items for inclusion on the agenda is the fifth calendar day before regular meetings and the fifth calendar day before special meetings.
  - 2. **Preparation:**
    - a. The Superintendent and Board President shall consult with one another to prepare the agenda for all Board meetings. The Superintendent shall include on the preliminary agenda of the meeting all topics that have been timely submitted in writing by at least two Board members.
    - b. Before the official agenda is finalized for any meeting, the Superintendent shall consult the Board President to ensure that the agenda and the topics included meet with the Board President's approval. In reviewing the preliminary agenda, the Board President shall ensure that any topics the Board or at least two Board Members have requested to be addressed are either on that agenda or scheduled for deliberation at an appropriate time in the near future. The Board President shall not have authority to remove from the agenda a subject requested by at least two Board Members without specific authorization from those Board members.
    - c. Prior to each meeting, the Superintendent or designee shall provide each board member written notice of the meeting, an agenda listing, appropriate reports, information, documents and recommendations. Questions from Board members will be funneled through the Superintendent for response from her or one of the Department Heads she deems appropriate. Members of the Board shall be given notice of regular and special meetings at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled time of the meeting and at least one hour prior to the time of an emergency meeting.

- I. **Notice to Members:** Notice of all meetings shall provide for the possibility of a closed meeting during an open meeting, as provided by law. [See BEC]
- J. **Closed Meetings:** The Board may conduct a closed meeting when the agenda subject is one that may properly be discussed in closed meeting. [See BEC]
- K. **Order of Business:** The order of business for regular Board meetings shall be as set out in the agenda accompanying the notice of the meeting. At the meeting, the order in which posted agenda items are taken may be changed by consensus of Board members.
- L. **Rules of Order:** The Board shall observe the parliamentary procedures as found in *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except as otherwise provided in Board procedural rules or by law. Procedural rules may be suspended at any Board meeting by majority vote of the members present. *Each Board member shall be issued a copy of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised during their orientation training.*
- M. **Voting:** Voting shall be by voice vote or show of hands, as directed by the Board President. Any member may abstain from voting, and a member's vote or failure to vote shall be recorded upon that member's request. No vote shall be taken by secret ballot. [See BDAA (LOCAL) for the Board President's voting rights]
- N. **Consent Agenda:** When the agenda is prepared, the Board President shall determine items, if any, that qualify to be placed on the consent agenda. A consent agenda shall include items of a routine and/or recurring nature grouped together under one action item. For each item listed as part of a consent agenda, the Board shall be furnished with background material. All such items shall be acted upon by one vote without separate discussion, unless a Board member requests that an item be withdrawn for individual consideration. The remaining items shall be adopted under a single motion and vote.
- O. **Superintendent's Report:** During the preparation of the agenda, the Board President and Superintendent shall collaborate to determine which items, if any, should be placed on the Superintendent's Report. The Superintendent's Report is intended for informational purposes only. The Board does not vote on these items, although a Board member may ask questions or lead a discussion on any of the items listed under the Superintendent's Report.
- P. **Items for Closed Session:**
  - 1. All personnel issues must be conducted in an closed session, unless specifically required by Texas Open Meeting Law.
  - 2. The Board may discuss in closed session any and all subjects, for any and all purposes permitted by Gov't Code 551.071-551.084.
    - a. Attorney consultations
    - b. Real property purchases or exchange, lease, value of real property, or economic development negotiations
    - c. Prospective gifts or donations to the District, Personnel matters, including employee complaints
    - d. Personally identifiable student information
    - e. Medical or Psychiatric records
    - f. Student discipline
    - g. Security devices, deployment, security personnel, security audits, specific occasions for implantations, and security assessments
    - h. Assessment instruments
    - i. Emergency Management

