

## **BIRDVILLE ISD BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

### **I. OPERATING RULES**

#### **A. Overview**

The Board defines the district's policies and goals that shall reflect the district's advocacy for all students. Board Members serve as advocates for all students by providing leadership at the local, state and national level. The policies set by the Board will insure that the district mission and goals are achieved. A responsibility of the Board is to hire a Superintendent, who then implements the policies and goals adopted by the Board. The Board shall evaluate the Superintendent's job performance based upon these policies and goals. These operating procedures will be reviewed annually by the Board and shall reflect a continuous improvement model.

#### **B. Effective Working Relationships**

A district is only as strong as the Superintendent/Board relationship. The Superintendent is the CEO of the organization and the Board is a governing body, much like a Board of Directors in a business setting. The Board must give the Superintendent leeway to accomplish the directives provided by the Board, without getting involved in the day-to-day minutiae.

An effective Board Member communicates with the Superintendent about a concern. It is the Superintendent's job to address concerns. Board Members should not violate the chain of command, causing disrespect and unclear expectations between staff, the Superintendent and the Board.

#### **C. Communications**

1. Superintendent will communicate with all Board Members via appropriate means such as direct conversation, telephone and/or weekly electronic mail.
2. Superintendent will communicate with the Board President on a routine basis to discuss issues of the district.
3. Superintendent shall keep the Board continuously informed on issues, needs, and operations of the District.
4. Requests to Superintendent from the Board President will be distributed to all Board Members via appropriate means, such as in electronic mail messages.
5. Board will keep Superintendent informed via appropriate means such as direct conversation, telephone and/or e-mail.
6. The Board will communicate with the community through public forums, regular Board meetings, committee meetings and regular publications.
7. Other than the Board President, individual Board Members are not authorized to speak in an official capacity outside the Board meetings.

8. Information discussed in executive session will be kept confidential until Superintendent or the Board President notifies the Board that such information is public.
9. Board Members are encouraged to get to know staff members but are never to give staff members directives.
10. Board Members will not respond to anonymous communication, but may refer it to the Superintendent. Any such anonymous communication that pertains to criminal, health, or safety concerns shall be forwarded to the Superintendent for action. Board Members will be informed by the Superintendent of any actions to be taken, if appropriate.
11. Board Members who participate in social media should be careful to avoid online conversations that could be construed as speaking for the Board or constituting an online Board meeting.

**D. Meetings**

1. Establishing the Agenda
  - a. In consultation with the Board President, the Superintendent shall prepare the agenda for all Board meetings. A recommendation from at least two Trustees is required for an item to be included on the agenda. The Superintendent shall include on the preliminary agenda of the meeting all Trustee-requested topics that have been timely submitted.
  - b. Before the official agenda is finalized for any meeting, the Superintendent shall consult the Board President to ensure that the agenda and the topics included meet with the President's approval. In reviewing the preliminary agenda, the President shall ensure that any topics requested to be addressed by two or more Trustees are either on that agenda or scheduled for deliberation at an appropriate time in the near future. The Board President shall not have authority to remove from the agenda a subject requested by two or more Trustees without specific authorization of at least one-half of the Board Members making the request.
  - c. Board Members shall be given notice of regular and special meeting at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled time of the meeting and at least one hour prior to the time of an emergency meeting.
  - d. The deadline for submitting items for inclusion on the agenda is noon of the third calendar day before the posting of the meeting.
2. Items Restricted from the Open Session
  - a. All personnel issues must be conducted in Executive Session unless specifically required by the Texas Open Meetings Act.
  - b. Exceptions to the Texas Public Information Act cannot be placed on the agenda.

3. Consent Agenda

- a. The consent agenda shall include items of a routine and/or recurring nature grouped together under one action item. For each item listed as part of a consent agenda, the Board shall be furnished with background material. Examples of such items include:
  - 1. Routine financial information or updates.
  - 2. Minutes of regular and special Board meetings.
  - 3. Routine bid recommendations.

4. Meeting Requirements and Conduct

- a. The Board will observe Robert’s Rules of Order unless suspended by a majority vote of members present.
- b. Oral and written reports of Board Special Committees shall be presented at the regular Board meeting and filed with regular Board meeting minutes.
- c. During discussion, a Board Member should not monopolize conversation and give all members a chance to take part in discussion.
- d. During discussion or while taking action during a Board meeting, the Board President will first acknowledge a Board Member and then discussion can proceed.

5. Voting

- a. Unless abstaining, the Board President will vote on all action items.
- b. In case of a tie vote, the item fails.
- c. Dissenting and abstaining votes shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board Meeting.
- d. Once a majority decision has been reached, individual Board Members will publicly support that vote.

6. Speakers Addressing the Board at Meetings

- a. Members of the public may only address the Board during the designated section on the agenda. Board Members will listen to the comments made but will not conduct an interchange with the speaker. The Board is assembled to gather input only.

