

Board Operating Procedures

The Austin ISD Board of Trustees adopts these Operating Procedures to guide the organizational, logistical, and role-specific activities related to the work of the Board.

I. Election of Board Members

- A. The Board is composed of nine members. Seven are elected from single-member districts, and two are elected by the community at large. Board members serve staggered terms of four years. Elections for District 1, 4, 6, 7, and at-large position 9 are held together. District 2, 3, 5, and at-large position 8 are elected together two years later.
- B. Board elections are held in alignment with uniform election dates established by the legislature and generally on the second Saturday in May.
- C. A meeting will be held not later than the 11th day after the election to canvass returns and for new members to file the Statement of an Elected Officer. The newly organized Board will meet at the next regularly scheduled meeting in May for the official swearing-in of new members and to elect the following Board officers: President, Vice-president, and Secretary.
- D. For specific policies related to Board Member Elections, see District Policy BBB (Legal) available on-line at <http://www.tasb.org/policy/pol/private/227901/>.

II. Role, Responsibility, and Authority of Board Members

- A. The Role, Responsibility, and Authority of Board Members, including officers, is fully addressed in Governance Process (GP) and Board/Superintendent Relations (B/SR) Policies.

III. Board Meetings

- A. The AISD Board of Trustees holds its regular meetings on the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 7:00 p.m.
- B. The first and third Mondays of each month are scheduled for Board work sessions, dialogue or special meetings. Additional meetings on specific topics shall be scheduled by the Board as needed.

- C. The Board may hold executive sessions prior to regular meetings or at other times as needed. These meetings must be called in compliance with Chapter 551 (Open Meetings) of the Texas Government Code.
- D. Regular Citizens' Communication time periods will not be part of work sessions or special meetings unless specifically stipulated by the Board and included in the notice of the meeting.
- E. When public participation is provided as part of a work session or special meeting, the regular procedures for Citizens' Communication will be followed unless the Board provides for an alternate method of participation.
- F. The Board President may call a special or emergency meeting at the request of two or more Board members and/or by the Superintendent as provided in Chapter 551 (Open Meetings) of the Texas Government Code.
- G. All public portions of the regularly scheduled board meetings are televised on AISD Cable Channel 22. Special meetings, work sessions, and public hearings may be televised at the Board's discretion.
- H. For specific policies related to Board Meetings, see District Policy BE (Legal) available on-line at <http://www.tasb.org/policy/pol/private/227901>.

IV. Developing Board Meeting Agendas

- A. To accomplish its stated objectives, the Board develops and follows an Annual Agenda Planning Calendar that includes a schedule for significant aspects of the Board's upcoming work, including monitoring of District performance, matters related to the District budget, bond and facility work, contracts, policies, personnel, evaluation of the Superintendent, and other items pertaining to major business of the Board. (Refer to Governance Process (GP-8) for more information on the annual agenda planning process).

B. Placing Items on the Agenda

1. The Superintendent's office staff, in collaboration with the Board Calendar Committee, shall prepare the agenda for each Board meeting in accordance with the Annual Agenda Planning Calendar. Agenda items may be added by the Superintendent through appropriate consultation with the Board Officers.
2. Any Board member may propose a subject for consideration by the Board. Ideally, such requests should be made before the Board at a Board meeting or proposed in writing to the Board President. Proposed topics will be placed on the Board's "Parking Lot" for review and consideration by the Board Officers who will recommend a process, venue and schedule for addressing each proposed item. If the requesting Board member is not satisfied with the Officers' recommendation for addressing a proposed subject or the Calendar Committee's scheduling of the item, the Board member may request that the full Board consider the method and timeline for addressing the requested topic.
3. In accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, no member can place an item on the agenda less than 72 hours in advance of a meeting, except in an emergency as per Texas law.
4. Board agendas will be electronically delivered to board members six days prior to the regular board meeting.
5. The Superintendent's office is responsible for the posting of the agenda, 72 hours before the meeting, under Chapter 551 (Open Meetings) of the Texas Government Code, and for the notification of the meeting to the media.
6. The Board will vote to approve the agenda at the beginning of each meeting.
7. The order in which posted agenda items are taken may be changed by consent of a majority of the Board members present at any meeting where a quorum exists.
8. In accordance with GP-8.4, the removal of an item from the consent agenda for discussion requires the approval, by vote, of a majority of the Board.