j. Economic Development Negotiations

Q. **Board Meetings and Public Participation:**

1. **Limit on Participation:** Audience participation at a Board meeting is limited to the portion of the meeting designated to receive public comment in accordance with BED (LOCAL). At all other times during a Board meeting, the audience shall not enter into discussion or debate on matters being considered by the Board, unless requested by the presiding officer.
2. **Public Comment:** At all Board meetings, public comment shall be limited to items on the agenda posted with notice of the meeting.
3. **Procedures:** Individuals who wish to participate during the portion of the meeting designated for public comment are required to register online beginning when the agenda for the meeting is posted, which is no later than 72 hours prior to the start of the meeting. All online registrations are due by 1 p.m. the day of the board meetings. All public comment submissions must be tied to a specific agenda item and topic as indicated on the board agenda for that meeting. Public comment shall occur prior to any vote taken by the Board. An individual's comments to the Board shall not exceed three (3) minutes per meeting. The individual's comments shall not exceed 6 minutes if the individual needs a translator.
4. **Meeting Management:** When necessary for effective meeting management or to accommodate large numbers of individuals wishing to address the Board, the presiding officer may make adjustments to public comment procedures, including adjusting when public comment will occur during the meeting, reordering agenda items, continuing agenda items to a later meeting, providing expanded opportunity for public comment, or establishing an overall time limit for public comment and adjusting the time allotted to each speaker. However, no individual shall be given less than one minute to make comments.
5. **Boards Response:** Specific factual information or recitation of existing policy may be furnished in response to inquiries, but the Board shall not deliberate or decide regarding any subject that is not included on the agenda posted with notice of the meeting.
6. **Complaints and Concerns:** The presiding officer or designee shall determine whether an individual addressing the Board has attempted to solve a matter administratively through resolution channels established by policy. If not, the individual shall be referred to the appropriate policy (see list below) to seek resolution:
  - a. Employee complaints: DGBA
  - b. Student or parent complaints: FNG
  - c. Public complaints: GF
7. **Disruption:** The Board shall not tolerate disruption of the meeting by members of the audience. If, after a least one warning from the presiding officer, any individual continues to disrupt the meeting by his or her words or actions, the presiding officer may request assistance from law enforcement officials to have the individual removed from the meeting.

#### IV. BOARD MEMBERS AUTHORITY BBE (LOCAL)

- A. **Board Members 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)]
- B. **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.
- C. **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]

- D. **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] [Requests for information should be submitted to the Superintendent or his/her designee. The request and responsive information or records shall be provided to all board members when the information is provided to the requesting board member.](#)

1. **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]

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

3. **Request 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.
4. **Confidentiality:** At the time a Board member is provided access to records or reports that are confidential or otherwise not subject to public disclosure [see GBA], 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.

- I. **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.

- J. **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] Please see below, under Section X for further instructions regarding visiting campuses.

## **V. BOARD MEMBERS TRAINING AND ORIENTATION BBD (LEGAL)**

### **A. Required Training:**

1. Each Board Member must complete any training required by the State Board of Education. The Board President shall announce the status of each Board member's continuing education credit. The announcement shall be made annually at the last regular Board meeting before the District's uniform election date, whether or not an election is held. The announcement shall be reflected in the meeting minutes and, when necessary, posted on the District's website in accordance with law.
2. Continuing education for Board members includes orientation sessions, an annual team building session with the Board and the Superintendent and specified hours of continuing education based on identified needs.

- B. **Local Orientation:** All Board members shall receive a local District orientation and an orientation to the Texas Education Code as provided by the Superintendent or designee. The Coordinator of School Board Operations will schedule individual meetings with new Board members and Executive Cabinet. The Local Orientation training should be a minimum of three hours.

### **C. New Members:**

1. New Board members shall participate in a local orientation session within 60 days before or after their election or appointment. The purpose of this orientation is to familiarize new Board members with local Board policies and procedures and District goals and priorities.
2. All newly elected Board members shall receive the orientation to The Texas Education Code within their first 120 days of service. The orientation shall be delivered by Regional Education Services Centers or online and shall be three hours in length.
3. The Board president will assign a mentor for one year to a new Board member.

- D. **Texas Education Code Training:** All sitting Board members shall receive a basic orientation to the Texas Education Code and relevant legal obligations. The orientation will have special but not exclusive emphasis on statutory provisions related to Texas school district governance. The orientation shall be delivered by regional education services centers and shall be three hours in length. Topics shall include, but not be limited to, Texas Education Code, Chapter 26 (Parental Rights and Responsibilities), and Texas Education Code, Section 28.004 (Local School Health Education Advisory Council and Health Education Instruction). [See BDF, EHAA, and FNG] New Board members should try and complete this training within their first 120 days of taking office.

