

# **Board Operating Procedures Dawson Independent School District**

In effective school systems, the Superintendent and the Board function as a “Team of Eight.” A structured approach (to developing a District vision and setting goals) is enhanced by first developing a system of standard operating procedures. The School Board is the corporate policy making body for the District, the Superintendent and staff provide the leadership to implement Board policies.

The Dawson ISD Board of Trustees adopts these guidelines as Operating Procedures to effectively communicate with staff and patrons of the District.

American public education is characterized by its unique emphasis on local lay control of the governance of school districts. Board trustees, as locally elected public officials, are stewards of the educational welfare of all students in the district. Dawson ISD trustees adhere to the Ethics for School Board Members adopted by the Texas Association of School Boards

## **I. DEVELOPING BOARD MEETING AGENDA**

### **A. Placing items on agenda**

1. The deadline for submitting items for inclusion on the agenda is noon of the sixth day before regular meetings and noon of the sixth day before a special meeting.
2. In consultation with the Board President, the Superintendent shall prepare the agenda for all Board Meetings. The Board President or any two trustees may request that a subject be included on the agenda for a meeting, and the Superintendent shall include on the preliminary agenda of the meeting all Trustee-requested topics that have been timely submitted. 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 the Board or any two Trustees have requested to be addressed 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 Trustees without those Trustees’s specific authorization.
3. In accordance with Texas Open Meeting Act (OMA), no item can be placed on the agenda less than 72 hours in advance of a meeting, except in an emergency as provided by the OMA.

### **B. Items for executive session**

Only the following may be deliberated in an executive or closed session:

1. When the Board seeks advice from its attorney about pending or contemplated litigation, a settlement offer, or other matters which the attorney has a duty to keep confidential.
2. When the Board discusses gifts or donations to the District or real estate transactions and values and needs to keep those discussions confidential to protect its negotiating position.
3. When the Board deliberates the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee, or hears a complaint or charge against an officer or employee. (This does not apply if the employee or officer requests a public hearing.)
4. When the Board deliberates the deployment or specific occasions for implementation of security personnel or devices.
5. When the Board deliberates the discipline of a student or when a charge is brought against an employee of the District. (This does not apply if an open hearing is requested in writing by a parent or guardian of the child or by the employee.)
6. When the Board deliberates the standards, guidelines, and terms or conditions the Board will follow in a consultation with a representative of an employee group.

7. When the Board discusses or deliberates regarding commercial or financial information that the District has received from a business prospect that the District seeks to have locate, stay, or expand in or near the territory of the governmental body and with which the District is conducting economic development negotiations; or to deliberate the offer of a financial or other incentive to such a business prospect.

8. The Board can only discuss those items listed on the executive agenda and as limited by law.

9. The Board must vote in public session.

### C. Use of consent agenda

1. The consent agenda generally consists of routine matters that do not require explanation or deliberation. Usually such items have been reviewed by Board members prior to a regular meeting, through written materials provided by the administration or at work sessions. The following are examples of appropriate items for the consent agenda:

- a) Annual renewal of Region XII and TEA items
- b) Financial information
- c) Minutes of regular and special Board meetings
- d) Human Resource Reports

Any Board member may request that an item be removed from the consent agenda if the member feels that further information, deliberation or discussion is necessary.

## II. MEMBER CONDUCT DURING BOARD MEETING

(Four members present constitute a quorum for a meeting.)

### A. Persons addressing the Board

There are two methods available to persons to address the Board. The first is through the complaint or grievance procedures (See Policy DGBA Local, Policy FNG Local, and Policy GF Local). The second and more common method is through the open forum portion of a regular meeting. The following rules apply to the open forum:

1. Speakers must register prior to the Regular Board Meeting which begins at 7:00 p.m. and indicate the topic about which they wish to speak.
2. No presentation shall exceed five minutes. Delegations of more than two persons shall appoint one person to present their views before the Board. (BED Local)
3. The Board President may recognize persons who sign up to address agenda items at the time when the agenda item is discussed by the Board or during the open forum portion of the meeting. However, the Board will not engage in dialogue with speakers during the Board meeting on items that are not part of the posted agenda.
4. Board President or two trustees may direct the Superintendent to review and respond to the request or concerns and report back to the Board through transmittal or at a designated meeting.
5. Discussions shall be addressed to the President of the Board and then the entire membership. Discussion shall be directed solely to the business currently under deliberation, and the Board President shall halt discussion that does not apply to the business before the Board. The Board President shall also halt discussion if the Board has agreed to a time limitation for discussion of an item, and that time limit has expired. Aside from these limitations, the President shall not interfere with debate so long as members wish to address themselves to an item under consideration.