9. Board members are encouraged to advise the Superintendent, Officers, or Superintendent's designee of questions or concerns on agenda items before the Board meeting.

C. Items for Executive Session

1. Items that may be discussed in Executive Session include:
 - a. Private consultation with an attorney, only when it seeks the attorney's advice about pending or contemplated litigation or a settlement offer or on a matter in which the duty of the attorney to the Board under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas clearly conflicts with the requirement for open meetings.
 - b. Purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property if deliberation in an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on negotiations with a third person.
 - c. A negotiated contract for a prospective gift or donation if deliberation in an open meeting would have detrimental effect on negotiations with a third party.
 - d. The appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee or to hear a complaint or charge against an officer or employee, unless the employee who is the subject of the deliberation or hearing requests a public hearing. This provision does not apply when the board discusses an independent contractor who is not a school employee, such as an engineering, architectural, or consultant firm, or when the Board discusses a class or group of employees, not a particular employee.
 - e. Deliberation of a case involving discipline of a public school child unless the child's parent or guardian makes a written request for an open hearing.
 - f. Deliberation of a case in which a complaint or charge is brought against a District employee by another employee and the complaint or charge directly results in the need for a hearing unless the employee against whom the complaint or charge is brought makes a written request for an open hearing.
 - g. Deliberation of the deployment, or specific occasions for implementation of security personnel or devices.

- h. The adoption of assessment instruments or assessment instrument items.
- i. Discussion of commercial or financial information that the Board has received from a business prospect that the Board seeks to have located, stay, or expand in or near the District, with which the Board is conducting economic development negotiations, or financial or other incentive to such a business prospect.

V. Role of Board in Executive Session

- A. The Board can only discuss those items listed on the executive session agenda and as proscribed by law. See Section IV. C of these Operating Procedures or District Policy BEC (Legal) available on-line at <http://www.tasb.org/policy/pol/private/227901/> related to items which can legally be discussed in executive session.
- B. During executive sessions, the Board can deliberate properly posted items but may not take any actions related to those items. All Board actions, including voting, must occur in open session under Chapter 551 (Open Meetings) of the Texas Government Code.
- C. Discussions and information shared during executive session shall remain confidential.
- D. The Board must convene in open session with proper posting prior to the presiding officer announcing a recess into executive session. The posted agenda for the executive session must be read aloud indicating the items to be discussed in executive session under Chapter 551 (Open Meetings) of the Texas Government Code.
- E. According to a Texas Attorney General's opinion, the Board shall either keep a certified agenda with minutes attached or make an audio recording of the proceedings of each executive session. Only members of the Board of Trustees (whether present at the executive session or not) can review the minutes or listen to the audio recording of an executive session without a court order. A Board member wishing to review an audio recording of an executive session should contact the secretary to the Board to submit the official request for a date, time and place for review of specified audio recording(s). A copy of the recording may not be made. Minutes and audio recordings are to be sealed, kept confidential, and stored in a locked place.

VI. Conduct During Board Meetings

- A. Five members present constitute a quorum for a meeting.

B. Citizens' Conduct

1. Board meetings are held in public to conduct the business of the district, as distinguished from public meetings. The Board shall not tolerate disruption of the Board meeting by members of the public. If, after at least one warning from the presiding officer, any person continues to disrupt the meeting by words or actions, the person shall be removed from the meeting. The presiding officer shall request that the person be escorted from the meeting by an AISD police officer.
2. Signs or placards brought to a Board meeting shall not block the vision of those attending the meeting or the District's cameras used to televise the meeting.

C. Persons addressing the Board during Citizens' Communication

1. The Board encourages citizens to make their comments, concerns and ideas known to the Board during the Citizens' Communication segment of the meeting.
2. Persons may address the Board on agenda or non-agenda items.
3. A person wishing to address the Board shall sign up prior to the beginning of the meeting. On the day of the meeting, the sign-up sheets for Citizens' Communication are available in the Superintendent's office during regular working hours and in the location on the notice of the Board meeting from 4:45 p.m. until the designated start time of the meeting, typically 7:00 PM, as posted on the agenda.
4. Up to 30 citizens may sign up to speak at each meeting. Each speaker is limited to two minutes.
5. No person is permitted to sign up for another person or to exchange time or to yield time to persons not signed up.
6. The presiding officer shall recognize persons who sign up to address the Board.
7. A device will be provided at the podium to assist speakers in keeping track of the allotted time.
8. The presiding officer will provide two warnings after the device has sounded to signal the end of the allotted time. The microphone will be turned off after the second warning.