- E. **Legislative Updates:** After each session of the Texas Legislature, each Board member shall receive an updated session from a Regional Education Service Center or any registered provider to the basic orientation to the Texas Education Code. The update session shall be of sufficient length to familiarize Board members with major changes in the Texas Education Code and other relevant legal developments related to school governance. A Board member who has attended a basic orientation session given by a service center that incorporates the most recent legislative changes is not required to attend an additional legislative update.



- F. **Cybersecurity:** Board members will annually complete the Cybersecurity training. The training shall be delivered by the Texas Department of Information Resources or the District and shall be one hour in length.
- G. **Team Building:** All Board members, shall annually participate with the Superintendent in a team-building session facilitated by the Regional Education Service Center or any registered provider. The team building session shall be of a length deemed appropriate by the Board, but must be a minimum of three hours. The purpose of the team building session is to enhance the effectiveness of the Board-Superintendent team and to assess the continuing education needs of the Board-Superintendent team. The assessment of needs shall be based on the framework for governance leadership and shall be used to plan continuing education activities for the governance leadership team for the upcoming year.
- H. **Continuing Education:** In addition to the orientation and team building training, all Board members shall receive additional continuing education on an annual basis, in fulfillment of assessed needs and based on the framework for governance leadership. [See BBD (EXHIBIT)] The continuing education sessions may be provided by the regional education service centers or other registered providers. To the extent possible, the entire Board shall participate in continuing education programs together.
- I. **First Year:** In their first year of service, Board members shall receive at least ten hours of continuing education in fulfillment of assessed needs. Board members may fulfill up to five of the required ten 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. Board members in their first year of service must complete three hours of Evaluating and Improving Student Outcomes, one hour of Sexual Abuse Human Trafficking and Other Maltreatment of Children, and 2 hours of School Safety
- J. **Subsequent Years:** Following the first year of service, Board members shall receive at least five hours of continuing education annually in fulfillment of assessed needs. Board members may fulfill the five 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. Current sitting Board members, every other year must complete 1 hour of Sexual Abuse Human Trafficking and other Maltreatment of Children, and 2 hours of School Safety.
- K. **Presidents:** The Board President shall receive continuing education related to leadership duties of the Board President as some portion of the annual requirement.
- L. **Local Training:** At least 50 percent of the annual continuing education shall be designed and delivered by persons not employed or affiliated with the Board member's local school District. No more than one hour of the required continuing education that is delivered by the local District may use self-instructional materials. *19 TAC 61.1*
- M. **Specific Open Meetings Act Training:**
1. Within 90 days after taking the oath of office, each Board member shall complete a course of training regarding the responsibilities of the Board and its members under Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code. The office of the attorney general may provide the training and may also approve other acceptable sources of training.
  2. The training is also available through TASB's online learning center and should be between one and two hours.

**N. Specific Public Information Act Training:**

1. Within 90 days after taking the oath of office or assuming duties as a public official, each Board member and public information coordinator shall complete a course of training regarding the responsibilities of the District and District officers and employees under Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code. The office of the attorney general may provide the training and may also approve other acceptable sources of training.
2. A Board member may designate a public information coordinator to satisfy the training requirements of Government Code 552.012 for the Board member if the public information coordinator is primarily responsible for administering the responsibilities of the Board member or District under Government Code Chapter 552.
3. The Public Information Act Training should be between one and two hours.

**O. Annual Compliance Announcement:** Annually, at the meeting at which the call for election of Board members is normally scheduled, the Board President or designee shall announce the name of each Board member who has completed the required continuing education, who has exceeded the required hours of continuing education and who is deficient in the required continuing education. The Board President shall cause the minutes to reflect the information and shall make this information available to the local media.

