

TAFT INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



BOARD OF TRUSTEES OPERATING PROCEDURES

We believe in the power of education.

We believe in the potential of each student.

We believe in student centered leadership.

We believe in success through collaboration.

We value our educational community.

Our success will be measured by

TAFT PRIDE!

OCTOBER 2016

PREFACE

It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees, as a body corporate, to create policy for the school district, and it is the responsibility of the Superintendent and staff to manage and lead the district, and ensure that the policies adopted by the Board are implemented. In effective school systems, the Superintendent and the Board function as a "Team of Eight." The Taft Independent School District Board Operating Procedures provide guidance to the Board and the Superintendent in the operation of this "Team of Eight" so it may function as a cohesive and effective unit in its mission to accomplish the goals and priorities of the school district. The Board Operating Procedures serve as standard operating procedures that supplement the local policies of the school district.

BA	Board Legal Status
BAA	Board Legal Status- Powers and Duties

BBA	Board Members - Eligibility/Qualifications
BBB	Board Members - Elections
BBBA	Board Members - Elections - Reporting Campaign Funds
BBBB	Board Members - Elections - Ethics
BBC	Board Members - Vacancies and Removal from Office
BBD	Board Members - Training and Orientation
BBE	Board Members - Authority
BBF	Board Members – Ethics
BBFA	Ethics - Conflict of Interest Disclosures
BBFB	Ethics - Prohibited Practices
BBG	Board Members - Compensation and Expenses
BBI	Board Members - Technology Resources and Electronic Communication

BDAA	Officers and Officials - Duties and Requirements of Board Officers
BDB	Board Internal Organization - Internal Committee

BE	Board Meetings
BEC	Board Meetings - Closed Meetings
BED	Board Meetings - Public Participation

BJCD	Superintendent - Evaluation
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BQ	Planning and Decision-Making Process
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Ethics for School Board Members

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 make no personal promise or take private action that may compromise my performance of my responsibilities.

Honor in conduct

- I will tell the truth.
- I will share my views while working for consensus.
- I will respect the majority decision as the decision of the Board.
- I will base my decisions on fact rather than supposition, opinion, or public favor.

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 keep confidential information that is privileged by law or that will needlessly harm the District if disclosed.

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 seek continuing education that will 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.

Taft ISD Board of Trustees
Operating Procedures

The Taft 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
- II. Role, Responsibility, and Authority of Board Members
- III. Board Meetings
- IV. Developing Board Meeting Agendas
- V. Role of Board in Executive Session
- VI. Conduct During Board Meetings
- VII. Voting
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- IX. Communications
- X. Individual Board Member Requests for Information or Reports
- XI. Citizen or Employee Request/Complaint to Individual Board Member
- XII. Media Inquiries to the Board
- XIII. Board Member Visits to a School Campus
- XIV. Board Training Requirements
- XV. Travel Reimbursement
- XVI. Role of the Secretary to the Board
- XVII. Reviewing the Board Operating Procedures

Operating Procedures

I. Election of Board Members

- A. The Board is composed of seven members elected by the community. Board members serve staggered terms of three years. Three of the District's Trustees shall be elected in 2018, 2021, 2024, and so forth, two Trustees shall be elected in 2019, 2022, 2025, and so forth, and two Trustees shall be elected in 2017, 2020, 2023 and so forth.
- B. Board elections are held yearly and 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, swearing-in of new members and to elect the following Board officers: President, Vice-president, and Secretary.

- II. For specific policies related to Board Member Elections, see District Policy BBB (LOCAL), BBB (LEGAL) and BBB (Exhibit) available on-line at <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/1057>.

III. Role, Responsibility, and Authority of Board Members

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

IV. Board Meetings

- A. The Taft ISD Board of Trustees holds one regular meeting per month. Generally, the meeting shall take place on the third Tuesday of each month, and shall convene in public at 7:00 p.m. Additional meetings on specific topics shall be scheduled by the Board as needed, and may be held as a special meeting or training session.
- B. Four members present constitute a quorum for a meeting.
- C. If a closed meeting (i.e., executive session) is called prior to or during regular meetings, these meetings must be called in compliance with Chapter 551 (Open Meetings) of the Texas Government Code.
- D. Regular Public Comment time periods will not be part of special meetings or training sessions unless specifically stipulated by the Board and included in the notice of the meeting.
- E. When public participation is provided as part of a training session or special meeting, the regular procedures for Regular Public Comment will be followed

unless the Board provides for an alternate method of participation. See District Policy BED (LEGAL), BED (LOCAL) available on-line at <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/1057>.

