

# Vantage Points

## A Board Member's Guide to Update 114

**Please note:** *Vantage Points* is an executive summary, prepared specifically for board members, of the TASB Localized Update. The topic-by-topic outline and brief descriptions focus on key issues to help local officials understand changes found in the policies.

**The description of policy changes in *Vantage Points* is highly summarized. Please pay careful attention to the more detailed, district-specific Explanatory Notes and the policies in your localized update packet.**

For questions, contact Policy Service at [policy.service@tasb.org](mailto:policy.service@tasb.org), call us at 800-580-7529, or visit our website at [policy.tasb.org](http://policy.tasb.org).

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Numerous bills were enacted in the 86th Legislative Session. In this *Vantage Points*, we will focus primarily on the local policies impacted by these new laws. There are a few policies that are recommended for updating in response to revised guidance from the Texas Education Agency. Different from previous versions of the *Vantage Points*, we have organized this document to align with the sections of the policy manual.

**We strongly encourage you to review the Explanatory Notes contained in your district's update packet for information specific to your policies and additional background on all the changes to the legal policies. Please remember that (LEGAL) policies provide the legal framework for key areas of district operations; they are not adopted by the board.**

## **Section B—Local Governance**

### **Tax Officials**

#### ***BDAF(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

A few districts had provisions regarding tax officials at this code. Since the statutory language on tax officials is being moved to CCG(LEGAL), districts with this policy will find that the content regarding the employment of an assessor or collector of district taxes has been moved to CCG(LOCAL). The BDAF policy code has been deleted from the table of contents and is no longer an active code.

### **Board Meetings**

SB 494 reduced the time required to post notice of an emergency meeting from two hours to one hour. This new one-hour requirement would also apply to an amendment to the meeting agenda after the 72-hour deadline, which is known as a supplemental notice. The same bill revised what constitutes an emergency or urgent public necessity that would permit the board to hold an emergency meeting or to amend its agenda after the 72-hour deadline.

SB 1640 revised the definition of “deliberation” and added new provisions that prohibit a series of communications between board members. Board members should review the sections in BE(LEGAL) titled Deliberation and Prohibited Series of Communications for more information.

#### ***BE(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

SB 494 reduces the time required to post notice of an emergency meeting or to provide a supplemental notice from two hours to one hour. A recommended revision to BE(LOCAL) reflects this change. All other legislative changes regarding board meetings are reflected in BE(LEGAL).

## Public Comment

HB 2840 impacts the manner in which public comment is conducted in your district. Prior to this legislation, the board had ample discretion to manage the portion of the meeting when citizens could address the board. The law now requires that public comment be permitted on agenda items at all meetings, including regular meetings, special meetings, and board workshops. The opportunity for the public to address the board on an agenda item must be before or during the board's deliberation on the item. The bill also states that the board cannot prohibit public criticism of the board unless the criticism is otherwise prohibited by law. HB 2840 does permit the board to establish reasonable rules that govern the amount of time an individual is permitted to speak, with additional time permitted for speakers that require certain translation services.

### ***BED(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

The vast majority of school districts were permitting public comment prior to this new law. In response to HB 2840, the following revisions to BED(LOCAL) are recommended:

- Deletion of the overall time for public comment.
- Deletion of the requirement that delegations of a certain number appoint one spokesperson.
- At regular meetings, public comment continues to be permitted on any topic, whether it is an item on the posted agenda or not.
- At special meetings, including board workshops or work sessions, public comment is limited to items on the posted agenda.
- A new provision is included requiring all public comment to occur at the beginning of the meeting.

To assist with efficient management of board meetings when large numbers of individuals wish to address the board, the revised policy permits the presiding officer to make adjustments to procedures, such as adjusting the time allotted to each speaker, reordering agenda items, deferring public comments on nonagenda items, and continuing agenda items to a later meeting.