**P. Training During Meetings:** No continuing education shall take place during a Board meeting unless that meeting is expressly called for the delivery of Board training. Continuing education may take place prior to or after a legally called Board meeting in accordance with the Government Code. *19 TAC 61.1*

**Q. Conventions and Workshops:** Board members may attend regional, state or national conventions or workshops without such gatherings being construed as “meetings” under the Open Meetings Act. However, no formal action shall be taken at such conventions or workshops concerning District business, and any discussion of public business shall be merely incidental to the convention or workshop. *Gov’t Code 551.001(4)*

**R. Commendation:** Annually, the State Board shall commend those Board-Superintendent teams that receive at least eight hours of the continuing education in the local orientation and team-building sessions as an entire Board- Superintendent team. *19 TAC 61.1*

## **VI. PUBLIC COMPLAINTS GF (LOCAL)**

**A. Guiding Principles:** The Board encourages the public to discuss concerns with an appropriate administrator who has the authority to address the concerns.

**B. Formal Process:**

1. Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level. If an informal conference regarding a complaint fails to reach the outcome requested by an individual, he or she may initiate the formal process described below by timely filing a written complaint form.
2. Even after initiating the formal complaint process, individuals are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their concerns. An individual whose concerns are resolved may withdraw a formal complaint at any time.
3. The process described in this policy shall not be construed to create new or additional rights beyond those granted by law or Board policy, nor to require a full evidentiary hearing or “mini-trial” at any level.

- C. **Freedom from Retaliation:** Neither the Board nor any District employee shall unlawfully retaliate against any individual for bringing a concern or complaint.
- D. **Application:** Except as addressed by SPECIFIC COMPLAINTS, below, this policy applies to all complaints or grievances from the public.
- E. **Specific Complaints:** For more information on how to proceed with complaints regarding:
  - 1. Alleged discrimination, see GA.
  - 2. Instructional materials, see EFA.
  - 3. On-campus distribution of non-school materials, see GKDA.
  - 4. A commissioned peace officer who is an employee of the District, see CKE.

## VII. ANONYMOUS PHONE CALLS AND/OR LETTERS

The Mansfield ISD Board of Trustees encourages input; however, anonymous calls, letters and e-mails will not receive Board attention, discussion or response and will not result in directives to the administration. Confidentiality is strictly maintained when possible.

Board members will not respond to anonymous communications, unless the communication pertains to criminal, health or safety issues. This type of communication will be forwarded to the Superintendent for action. If a Board member receives any communication which he/she perceives to be of a threatening nature, the Board member will immediately call and forward the communication to the Superintendent for action. The Superintendent will contact all Board members, if deemed necessary.

## VIII. RESPONSE TO SIGNED LETTERS

- A. The Board members encourages input. A signed letter or e-mail regarding district business will be forwarded to the Superintendent. The Superintendent or a designee will respond to the letter or e-mail and communicate their actions/response to the signed letter to the Board.
- B. A Board member retains the right to respond to an individual regarding issues other than District business but must understand that such communication may be interpreted as being an official statement of the Board. The Board member should do the following:
  - 1. Clarify that he/she is responding as an individual and not for the Board
  - 2. Remind the individual any position/action the Board has officially taken on the subject.

~~C. Board members will not respond to anonymous communications, unless the communication pertains to criminal, health or safety issues. Any such communications, will be forwarded to the Superintendent for action. If a Board member receives any communication which he/she perceives to be of a threatening nature, the Board member will immediately call and forward the communication to the Superintendent for action. The Superintendent will contact all Board members, if deemed necessary.~~

## IX. BOARD MEMBER USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

- A. While using social media platforms, should a community member, parent, student, employee, etc., of the District make a complaint or share concerns regarding the District online, Board members should either refrain from responding to the comment made, or should direct the community member to an administrator so that the individual can go through the District's grievance process to have their concerns addressed.

- B. Board members should also keep in mind that they can be collectively and individually subject to defamation suits. As such, Board members must be extremely cautious in creating posts or responding to comments with information that has not been verified or made public. Board Members should also refrain from commenting on or spreading rumors or misinformation about the District or its students or employees.
- C. Board members should refrain from using their individual accounts to discuss school business or invite any kind of public discourse. If this activity occurs and the account is designated as a public forum, Board members and the District can be subject to legal action for deleting posts or comments, blocking or restricting certain users or restricting public speech in any way.