9. Persons shall deliver any handouts to the secretary to the Board for distribution to the Board.

D. Board response to persons addressing the Board during Citizens' Communication

1. The Board will not engage in dialogue with the speaker during the Board meeting. However, the Board or Superintendent may provide specific factual information or recite existing policy to clarify some inquiries or issues.
2. The Board shall not deliberate or make decisions regarding any subject that is not on the posted agenda.
3. The presiding officer shall recognize Board members prior to any member asking clarifying questions or making statements to the Board.
4. Board members may direct the Superintendent to investigate item(s) and report back to the Board as appropriate.

E. Public hearings

1. The Board may schedule public hearings to address community issues on a particular issue.
2. During public hearings, the Board is assembled only to gather information, unless otherwise posted.
3. A person or representative of a group or organization shall sign up prior to the beginning of the hearing. On the day of the hearing, the sign-up sheets are available in the Superintendent's office during regular working hours and, from 4:45 p.m. to the beginning of the hearing, in the location on the notice of the Board hearing as posted.
4. There is no limit to the number of speakers who may speak during a public hearing.
5. The Board will designate the number of minutes allowed per speaker at each public hearing.
6. No person is permitted to sign up for another person or to exchange time or yield time to persons not signed up.
7. The Board will not answer questions or engage in a dialogue with the public during the public hearing. The Board may provide specific

factual information or recite existing policy to clarify inquires or issues raised.

F. Discussion of individual employees or students by the Board or audience

1. Specific complaints about individual district personnel shall be processed through the District's grievance policy.
2. The Board requests that citizens not refer to students or employees by name during Citizens' Communication or during a public hearing.

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

1. All discussion shall be directed solely to the business currently under deliberation.
2. The presiding officer has the responsibility to keep the discussion to the motion at hand and shall halt discussion that is not germane to the business before the Board.
3. The presiding officer shall recognize a Board member wishing to comment.

H. For specific legal policies related to public participation at Board meetings, see District Policy BED (Legal) available on-line at <http://www.tasb.org/policy/pol/private/227901/>.

VII. Voting

- A. No item shall be acted upon by the Board unless the item is posted in the public notice for the meeting.
- B. When an item for action on the agenda is reached, the following procedure will apply:
1. The Presiding officer shall announce the item for action.
 2. The Superintendent or appropriate staff member may make a comment, statement, recommendation or presentation regarding the item.
 3. The Board may discuss the item and raise questions.
 4. Action is taken by means of a motion and a second, followed by a hand vote of Board members present. The Board also has the option of not taking action on an item.

VIII. Evaluation of the Superintendent

- A. As outlined in Governance Policy B/SR-5, the Board will view Superintendent performance as being identical to organizational performance. Superintendent job performance will be monitored systematically against only the Superintendent job expectations: reasonable progress toward organizational accomplishment of the Board's Results policies, and organizational operation within the boundaries established in the Board's Executive Limitation policies.

IX. Evaluation of the Board

- A. The Board shall self-assess its process and performance by monitoring Governance Process (GP) and Board/Superintendent Relations (B/SR) Policies throughout the year and according to the established Annual Agenda Planning Calendar. Self-monitoring will include comparison of actual Board activity to the provisions outlined in GP and B/SR policies.
- B. The Board will also self-assess process and performance during a debriefing session at the end of each Board meeting.

X. Communications

- A. Board/Superintendent Communication
 - 1. With respect to providing information and counsel to the Board, the Superintendent shall not fail to give the Board as much information as necessary to allow Board members to be adequately informed (EL-10). The Superintendent will communicate information in a timely fashion to all Board members through:
 - a. Board meetings and executive sessions.
 - b. Board deliveries.
 - c. Voice-mail messages. The Board will be notified when a message has been recorded for their information.
 - d. Telephone calls.
 - e. One-on-one meetings.
 - 2. Board members will keep the Superintendent informed via telephone calls, voice mails, e-mails, personal visits, dialogue meetings, and requests for executive session or open meeting discussions.