- F. The Board President shall call an emergency meeting when it is determined by the President or two of the members of the Board that an emergency or urgent public necessity, as defined by Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, warrants the meeting.
- G. For specific policies related to Board Meetings, see District Policy BE (LEGAL) and BE (LOCAL) available on-line at <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/1057>.

V. Developing Board Meeting Agendas

- A. In consultation with the Board President, the Superintendent shall prepare the agenda for all Board meetings. The Board President will receive a draft copy of the agenda for review on, at least, the Thursday prior to the Friday posting.
- B. Before finalization of the agenda for any meeting, the Superintendent shall consult the Board President to ensure the agenda and topics meet with the Board President's approval. The Board President shall not remove an item from the agenda requested by a Trustee without that Trustee's specific authorization.

VI. Role of Board in Executive Session

- A. The Board can only discuss those items listed on the executive session agenda as prescribed by law. See Section IV of these Operating Procedures or District Policy BEC (Legal) available on-line at <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/1057>.
- B. During executive sessions, the Board can deliberate properly posted items but may not take actions related to those items. All Board actions, including voting, must occur in open session under Chapter 551 (Open Meetings) or 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 keep a certified agenda with minutes attached 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 of an executive session without a court order. A Board member wishing to review an agenda of an executive session should

contact the Board President to submit the official request for a date, time and place for review of specified agenda(s). Minutes are to be sealed, kept confidential, and stored in a locked place.

VII. Conduct During Board Meetings

A. 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 law enforcement.
2. Signs or placards brought to a Board meeting shall not block the vision of those attending the meeting.

B. Guidelines for Hearing Public Comments during "Comments" Time Period

The Taft ISD Board welcomes public comments during the Comments portion of the agenda of its regular meetings. Generally, Board members do not respond to public comments during the meeting. The following are guidelines Taft ISD Board applies to all speakers who sign up to address the members at regular meetings, and are intended to ensure that meetings run smoothly.

1. Signing Up to Speak: Any person who wishes to sign up to address the Board during its regular meeting must do so by signing up with the presiding officer or designee and identifying the topic upon which he or she wishes to speak before the Board meeting begins.
2. Time: As set forth in Board Policy BED (LOCAL), each speaker who signs up to address the Board during the Comments portion of the agenda may speak for up to five minutes. In the interest of time, if 5 persons or more sign up to address the Board on the same topic, then one of those individuals shall be designated as the single presenter of their comments to the Board. Similarly, the Board shall allot 30 minutes for public comment.
3. Topics: Speakers will also be required to address the Board on the specific topic they identified when signing up. If a speaker fails to restrict his or her comments to the topic they identified when signing up, the Board President, or other member presiding over the meeting, shall immediately interrupt the speaker and issue a verbal warning that the comments remain on the identified topic. If a speaker refuses to comply with this warning, he or she shall forfeit the remaining time allotment. Speakers who sign up to speak on non-agenda items, or who fail to indicate which topic they wish to speak on when signing up with the designee, shall not be allowed to address the Board.

The Board will not hear public comments during the Comments portion of the agenda, or any other time public comment occurs at a regular meeting, that involves a complaint about an individual District staff or Board member, a personnel action, a student disciplinary matter, a complaint about a particular student, or pending litigation.

To the extent this occurs, the Board President, or other member presiding over the meeting, shall immediately interrupt the speaker and, if applicable, direct the speaker to avail themselves of the applicable grievance policy or other appropriate procedure for addressing particular concerns or to ensure that further comments do not discuss any of the impermissible topics listed herein.

4. Decorum: The Board expects that each speaker will be courteous, respectful, and model for our students how one can conduct themselves in a professional manner even if one disagrees with another's views. Any person, whether speaking to the Board or not, who engages in disruptive action during a Board meeting will be asked to leave the meeting room after one warning. If necessary, the Board President or member presiding over the meeting may request assistance from law enforcement to remove a disruptive person from the meeting room.
5. Written Comments: Any person may have access to the Board at any time by submitting their written comments by mail to: 400 College Street, Taft, Texas 78390. Even any person whose privilege to address the Board at a regular meeting has been revoked shall nevertheless have the ability to submit his or her concerns to the Board in writing at any time through the means in this paragraph. Such comments shall be subject to the same requirements made of those made during open meetings.
6. The Board President shall recognize persons who sign up to address the Board.
7. The Board President is responsible for setting the device that will keep track of the speakers allotted time.
8. The Board President will provide two warnings after the device has sounded to signal the end of the allotted time.
9. Persons shall request to the presiding officer any written handouts to the Superintendent's assistant for distribution to the Board.