## **X. BOARD MEMBER TO VISIT SCHOOL CAMPUS**

- A. Board members are encouraged to attend special events on campuses to represent the Board in support of activities.
- B. Board members are not to go into teachers' classrooms or campuses for the purpose of evaluation or investigation.
- C. Board members must sign in at the office when visiting campuses.
- D. Board members must wear identification badges when visiting schools.
- E. Except for routine activities or visits to see their children, as a courtesy, Board members should let the principal and Superintendent and/or designee know of their visit.
- F. Board members should always have an invitation from, or coordinate their visit with, the campus administrator. Board members should avoid visiting a campus unannounced to avoid disruption to the classroom instruction or other planned activities.
- G. Board members that volunteer to help at a campus with reading to students, helping with book fairs or cookie sales must complete a background check just like all other volunteers.
- H. Board members should not invite possible candidates or other individuals to campus events during the school day.

## **XI. COMMUNICATIONS WITH SUPERINTENDENT**

- A. Superintendent will meet with the Board President on a routine basis.
- B. Superintendent will communicate with all Board members via regular transmittals by telephone calls, faxes, e-mail, text messages or personal visits. In an emergency, the board will receive a phone call from Superintendent. For minor things, the Superintendent will send a text message. If more detailed is required, the Superintendent will send an email.
- C. Superintendent and Board President will communicate information in a timely manner to all Board members.
- D. Board will keep Superintendent informed via telephone calls, faxes, e-mail, text messages or personal visits.

## **XII. COMMUNICATIONS WITH PUBLIC**

- A. The Board is committed to, and encourages, community input through surveys, community engagement opportunities, district website, and district publications
- B. The Board will communicate with its community through community conversations, public hearings, regular Board meetings and regular publications.
- C. Unless otherwise approved or authorized by the Board, individual members cannot speak in an official capacity or otherwise represent the views of the Board.
- D. Community members may contact the Board and Administration through the District website. Board members are discouraged from responding to any website e-mail individually as the Administration will appropriately respond and all Board members will be copied on their response when appropriate. Board members will forward patrons concerns on to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will determine the district employee best to answer the concern and communicate back to the patron and Board members the outcome of the investigation. When all the Board members and the Superintendent are included on an email the Superintendent will respond. When all the Board members but not the Superintendent are included on an email the Board President will respond. When an individual Board Member receives an email, he or she should forward the email to the Superintendent and carbon copy the Board President. The Board member may respond as follows "Thank you for your email. I have forwarded your email to the proper administrator who will respond to your concerns or questions.
- E. Media Inquiries to the Board:
  - 1. The Board President shall be the official spokesperson for the Board to the media/press on issues of media attention.
  - 2. All Board members who receive calls from the media should direct them to the Board President, Superintendent, and /or District Communications Department.

## **XIII. SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION BJCD(LOCAL)**

- A. **Evaluation Instrument:** The instrument used to evaluate the Superintendent shall be based on the Superintendent's job description [see BJA (LOCAL)] and performance goals and shall be adopted by the Board.
- B. **Written Evaluation:**
  - 1. The Board shall prepare a written or electronic evaluation of the Superintendent at annual or more frequent intervals.
  - 2. An evaluation must be completed within 15 months of the last evaluation. In other words, the board may not go more than three months past the one-year mark of the last evaluation
  - 3. The Board shall furnish the Superintendent with a copy of the completed evaluation and shall discuss its conclusions with the Superintendent in a closed meeting, unless the Superintendent requests that the discussion be open.
- C. **Objectives:** The Board shall strive to accomplish the following objectives in conducting the Superintendent's written evaluation:
  - 1. Clarify to the Superintendent his or her role, as seen by the Board.

2. Clarify to Board members the Superintendent's role, according to the Board's written criteria, as expressed in the Superintendent's job description and the District's goals and objectives.
3. Foster an early understanding among new Board members of the evaluation process and the Superintendent's current performance objectives and priorities.
4. Develop and sustain a harmonious working relationship between the Board and the Superintendent.
5. Ensure administrative leadership for excellence in the District.
6. The Board may at any time conduct and communicate oral evaluations to augment its written evaluations.

#### **XIV. EVALUATION OF THE BOARD**

- A. The Board shall conduct formative self-evaluations at least quarterly, and within 45 days prior to conducting the annual Superintendent evaluation, an annual summative evaluation.
- B. The Board shall self-evaluate using the most current version of the Board's annual scorecard and monthly dashboard reports.

#### **XV. REVIEW BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

Standard Board Operating Procedures will be reviewed and updated annually.