3. As outlined in Board Policy B/SR-1, the Board's official connection to the operational organization is the Superintendent. However, to facilitate communication, the Superintendent designates other senior staff members as Board contacts as follows: Chief Academic Officer, Chief Financial Officer, General Counsel, Director of Internal Audit, and Chief of Staff.
4. In addition, administrators who are designated as "staff support" for officially appointed Board Committees may serve as direct contacts for purposes of supporting the work of the committee.
5. Correspondence related to formal complaints or grievances, as described in District Policy FNG (Legal and Local), will not be forwarded to Board members so that they may maintain their objectivity pertaining to matters that may require Board action in the future. The sender will be notified with an explanation of the decision not to forward the communication.

B. Board Response to Contacts/Correspondence

1. Individual Trustees may communicate with members of the community as they deem appropriate. While Trustees strive to be responsive to stakeholders, it is not possible for them to respond to every inquiry due to the volume of correspondence.
2. Letters and faxes addressed to individual Trustees and received in the Superintendent's office are delivered to that Trustee in the weekly Board delivery packet. If an item is urgent or time sensitive, the Trustee is contacted by email or telephone before the board delivery.
3. Citizens may contact the Board of Trustees by email at trustees@austinsd.org. The Board secretary acknowledges receipt of the email and informs the sender that the message has been forwarded to the individual Trustee and to the appropriate administrator(s). The administration ensures that an appropriate response is provided on behalf of the Board of Trustees.
4. If the Board President responds to an inquiry in writing, all Board members receive a copy of the response.
5. The Board of Trustees encourages input, and the confidentiality of individuals will be maintained to the fullest extent possible. Anonymous calls or letters will not receive a response and will not result in directives to the administration.

C. Administration Response to Contacts/Correspondence

1. All correspondence addressed to the Superintendent or administration is routed to the appropriate staff members.
2. The appropriate staff members investigate the issues raised in the correspondence and will respond in a reasonable and appropriate manner. It is the goal of the administration to respond to correspondence within 10 working days.
3. The AISD administration encourages input. Anonymous calls or letters, however, will not receive a reply from the administration.
4. Confidentiality of the person writing the correspondence is appropriately maintained.
5. The Ombudsman will facilitate the resolution of citizen complaints as appropriate.

D. Internal Board Communication

1. Board members are encouraged to share information about noteworthy meetings and events with other Board members by e-mail or telephone. Board members should notify the Superintendent's office to allow for calendar additions and postings as needed.

XI. Individual Board Member Requests for Information or Reports

- A. An individual Board member, acting in his or her official capacity, has the right to seek information pertaining to District fiscal affairs, business transactions, governance, school operations, 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.
- B. Individual members 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 such cases, individual members shall seek access to the records from the Superintendent or District Public Information Specialist. At the time access to the records is provided, the Board member shall be advised of his or her responsibility to comply with confidentiality requirements.
- C. Board members may e-mail or call the Superintendent, Officers, or the Chief of Staff to ask questions or request information.

- D. The Superintendent may refuse to respond to requests that, in the Superintendent's opinion, would require a material amount of staff time or resources or which are disruptive or unreasonable. In such cases, the Superintendent will redirect the request to the full Board for authorization (B/SR-2).
- E. Written responses to information requests from the Board will be distributed to all Board members in a timely manner.
- F. Individual Board members shall not issue formal written or oral requests for information directly to campus principals or other administrators not designated as Board contacts.

XII. Citizen or Employee Request/Complaint to Individual Board Member

- A. If parents, students, or other members of the public bring concerns or complaints to an individual Trustee, the Board member should listen to the complaint to better understand the critical issues unless it relates to a formal complaint or grievance already filed under District policy FNG and upon which the Board may be requested to take action. If a formal process is not underway, the Board member should take the following steps:
 1. Refer the parent, student or citizen to the appropriate employee or administrator(s) who are in the best position to assist in addressing the concern or complaint.
 2. Make them aware of the District policies and procedures in place to address citizen concerns or complaints and remind them that Board members must remain impartial in case the matter requires Board action in the future. Notify the Superintendent's office if the situation warrants.