For those few districts that did not permit public comment at board meetings prior to this legislation, the revisions made to BED(LOCAL) will now permit public comment at all board meetings but only for agenda items. The policy for these districts also states when public comment will be received and includes a provision that permits the presiding officer to make adjustments to procedures for meeting efficiency as well as time limits for individuals to address the board.

If the board wishes to limit public comment to agenda items at regular meetings, adjust the individual time limit, or make other adjustments to this policy, please contact the district's TASB policy consultant.

To assist the board in developing public comment procedures, Policy Services provides samples in the *TASB Regulations Resource Manual*. Please contact your superintendent or your TASB policy consultant if you wish to review these sample board procedures.

**Section C—  
Business and  
Support Services**

**Texas Economic  
Development Act**

***CCGB(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

For those districts that currently have a local policy at CCGB(LOCAL), we recommend a more streamlined version of that policy. The revised policy removes legal provisions that can be found in CCGB(LEGAL) and addresses provisions that require board action, such as establishing the threshold for the large project application, setting the standard application fee, providing procedures for filing and processing the application, outlining the board and superintendent responsibilities regarding the application and implementation of the agreement, and providing a statement regarding conflicts of interest.

**Investments**

HB 2706 permits the district to invest bond proceeds or pledged revenue to the extent allowed by the Public Funds Investment Act, other laws, and the district's local policy.

***CDA(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

The recommended changes to CDA(LOCAL) permit the district to invest bond proceeds or pledged revenue in accordance with law. Additional recommended revisions clarify that, should the district exercise the option to invest in bond proceeds, those investments could not be made in no-load mutual funds.

Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement 84 revised terminology to change "agency" funds to "custodial" funds. In response, a corresponding change is recommended in the local policy.

Finally, a few districts' local policies included a statement requiring an annual portfolio report to the board in addition to the monthly or quarterly reports the board receives. Because there is no requirement to reflect this practice in policy, the provision is recommended for removal. A district may continue to provide this annual report without the policy provision.

**Purchasing  
Procedures**

***CH(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

The Texas Education Agency, through its *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide*, requires the district to have purchasing procedures to comply with a variety of state and federal laws. Recommended policy text has been added that requires the superintendent to develop those procedures.

**Emergency  
Operations  
Plans**

***CKC(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

Recommended revisions to this policy require the district's emergency operations plan to include active shooter response procedures (HB 2195) and to ensure that a substitute teacher has access to campus buildings and materials to carry out duties of a regular district employee during an emergency or emergency drill (SB 11).

**Security  
Personnel**

***CKE(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

This policy has been revised to comply with SB 1707. The bill prohibits district peace officers or school resource officers (SRO) from being assigned routine discipline or school administrative tasks. A statement to this effect has been added to the policy.

SB 1707 also requires that the board determine the duties of the district's peace officers and SROs and include those duties in specific documents, such as the district improvement plan, the student code of conduct, and other appropriate publications. For districts with a police force, if your policy describes the powers and duties of your police officers, your policy will meet this requirement. If your district has entered into an agreement with local law enforcement to hire SROs and has this currently reflected in your policy manual, new policy language is recommended to satisfy the SB 1707 requirement to determine SRO duties.

**Cybersecurity**

***CQB(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

This new recommended policy code has been created to house the new cybersecurity policy required by SB 820 and to address the cybersecurity training of employees and board members required by HB 3834. This new code is also where provisions on security breaches are now found; these provisions were formerly coded at policy CQ. The security breach text has

been revised to address reporting requirements to the Texas Education Agency in accordance with SB 820.

## **Section D— Personnel**

### **Furloughs**

#### ***DFFA(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

A minor revision is recommended to this policy as a result of HB 3 moving statutory provisions on furloughs from Education Code Chapter 42 to Chapter 48. The detail has been removed in favor of the cross-reference to policy DEA.

### **Firearms**

#### ***DH(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

HB 1143 prohibits a district from regulating the manner in which a handgun, firearm, or ammunition is stored in a locked vehicle in a district parking area, provided the item is not in plain view. Recommended changes to this policy and GKA(LOCAL) reflect this new law by deleting language requiring firearms in locked vehicles to be unloaded.

