

Board Operating Protocol Sections

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Further information: BAA(LLEGAL) BBF(LOCAL)

Approved November 4, 2020

The Plano Independent School District Board Operating Protocols have been approved by the Board of Trustees to be used in the context of their duties and responsibilities as a Trustee. These protocols have been established to expand upon local policies adopted by the Board of Trustees. Adopting and adhering to these protocols ensures that the Board operates as a cohesive team to accomplish the District's vision, mission, and goals. Board policy and applicable law always supersedes Board Operating Protocol. Board activities and meetings will comply with the Texas Open Meetings Act and Board Members will adhere to ethical standards established in policy and Board Operating Protocol.

Communication to Board Members

Further information: BAA(LLEGAL) BBE(LLEGAL) BBE(LOCAL) BBF(LOCAL)

1. Board Members will receive important District information from the Superintendent or designee.
2. Board Members will receive correspondence delivered to the District office at the earliest opportunity.
3. Board Members may communicate with other individual Board Members, the Superintendent, or staff for the purposes of asking clarifying questions, providing the communication does not conflict with or circumvent the Texas Open Meetings Act.

Community Relations

Further information: BAA(LLEGAL) BBE(LLEGAL) BBE(LOCAL) BBF(LOCAL)

1. Board Members are encouraged to participate in community activities to build relationships between the public and the District.
2. When interacting with the community, Board Members are expected to:
 - listen politely and respectfully;
 - accurately relay information about the District;
 - refer questions about specific District issues to the appropriate staff person;
 - clarify limitations, obligations, and responsibilities as a Board Member; and
 - relay official decisions and actions of the Board.
3. Citizens wishing to express concerns should be directed by Board Members to use these alternatives:
 - contact appropriate staff members;
 - email, telephone or write Board Members; or
 - speak at Board Meetings per Board Policy.
4. A Board Member retains the right to communicate in any manner to anyone as an individual, but must understand that comments will likely be interpreted as an official statement of the Board. In communicating as an individual, the Board Member should do the following:
 - clarify that they are speaking as an individual and not for the Board;
 - remind the individual that official statements of the Board are made only by the Board President or their designee;
 - remind the individual of the position or action of the Board related to the issue in question; and

- refrain from using District resources for the purpose of their individual response.
5. Communication addressed to all Board Members will be answered by the Board President on behalf of the Board. The Board President will respond to such communication as soon as practical, no later than two business days. The Board President may appoint the Vice President or Board Secretary to respond to correspondence received during any absences provided that such correspondence shall clearly identify that the response is on behalf of the entire Board at the request of the Board President.
 6. If it is believed the entire Board was a recipient under separate cover, a Board Member should forward the correspondence to the Board President and ask if they will be responding, or confirm the receipt of such correspondence by the Board President.
 7. Board Members should bear in mind that individual phone calls, correspondence, email, text messages, or social media communications may be subject to the Public Information Act and the Texas Open Meetings Act. Communications received by an individual Board Member using their personal email address or via text should be answered using the following or a substantially similar statement: *Due to requirements of the Texas Open Meetings Act, I only respond to emails and text messages pertaining to District business using the email address provided by the District.*
 8. To the extent possible, copying the Board President and Superintendent is considered the best practice for communications with the community regarding District business. When applicable, copying the Chief Operating Officer is also recommended.

Speaking Engagements

Further information: **BAA(LEGAL)** **BBE(LEGAL)** **BBE(LOCAL)** **BBF(LOCAL)**

1. The Board President is the primary spokesperson for the Board, specifically regarding media relations and legislative testimony.
2. Board members will inform the Board President of speaking engagement invitations prior to the event. The Board President, in collaboration with the invited Board speaker, shall discuss and decide the appropriate spokesperson for the selected engagement.
3. Board Member Liaisons may provide updates to their assigned group on an as-needed or ongoing basis.
4. A Board Member who is not the Board Member Liaison to a group or organization at which they have been invited to speak must notify the Board President and the Board Member Liaison prior to accepting the speaking engagement.
5. Board Members will keep the Board informed of upcoming speaking engagements by notifying the Board President and the Executive Assistant to the Board.
6. During Board of Trustee elections, speaking engagements must not violate electioneering rules nor create conflicts of interest with Board service (see also *Elections*). During the period of time between filing and Board Election Day, Board members seeking re-election will notify the Board President of speaking engagements and whether that engagement is in Board service or in an individual capacity as a candidate for Board.

Board Subcommittees

Further information: **BAA(LEGAL)** **BBF(LOCAL)** **BDB(LEGAL)** **BDB(LOCAL)**

1. Through consultation and appointment by the Board President, Board Members serve on District subcommittees. The Board President will make the final determination as to which Board Members serve on the subcommittees and may add subcommittees as needed. The following are Board Subcommittees.
 - Board Advisory
 - Board Audit
 - Legislative
 - Board Operating Protocol

2. When possible, subcommittee member terms will be:
 - staggered to minimize the impact of member turnover;
 - no less than two years for a Board Member's first term on a subcommittee; and
 - will be two-year terms for the Audit Subcommittee.

3. By May 15 for nonelection years and June 15 for election years, the Board President will solicit input from Board Members and assign subcommittee positions. The Board President will ensure that each Board Member serves on at least one subcommittee each year and will make a good faith effort to ensure each member has the opportunity to serve on all subcommittees.