XIII. Media Inquiries to the Board

- A. Individual Board members may respond to media inquiries as they deem appropriate, however each individual member speaks in his or her individual capacity and not on behalf of the Board as a whole.
- B. As stated in GP-5, the Board President generally serves as the official spokesperson for the Board. However, under special circumstances the Board may elect to appoint a different spokesperson for the Board.

- C. A Board member who receives calls from the media should notify the Superintendent, Chief of Staff, or Director of Communications.

XIV. Board Member Visits to a School Campus

- A. Board members who wish to visit a campus to view a program or activity in their official capacity shall coordinate their visit with the principal, who shall notify the associate superintendent.
- B. Board members who wish to visit a campus in any capacity other than their official capacity shall do so in accordance with District Policy GKC (LOCAL), which states that visits to individual classrooms during instructional time shall be permitted only with the principal's and teacher's approval, and such visits shall not be permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment.
- C. Board members may be invited to attend public events, receptions, groundbreakings, dedications, ribbon cuttings, and other campus events.

XV. Board Training Requirements

- A. The Board must meet minimum annual requirements for training for the period between January 1 and December 31.
- B. For new Board members, the training requirements include:
 - 1. New Board member orientation within sixty (60) days of their election to the Board;
 - 2. Orientation to Texas Education Code Training;
 - 3. Three hours of Team-Building Training with the Board and Superintendent; and
 - 4. Ten hours of additional continuing education credits.
- C. For experienced Board members, the training requirements include:
 - 1. Update to the Texas Education Code;
 - 2. Three hours of Team-Building with the Board and Superintendent; and
 - 3. Five hours of additional continuing education credits.

- D. The Texas Education Code requires the President of the Board to announce the status of earned training credits for each member of the Board of Trustees twice annually. The first announcement is a progress report on the training board members have received to date. This announcement occurs at the last Board meeting in December. The second announcement requires the President of the Board to officially notify the community of continuing education hours received by members of the Board at the meeting at which the Board calls its election of trustees. This announcement typically is made in February whether or not a trustee election is called.
- E. In addition to required training activities, Board members are encouraged to join the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) and attend the TASB convention as well as other relevant conventions, conferences, or clinics.
- F. For specific legal polices related to Board Member training see District Policy DDB (Legal) available on-line at <http://www.tasb.org/policy/pol/private/227901/>.

XVI. Travel Reimbursement

- A. Each Board Member will have an established travel budget for attending governance or education-related conferences, conventions, or other purposes relevant to the work of the Board. Board members will receive periodic reports on the status of travel accounts and members are expected not to exceed the allocated budget. In extenuating circumstances, the Officers of the Board may consider a reallocation of individual travel allotments to meet the best interests of the Board as a whole.
- B. Reimbursement to Board members for reasonable travel expenses for attendance at regional, state, or national conventions, conferences, and workshops shall be made by the District when attendance is authorized and deemed by the Board to be necessary in the conduct of the public schools.
- C. The District 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 a Board member to Board-related activities.
- D. As specified in District Policy BBG (LOCAL), in the event that a Board member received a travel advance for which a balance is due to the District, the repayment shall take place within 60 days of the end of the travel.
- E. For specific policies related to Board Member Travel Reimbursement, see District Policy BBG (Legal) available online at <http://www.tasb.org/policy/pol/private/227901/>.

XVII. Role of the Secretary to the Board

- A. The secretary to the Board shall take the official minutes of each Board meeting, work session, and public hearing and will provide minutes for Board Secretary review and approval in a timely manner.
- B. The secretary to the Board provides clerical and organizational support to Board members by:
 - 1. Forwarding all Board written correspondence and e-mail to Board members and to the Chief of Staff when a response is appropriate;
 - 2. Maintaining the Board Calendar of Events;
 - 3. Contacting Board Members concerning possible meeting dates and time;
 - 4. Assisting the Board with constituent contacts;
 - 5. Making travel arrangements and reservations for Board trainings or travel to conferences;
 - 6. Maintaining Board files;
 - 7. Assisting with Board purchases;
 - 8. Tracking completion of Board member training credits; and
 - 9. Providing assistance to the Superintendent's office in assembling weekly Board deliveries to Board members and other duties as assigned by the Superintendent or his designee.

XVIII. Reviewing the Board Operating Procedures

- A. Board of Trustees Governance Policies and Operating Procedures will be reviewed and updated in June of each year and will be part of Board training.