- b. The Board can only offer factual information, cite Board policy, or direct the administration to investigate items and report back to the Board but shall not engage in a two-way dialogue with open session speakers.
- c. Board will limit individual speaker input time to three minutes per speaker.
- d. For general topics, the total time for input is thirty minutes without specific action of the Board.
- e. For agenda topics, the Board will not limit the time designated for public comment. However, individuals are limited to three minutes per speaker.
- f. The Board shall not tolerate disruption of the meeting by members of the audience.
- g. Formal acknowledgements and/or written responses to open session speakers will be provided by the appropriate staff, after review by the Board President and Superintendent. Leadership will make every effort to respond within ten working days of the meeting date at which the communication was presented to the Board. The Board will be copied on all such communications.

## **II. TRANSITIONS IN THE BOARD**

### **A. Board Member Replacement**

- 1. The departing Board Member should give written notice of impending resignation and deliver it to the Board President.
- 2. Possible Courses of Action
  - a. Special election.
  - b. Regularly scheduled election.
  - c. Appointment until the next regularly scheduled election.
  - d. Allow the vacancy.

### **B. Board Member Officer Elections**

- 1. No Board Member shall be elected as a Board Officer without one term minimum Board experience.

2. Board offices, terms, duties and vacancies shall be resolved according to district policy.
3. At the first meeting after each Trustee election and qualification of Trustees in May, the Board Members shall organize by selecting Board Officers.
4. Board officer elections will be held in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order.
5. A vacancy among officers of the Board shall be filled by majority action of the Board.

**C. Role and Authority of Board Members and Officers**

1. No Board Member or officer has authority outside the Board meeting except for requests for information allowed under district policy and while fulfilling duties of the President.
2. No Board Member shall direct employees in regard to performance of their duties. Such attempts shall be reported by the Superintendent to the Board President.
3. President of Board of Trustees:
  - a. Shall preside at all Board meetings and is the “face of the Board”.
  - b. Appoint Board Members to both committee participation and chairmanships.
  - c. Shall call special meetings.
  - d. Sign all legal documents required by law.
  - e. Have the right to discuss, make motions and resolutions, and vote on all matters coming before the Board.
4. Vice President of Board of Trustees
  - a. Shall act in capacity of Board President in his/her absence.
  - b. Will work with Board President to appoint Board Members to both committee participation and chairmanships.
  - c. Performs other duties as directed by the Board.
5. Secretary of Board of Trustees

- a. Keeps, or causes to be kept, an accurate record of the proceedings of each Board meeting.
- b. Act in capacity of Board President in the absence of the President and the Vice President.
- c. Countersign all warrants.
- d. Performs other duties as directed by the Board.

### **III. TRAVEL, TRAINING, AND ELECTIONS**

#### **A. Training**

1. Board Members shall complete continuing education annually in accordance with state statutes.
2. The Board shall complete their “Team of 8” (see Sec. VI A) training as prescribed by law each year.
3. The Board shall attend a legislative update as required by law.
4. Total required and completed training hours of each trustee are announced as required by law.

#### **B. Travel Planning**

1. Trustees are encouraged to attend seminars at various locations including Regional Service centers, annual state, and annual national conventions sponsored by TASB and NSBA. All travel must have prior approval by the Board Officers.
2. Trustees shall follow the district guidelines and procedures for maintaining travel expenses. The Board President will approve travel expenses for Board Members and the Superintendent. The Vice President will approve travel expenses for the Board President.
3. Trustees shall make prudent spending decisions while traveling.
4. All Board Members attending a conference or training session are encouraged to attend two-thirds or more of available continuing education opportunities. All “early bird” workshops paid extra by the district must be attended except in a case of emergency. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in the cost of the training not being covered by the district.

5. All personal costs (outside of travel, parking, lodging, and meals as allotted by law and District policy) will be borne by individual Board Members. Family member travel will not be a reimbursable expense.
6. Expense reports should be submitted within thirty (30) days.
7. Issues regarding travel will be addressed through the Board President.

**C. Increasing Impact**

1. After attending continuing education seminars and conferences, each Board Member is encouraged to share new learning with other Board Members.
2. Each Board Member should record and report appropriate credits.
3. Each Board Member should apply new learning in his/her role as a School Board Member.

**D. Activities Related to Elections**

1. Board Members will follow all applicable law in all campaign activities. No Board Member will use district funds or resources to electioneer for or against any candidate, measure, or political party.
2. No Board Member seeking re-election to the Board will solicit district employees for endorsement during such employee's work hours or at any time while on district property.
3. The Board, as a body corporate, will not endorse any candidate running for any public office. Recognizing that the Board operates as a non-partisan elected body that works with other elected officials in its duties, individual Board Members should exercise heightened caution when providing a personal endorsement to any candidate, including all social media. If an individual Board Member chooses to provide an endorsement to a candidate for elected office, the Board Member should indicate to the candidate that such endorsement is their personal view and not that of the Board, as a body corporate.
4. Board Members seeking re-election to the Board shall not receive campaign contributions from persons or entities with financial interests in contracts with the district.

