



Board Policy Equity Lens Tool

Title of board policy being reviewed:

BBAA-Board Member's Authority and Responsibilities

Describe the purpose of this policy:

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear expectations for Board member roles, authority, ethics, communication, confidentiality, and legal compliance. It defines how Board members operate collectively, interact with staff and the public, and uphold governance responsibilities in accordance with Oregon law and Board policy.

What is your experience with this policy:

Governance policies like this are foundational to effective Board operations and public accountability. Their equity impact depends on how accessible, transparent, and community-centered governance practices are in implementation, particularly for historically underserved populations.



**What is the plan to communicate this policy to staff, students, and/or families?
What is the plan to communicate this policy to linguistically diverse students and their families?**

Is this policy:

Easy to locate for staff?

This policy and a summary of this policy will be available on the MESD web page. The summary of this policy is also available on the MESD website in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese and, upon request, the summary and/or policy may be translated into other languages.

Accessible to students and families?

This policy and a summary of this policy will be available on the MESD web page. The summary of this policy is also available on the MESD website in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese and, upon request, the summary and/or policy may be translated into other languages.

Included in onboarding, intake, or other training?

This policy will be communicated to the Board at its next Regular Session meeting as well as be available in the handbook. The policy will also be posted on the district website for easy access.



Clear and easy to understand?

Yes. The policy clearly outlines Board member authority, limitations, responsibilities, and legal obligations. It provides specific guidance regarding communication, complaints, public meetings, ethics, confidentiality, and interactions with administration.

Some legal references and governance terminology may require additional orientation for new Board members.

People

How are people affected positively or negatively by the policy? What potential barriers might people encounter? What barriers might be reduced by this policy?

The policy positively supports transparent governance, accountability, ethical conduct, and consistent decision-making. It clarifies processes for handling complaints and protects against unilateral action by individual Board members.

Potential barriers may arise if community members perceive governance processes as inaccessible or difficult to navigate, particularly when complaints must move through formal channels.

The policy reduces barriers related to inconsistent governance, conflicts of interest, and unclear authority structures.

Can you identify the racial or ethnic groups affected by this policy, program, practice, or decision? Do you know the potential impacts to these populations? If you don't know, how will you find out?



The policy applies broadly to governance practices affecting all students, staff, and community members. Historically marginalized communities may be disproportionately impacted if complaint processes, public participation opportunities, or Board communications are not culturally and linguistically accessible.

Transparent governance and adherence to ethics and public meetings laws can strengthen trust with historically underserved communities when implemented equitably.

Were these populations involved in any way, at any point in the development, implementation, and evaluation of this policy? If so, when and how?

The policy reflects state governance requirements, ethics laws, and public accountability standards. Ongoing governance improvement can include community engagement, Board training in equity-centered leadership, and feedback from students, families, and staff regarding accessibility and responsiveness.

What priorities and commitments are communicated by this policy?

The policy communicates commitments to ethical governance, transparency, accountability, legal compliance, confidentiality, and collective decision-making. It reinforces that Board authority is exercised publicly and collaboratively rather than individually.

It also signals commitments to professional conduct, child safety, and public trust.

Place

What kind of positive or negative environment are we creating?



What are the barriers to more equitable outcomes? (e.g. mandated, political, emotional, financial, programmatic or managerial)

The policy creates an environment focused on structured governance, accountability, and clear boundaries between governance and administration.

Barriers to equitable outcomes may include limited public understanding of governance processes, accessibility challenges in complaint systems, and unequal familiarity with Board procedures among community members. Language access and trust in institutions may also affect participation.

Power

How is the power of decision-making shared with those it affects?

How have you intentionally involved the communities affected by this policy, program, practice, or decision?

The policy supports shared governance through public meetings, complaint procedures, and formal Board processes. It ensures decisions occur through collective action rather than individual authority.

Power-sharing can be strengthened by increasing accessibility of meetings, complaint processes, and Board communications for multilingual and historically marginalized communities.

Process

Does the policy, program, or decision improve, worsen, or make no change to existing disparities?



Does it create other unintended consequences?

The policy has the potential to improve equity through transparent and accountable governance practices. However, disparities may persist if community members with less familiarity with institutional systems face barriers to participation or complaint resolution.

Unintended consequences may include community frustration if processes feel overly procedural or difficult to navigate.

Plan

How will you reduce the negative impacts and address the barriers?

Negative impacts can be reduced by:

- Providing accessible and multilingual communication about Board processes.
- Offering equity and cultural responsiveness training for Board members.
- Ensuring complaint procedures are easy to understand and access.
- Encouraging inclusive public participation practices.
- Regularly reviewing governance practices through an equity lens.