## **Section E— Instruction**

### **Gifted and Talented Program**

#### ***EHBB(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

Based on HB 3 and the newly adopted Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students, EHBB(LEGAL) and (LOCAL), the policies on gifted and talented (GT) services, have been updated. EHBB(LOCAL) has undergone a complete review to ensure that all required provisions are included in the policy as reflected in law and the state plan. In addition to the revisions to existing text, new recommended provisions address use of GT funds and the annual compliance certification the district must make to the commissioner. This recommended policy also addresses parent consultations for exiting students, appeals, and broader language regarding the selection committee. The remaining revisions are recommended to provide more flexibility to the district regarding reassessments and placement of transfer students in the GT program.

### **Partnership Charters**

#### ***ELA(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

This policy only appears in a few districts' policy manuals. A minor revision has been made to the legal citation in this policy as a result of HB 3, which

moved funding provisions regarding partnership charters from Education Code Chapter 42 to Chapter 48.

**Section F—  
Students**

**School Safety  
Transfers**

***FDE(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

TEA's recent revisions to the Unsafe School Choice Option Guidance Handbook prompted recommended changes at FDE(LOCAL) to update the list of violent criminal offenses for which a victim is eligible for a transfer to another school within the district.

**UIL Physicals**

***FFAA(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

A new UIL rule requires students who are participating in marching band to have a pre-participation physical in accordance with the schedule established by the UIL. Recommended revisions to this policy broaden the language to accommodate future changes to UIL rules and allow the superintendent to designate other extracurricular programs for which the district will require physicals.

**Threat  
Assessments**

FFB(LEGAL) includes new provisions regarding the establishment and composition of threat assessment and safe and supportive school teams as required by SB 11 and the process these teams will use in evaluating individuals and students who make threats of violence or exhibit harmful, threatening, or violent behavior.

***FFB(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

This new recommended local policy has been created in response to SB 11 and addresses the requirement for boards to adopt policies and procedures regarding the threat assessment and safe and supportive teams. The district's policies and procedures must be consistent with the model policies and procedures developed by the Texas School Safety Center (TxSSC). TASB collaborated with the TxSSC to develop this policy.

The TxSSC advises that district procedures need to be individualized to fit each district's unique circumstances. The TxSSC website has numerous resources to assist in developing such procedures.

**Trauma-Informed Care**

***FFBA(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

This new recommended local policy on trauma-informed care has also been developed to comply with SB 11. The details of the district's trauma-informed care program must be included in the district improvement plan. The policy specifies the elements required to be addressed in the district's trauma-informed care program, including increasing staff and parent awareness of trauma-informed care, required training, and available counseling options for students affected by trauma or grief. The policy also affirms that the district must report training compliance to TEA.

**Student Records**

***FL(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

This policy has been revised to assist with the implementation of the district's safe and supportive school program (see policy FFB) as required by SB 11. The new recommended provision at Access by School Officials clarifies that a person appointed to a team that supports the safe and supportive school program may access student records if the person has a legitimate educational interest in the records.

**Section G—  
Community and  
Governmental  
Relations**

**Public  
Information  
Requests**

***GBAA(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

SB 494 permits the board of a district impacted by a catastrophe to temporarily suspend the Public Information Act. This policy includes new recommended provisions to delegate to the superintendent the authority to approve the initial suspension period of up to seven consecutive days and provide the required notices. For an extension beyond the initial seven-day period, the law requires the board to determine whether it is still impacted by the catastrophe. Thus, the recommended local policy text requires the board to approve an extension.

**Firearms**

***GKA(LOCAL) POLICY CONSIDERATION***

HB 1143 prohibits a district from regulating the manner in which a handgun, firearm, or ammunition is stored in a locked vehicle in a district parking area, provided the item is not in plain view. Recommended changes to this policy and DH(LOCAL) reflect this new law by deleting language requiring firearms in locked vehicles to be unloaded.