**IV. SCHOOL VISIT GUIDELINES**

**A. Guidelines for Board Members to Follow for Campus Visits**

Board Members may visit campuses, but must ensure that the visits do not impede the delivery of instruction in the classroom and do not affect primary

responsibilities of school administrators or educators. As a courtesy and being respectful of time constraints of school staff and leadership, such visits, other than for special events or for parental duties, should be preceded by written notification to the Board President and Superintendent. Except for extraordinary reasons, Board Members should refrain from going into classrooms during instruction time and from being present during teacher preparation time.

1. Honor the campus rules regarding all visitors such as checking in at the office and wearing name identification.
2. Notify the school principal in advance of the date and time of an official visit, except during Public Schools Week. All visits are to be escorted or directed by a staff member designated by the principal.
3. Remember chain of command for complaints, concerns, and requests.
4. Do not attempt to solve problems, make promises or make recommendations.
5. Remember you are a public servant. Your actions and behavior should reflect this critical role.
6. Make positive observations about the campus and express any concerns privately to the Superintendent.

## **V. COMMUNICATIONS**

### **A. Local Public Complaint Policy**

1. If citizens bring concerns or complaints to an individual Board Member, he or she shall refer them to the appropriate chain of command as defined.
  - a. The chain of command is the appropriate channel to take to get problems solved.
  - b. The person at the lowest level and closest to the problem should strive to solve an issue.
  - c. The chain of command moves up through the organization to the Superintendent and ultimately to the Board of Trustees as spelled out in Policy.

### **B. Media Communications**

1. The Board President shall function as the official spokesman for the Board.



2. This does not restrict other Board Members from speaking at meetings, hearings, public functions, or to the media, but all remarks should be clarified that it is their personal opinion.
3. Once a majority decision has been reached, individual Board Members will publicly support that vote.

## **VI. NEW MEMBER BOARD ORIENTATION**

### **A. Understanding the Team of 8 role**

1. Each Board Member is:
  - a. 1 of 7 Board Members plus the Superintendent,
  - b. A trustee for the entire ISD,
  - c. A leader for the entire ISD,
  - d. An elected public official,
  - e. Responsible for governance,
  - f. Equal to all the other Board Members,
  - g. Responsible for personal preparation for all meetings,
  - h. Expected to attend districtwide functions as available,
  - i. Expected to be familiar with current laws,
  - j. Expected to attend further training,
  - k. Expected to support Board decisions,
  - l. Expected to support the chain of command in dealing with problems,
  - m. Expected to refrain from being divisive or a negative influence,
  - n. Expected to hold confidential any information regarding personnel, real estate, or any other matter that is confidential in nature,
  - o. Not expected to be a legal expert on all aspects of public education,
  - p. Expected to assist in educating the public on district issues where appropriate, and
  - q. Expected to attend board meetings.

**B. Induction into Board Culture**

1. New Board Members must attend local district orientation within the first 60 days after election or appointment, an orientation to the Texas Education Code within the first 120 days after election or appointment, and other hours of training as required by law.
2. New Board Members are encouraged to attend as much training as possible during their first year of service. So that district budget funds will be used appropriately, except for traditional training events such as state TASB and national NSBA conventions, all travel must have prior approval by the Board Officers.
3. At the discretion of the Board President or the request of the new member, new Board Members may be assigned an existing Board Member who will serve as a mentor.
4. New Board Members should feel free to ask questions of the Superintendent, Board President, and other Board Members.
5. Internal District Training
  - a. Within 60 days of election or appointment, the Superintendent shall meet with the Board Member to provide local district orientation.
  - b. The Superintendent may arrange for new Board Members to visit with key staff members to familiarize themselves with such issues as finance, budgets, curriculum and instruction, safety and discipline issues, school management issues, and other issues of interest.

**VII. BOARD VIOLATIONS AND SANCTIONS**

**A. Private Censure of Behavior**

1. In the event of inappropriate behavior by a Board Member, the Board may choose to censure or sanction the Board Member.
2. The Board may do this privately, in a closed session.
3. The censure will consist of a calmly worded statement of:
  - a. The inappropriate behavior of the named Board Member.
  - b. The desired behavior.

- c. A statement of agreement by a majority of the Board Members that the behavior is inappropriate.

**B. Public Sanction of Behavior**

1. The Board may also choose to issue a public sanction, either:
  - a. Concurrently with the private censure.
  - b. After the Board Member has still not modified the behavior, even following a private censure.
2. The sanction would consist of a calmly worded statement of:
  - a. The inappropriate behavior of the named Board Member.
  - b. The desired behavior.
  - c. A statement of agreement by a majority of the Board Members that the behavior is inappropriate.

**C. Withdrawal of Resources**

1. The Board may choose to withhold financial resources from the offending Board Member.
2. Examples might be disallowance of reimbursement for attendance at conventions, seminars, or other district travel plans.

**D. Requests for Resignation**

1. Under extreme conditions, the Board may agree to ask the offending Board Member to resign.