### B. Discussion of individual employees or students by the Board or audience

Negative comments or complaints to or about individual employees or students fall under the complaint process. A complaint form and information regarding the process may be obtained from the Director of Personnel's Office. The Board will not entertain such comments in public session as provided by law.

(See Policy FNG Local)

### **C. Voting**

1. Each action item shall require a motion and second prior to voting.
2. The Board President may participate in the discussion and vote on all action items.
3. Voting shall be by voice or show of hands, as directed by the President. Any member may abstain from voting, and a member's vote or failure to vote shall be recorded upon the member's request.
4. In case of a tie vote, the President or two trustees may bring the item back to the Board on a subsequent agenda.

### **III. INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION OR REPORTS**

- A. Board members shall request information and/or reports through the Superintendent.
- B. The Superintendent will gather the information and/or reports and disseminate it in a timely manner to all Board members.
- C. Board members are encouraged to advise the Superintendent of questions or concerns on agenda items before the Board meeting.

### **IV. CITIZEN REQUEST/COMPLAINT TO INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER**

- A. The Board has provided a complaint process that encourages the resolution of concerns at the level at which the concern arises. It is the intent of the Board that the public is treated with dignity and respect throughout the complaint process.
- B. When an individual Board member is contacted by a member of the public, the trustee is to encourage the individual to discuss the concern or complaint through informal conferences with the appropriate administrator.
- C. The Board member should explain the steps in the complaint process if the concern cannot be resolved informally.
- D. The Board member should explain the need for the trustee to remain impartial due to the potential for a hearing if the complaint remains unresolved through administrative channels.
- E. The Board member should inform the Superintendent of the citizen concern.

### **V. BOARD MEMBER VISIT TO SCHOOL CAMPUS**

- A. Board members are not to go to a campus or into teachers' classrooms for the purpose of evaluation or investigation of complaints or grievances.
- B. Board members are encouraged to visit campuses for special events and for parental reasons. Board members as well as parents and visitors to campuses should sign-in at the front office when visiting the campus.

### **VI. COMMUNICATIONS**

- A. Superintendent will meet with the Board President on a routine basis.

B. Board members will keep Superintendent informed via telephone calls, faxes, e-mail, or personal visits.

C. Board members will communicate with the community through public hearings and regular Board meetings.

D. The Board President or his/her designee shall be the official spokesperson for the media/press on issues of media attention that are high profile. Individual Board members should feel free to express their opinions in response to media inquiries, but with discretion-avoiding the appearance of debating an issue through the media, and should avoid criticism of prior action taken by the Board.

#### **VII. EVALUATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

A. The evaluation of the Superintendent will be in accordance with state law and Board policy.

B. The Board President obtains input from all Board members for the Superintendent's evaluation.

C. The Superintendent's evaluation is conducted in executive session.

#### **VIII. EVALUATION OF THE BOARD**

A. Evaluation of the Board is an assessment of completion of goals established by the Board and its working relationship with the Superintendent.

B. The evaluation of the Superintendent is an indication of the Board's success in meeting established goals.

#### **IX. DUTIES AND REQUIREMENTS OF BOARD OFFICERS**

A. The Board shall elect a President, a Vice-President, and a Secretary who shall be members of the Board.

B. A vacancy among officers of the Board shall be filled by majority action of the Board.

C. The President of the Board shall:

1. Preside at all Board meetings unless unable to attend.

2. Have the right to discuss, make motions and resolutions, and vote on all matters coming from the Board.

3. Appoint all Board committees, unless otherwise provided by policy or Board consensus. (Policy BDB Local)

4. Execute contracts on behalf of the District, subject to any restrictions imposed by law, as approved by the Board unless such authority has been delegated to the Superintendent or designee.

D. The Vice-President of the Board shall:

a. Act in the capacity and perform the duties of the President of the Board in the event of the absence or incapacity of the President.

b. Become President only upon being elected to the position.

E. The Secretary of the Board shall:

1. Ensure that an accurate record is kept of the proceedings of each Board meeting.

2. Ensure that notices of Board meetings are posted and sent as required by law.

3. In the absence of the President and Vice-President, call the meetings to order and act as presiding officer.

4. Sign or countersign documents as directed by action of the Board.

**X. ROLE OF BOARD IN EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- A. The Board may only discuss those items listed on the executive session agenda and as allowed by law.**
- B. The Board must vote in public session.**
- C. Discussions during executive session must remain confidential.**

**XI. ANONYMOUS PHONE CALLS AND/OR LETTERS**

The Dawson Independent School District Board of Trustees encourages input; however, anonymous calls or letters will not receive Board attention, discussion, or response and will not result in directives to the Administration. Confidentiality is strictly maintained when possible.

**XII. CONFLICTS WITH POLICY**

These procedures are not part of the official policies of the Dawson Independent School District. In the event of any conflict between these procedures and such policy, the terms of the policy shall control.