C. Board response to persons addressing the Board during "Comments"

1. The Board will not engage in dialogue with the speaker during the Board meeting.
2. The Board shall not deliberate or make decisions regarding any subject that is not on the posted agenda.

3. The Board President 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.

D. Public Hearings/Board Meetings

1. The Superintendent 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 who wishes to speak shall sign up prior to the beginning of the hearing. On the day of the hearing, sign-up sheets are located at the Administration Building 400 College Street, Taft, Texas 78390, with the presiding officer or designee. Sign-up is allowed until the start time of the hearing, as posted on the agenda.
4. There may be a 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.

E. 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 Comments or during a public hearing.

F. The Board shall observe the parliamentary procedure 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 Board President has the responsibility to keep the discussion to the

motion at hand and shall halt discussion that is not relevant to the business before the Board.

3. The Board President shall recognize a Board member wishing to comment.

G. For specific legal policies related to public participation at Board meetings, see District Policy BED (LEGAL) and BED (LOCAL) available on-line at: <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/1057>.

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 Board Secretary shall read/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 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 Local Governance Policy BJCD (LOCAL), the Board will review the Superintendent performance at annual or more frequent intervals.

IX. 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. The Superintendent will communicate information in a timely fashion to all Board members through:

a. Board meetings and executive sessions.

b. Board packet deliveries.

c. Voice-mail, text messages or email.

d. Telephone calls.

2. Board members will keep the Superintendent informed via telephone calls, voice mails, text, e-mails, personal visits, dialogue meetings and requests for executive session or open meeting discussions.
3. The Board's official communication to the operational organization is the Superintendent. However, to facilitate communication, the Superintendent may designate other senior staff members as Board contacts.

B. Board Response to Contacts/Correspondence

1. Individual Trustees may communicate with members of the community as they deem appropriate. While the Board strives to be responsive to stakeholders, it is not possible for them to respond to every inquiry.
2. Letters and faxes addressed to individual Trustees and received in the Superintendent's office are distributed to the Trustees in their Board meeting packet. If an item is urgent or time sensitive, the Trustee is contacted by email or telephone before the Board meeting.
3. Citizens may contact the Board members by email at their Taft ISD designated email addresses. The Trustees should acknowledge receipt of the email and inform the sender that the message has been forwarded to the Superintendent's office. The Superintendent shall ensure that an appropriate response is provided on behalf of the Board. The Board will also receive a copy of the response.
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 Taft ISD 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.

X. Individual Board Member Requests for Information or Reports

- A. Board members may e-mail or call the Superintendent to ask questions or request information.
- B. 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.
- C. Written responses to information requests from the Board will be distributed to all Board members in a timely manner.
- D. Individual Board members shall not issue formal written or oral requests for information directly to campus principals or other administrators.

XI. 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 all substantive criticisms, complaints, and suggestions called to the Board's attention to the Superintendent for study, recommendation, and/or appropriate action.
 2. Make the parent, student, or citizen 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.
- B. The Superintendent shall investigate such matters and inform the Board of the results of such efforts.

XII. Media Inquiries to the Board

- A. Individual Board members may respond to media inquiries as they deem appropriate, however, Board members are encouraged to speak to the Superintendent prior to speaking to the media.
- B. 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.

XIII. 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 Superintendent's office.
- 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, groundbreaking, dedications, ribbon cuttings, and other campus events.

XIV. 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. At least 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 at the last Board meeting in December a report on the training board members have received to date and whether or not they have met the required training.

- 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 policies related to Board Member training see District Policy BBD (LOCAL), BBD (LEGAL), and BBD (EXHIBIT) available on-line at <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/1057>.

XV. Travel Reimbursement

- A. 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.
- B. 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.
- C. As specified in District Policy BBG (LOCAL), payment for authorized and documented travel expenses shall be made in accordance with legal requirements by either reimbursement (not to exceed the allowable rates) or advancement of a set amount.
- D. For specific policies related to Board Member Travel Reimbursement, see District Policy BBG (LEGAL), and BBG (LOCAL) available online at <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/1057>.

XVI. Role of the Secretary to the Board

- A. The Superintendent's Secretary shall take the official minutes of each Board meeting, work session, and public hearing and will provide minutes for Board review and approval in a timely manner.
- B. The Superintendent's Secretary provides clerical and organizational support to Board members by:
 - 1. Forwarding all Board written correspondence and e-mail to Board members 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. Tracking completion of Board member training credits; and
8. Providing assistance in assembling weekly Board packets for Board members and other duties as assigned by the Superintendent.

XVII. Reviewing the Board Operating Procedures

- A. Board of Trustees Operating Procedures will be reviewed and updated in October of each election year and will be part of Board training.