#### **XVI. CAMPAIGNING FOR ELECTION**

- A. **Support from Employees:**
  1. School district employees, during work hours, will not be solicited for endorsement by any Board Member campaigning for re-election. Use of district materials and systems (including district email communications) will not be used by any employee to discuss or solicit support of any candidate running for election or re-election. Texas Education Code Section 11.168, as amended by the 79<sup>th</sup> Legislature, 2005.
  2. Campaign materials may only be distributed on school property in accordance with Board Policy.
- B. **Support of Board Members:** The Board, as a whole, will not endorse any candidate running for public office. *If a Board Member chooses to endorse a candidate running for office, they must do so in his/her individual capacity. The endorsement must make clear that the Board Member is acting in his/her individual capacity, and the endorsement shall not contain any District logos, symbols, artifacts or properties as a part of the endorsement.*
- C. **Board members as Private Citizens:** Board Members may endorse any school board candidate of their choice and may put endorsement signs in their private yards; however, active campaigning for a school board candidate is discouraged as it could create a detrimental working environment on the Board after the election.
- D. **Campaigning on School Property:** School board members should not invite candidates to campus events during the school day. Campaigning or Electioneering is prohibited on district property during school hours while students are on campus. The exception being when district facilities are being used as polling places and only during the times they are serving as polling places.

## **XVII. BOARD MEMBERS COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES BBG (LEGAL/LOCAL)**

### **A. Expense Reimbursement:**

1. An amount for Board member travel expenses shall be approved in the budget each year.
2. A Board member shall be reimbursed for reasonable, allowable expenses incurred in carrying out Board business only at the Board's request and for reasonable, allowable expenses incurred while attending meetings and conventions as an official representative of the Board.
3. Meals are only reimbursable when not provided by the conference host or MISD community partners or vendors. Reference district travel expenses and reimbursement form provided by the district.

### **B. Travel Expenses:**

1. Payment for authorized and documented travel expenses shall be made in accordance with legal requirements by either of the following two methods:
  - a. Reimbursement, not to exceed the allowable rates, for use of a personal car or commercial transportation plus parking, taxi fares, lodging, meals and other incidental expenses.
  - b. Advancement of a set amount for use of a personal car or commercial transportation plus parking, taxi fares, lodging, meals and other incidental expenses. Any excess over actual allowable expenses shall be refunded to the District.
2. Accounting records shall accurately reflect that no state or federal funds were used to reimburse travel expenses beyond those authorized for state employees.
3. If staying at a hotel, Board members must check out a district credit card from the Purchasing Department. Board members will also receive a hotel tax exempt form that must be presented at time of check-in.
4. All district credit cards along with the hotel folio must be returned to the Purchasing Department of Coordinator of School Board Operations within 3 business days. A signature will be required.

### **C. Documentation Required:** For any authorized expense incurred, the Board member shall submit a statement, with receipts to the extent feasible, documenting actual expenses and in accordance with procedures applicable to employee expense reimbursement.

### **D. Members Expenses:** Local funds and state funds not designated for a specific purpose may be used for purposes necessary in the conduct of the public schools determined by the board. Reimbursement of travel expenses for Board members is not illegal if the reimbursement is determined to be necessary in the conduct of the school and to serve a proper public purpose. *Education Code 45.105(c); Atty. Gen. Op. H-133 (1973)*

### **E. Nonmembers Expenses:** The Board may not pay the travel expenses of spouses and other persons who have no responsibilities or duties to perform for the Board when they accompany Board members to Board-related activities. *Atty. Gen. Op. MW-93 (1979)*

### **F. Travel Cancellations:**

1. Conference/Seminar Registration – Cancelled registrations are only partially refundable to a certain date, and non-refundable as the conference time approaches. Cancellations should only occur for extenuating circumstances or emergencies. If a Board member must cancel, he or she should inform the Coordinator of School Board Operations, Board President, and Superintendent.
2. Hotel Reservations – If needing to cancel a hotel reservation made by the district, at least four days' notice must be given to the Coordinator of School Board Operations to avoid the district being charged for the room.
3. Airfare – Most airfare is non-refundable. Avoid canceling flights unless there is an emergency situation.