

**Lake Travis Independent School District**

**Board  
Operating  
Procedures**

**Approved November 5, 2009**

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**Lake Travis ISD  
Board of Trustees Operating Procedures  
Approved November 2009**

**BOARD MEETINGS**

**While Board Meetings are for the purpose of the Board conducting the business of the District in public, and are not public forums for the purpose of securing interaction with the public, the Board recognizes that flexibility is desirable to allow meaningful public interaction with the Board as well as meaningful dissemination of information concerning Board actions.**

**1. Developing the Board Meeting Agenda**

a. Agendas

- i. The Superintendent will develop all Board Meeting Agendas in collaboration with the Board President.
- ii. Items discussed at previous Board meetings which are proposed for inclusion at a future meeting will also be added when appropriate.
- iii. Any Trustee may submit a request in writing to the Superintendent for a subject to be placed on the agenda. The request shall be accompanied by a brief summary of the submission.
- iv. Any Citizen wishing to place an Item on a Board Agenda for public discussion can request a Board Member to do so. If the request does not involve specific students or personnel and if the Board Member agrees that it merits public discussion and/or consideration by the Board, the Board member may request placement of the item on a future Board Meeting agenda by following approved Board Operating Procedure protocol.
- v. All Trustee-requested topics submitted in a timely manner shall be included, unless the requesting Trustee and the Board President and/or the Superintendent agree to postpone the item until a future date.
- vi. No item can be placed on the agenda less than ten days in advance of the meeting without the Board President's approval.
- vii. No item can be placed on the agenda less than three work days in advance of the meeting unless an emergency or public necessity exists.

b. Timely Notification and Information

- i. Board members shall be notified of a meeting at least 72 hours prior to a regular meeting, workshop or special meeting, and at least two hours prior to an emergency meeting
- ii. Typically, the Superintendent will release the Agenda and any Board Packet of supporting materials for each Tuesday Meeting (Regular or Workshop) to the Board Members on the Friday preceding such Meeting, and for each other non-emergency Meeting approximately 4 work days prior to the Meeting.
- iii. Typically, information will be provided to each Trustee via electronic or hard copy delivery. Questions regarding supporting documents should be directed to the Superintendent or his designee at least two work days prior to the meeting.
- iv. Excluding only closed session materials, or materials that were unavailable or in incomplete form or otherwise protected from disclosure by policy, law or advice of legal counsel, the entire Board Packet for every Regular or Workshop Meeting of the Board will be published, along with the Agenda, on the District Website approximately twenty-four hours before the scheduled Meeting time.

- c. Open and Closed Session Format
  - i. The Open Session (public portion) of every Meeting of the Board will begin at a designated time.
  - ii. Closed Session items for which there is a corresponding action item to be considered during the Open Session of the meeting will be scheduled prior to the beginning of the Open Session and the Board President and Superintendent shall, to the extent possible allocate sufficient time to complete Closed Session discussion prior to the beginning of the Open Session.
  - iii. To the extent reasonably predictable and possible if more Closed Session discussion is needed for corresponding action items or items not considered for action on the agenda, the Presiding Officer shall announce, after conclusion of consideration of all other agenda action items, that it is necessary for the Board to reconvene in Closed Session to allow the Board to continue or complete its consideration of duly posted Closed Session items for which previously allocated time was insufficient.
  - iv. The Presiding Officer shall state publicly that any action, if taken, will be conducted in Open Session at the conclusion of Closed Session; or, if appropriate, that no action will then be taken.
  
- d. Consent Agenda
  - i. The consent agenda includes items of routine and/or recurring nature, grouped together under one action item.
  - ii. The Superintendent, with the Board President's approval, shall determine which items qualify for inclusion in the consent agenda.
  - iii. Background material for each consent agenda item shall be furnished to the Board in the meeting's supporting documents.
  - iv. All consent agenda items shall be acted upon by one vote without separate discussion.
  - v. A Board member may request that an item be withdrawn for individual consideration.
  
- e. Meeting Dates
  - i. The Superintendent will develop a Board calendar that will include regular and workshop meeting dates of the Board of Trustees.
  - ii. Generally, unless otherwise scheduled by a consensus of the Board, Regular Board Meetings will be held on the third Wednesday of every month. Workshops will be scheduled as necessary.
  - iii. The calendar will include those items that are cyclical and/or recurring for consideration at regular or workshop meetings.
  - iv. The calendar and agenda items will be made available for the Board and public via appropriate communication methods, posted in accordance with Board legal policy.
  - v. The calendar will be reviewed annually for updates and revisions.

## **2. Conducting Board Meetings**

- a. Quorum
  - i. Any time four or more board members are gathered to discuss school district business, it is considered a meeting, and must be posted as such according to Board legal policy.
  
- b. Closed Session
  - i. The Board may meet in Closed Session as provided for in the Texas Open Meetings Act, Government Code, Chapter 551, Subchapters D and E.
  - ii. Before any Closed Session is convened, the Presiding Officer will announce publicly,

- as appropriate, that matters before the Board exist that necessitate convening into Closed Session to serve and protect the interests of the District, and that any action, if necessary, resulting from duly posted Closed Session items shall be conducted in Open Session.
- iii. The posted agenda shall identify the section or sections of the Act authorizing the Closed Session and the general topics or subjects to be discussed. The Presiding Officer of the Board shall publicly identify such section or sections and such topics and subjects.
  - iv. The Superintendent shall attend all sessions of the Board, both Open and Closed, except when the Board desires to meet without the Superintendent to consider the Superintendent's contract evaluation or performance, or to resolve conflicts between individual Board members, or to act as a tribunal.
  - v. In the event of the Superintendent's illness or Board approved absence, the Superintendent's designee shall attend such meetings.
- c. Citizen Participation-Audience Comments
- i. At all meetings of the Board, the Presiding Officer may allot time to hear persons who desire to make comments to the Board.
  - ii. At the beginning of each meeting, the Presiding Officer will announce the rules for audience comments. At regular Board meetings, the rules of Citizen Participation will be summarized for the audience. At Board workshops, the guidelines for comments and informal discussion will be noted.
  - iii. Citizens who have signed up to address the Board at the regular monthly Meeting of the Board will be given the option of doing so at the conclusion of the Superintendent's Report portion of the agenda. If their comments relate to a particular Item on the Board Agenda, they will be given the option of sharing their comments following the administration's presentation of the agenda item, but prior to Board deliberation. Board members may request permission from the Presiding Officer of the meeting to seek clarification of the Citizen(s) speaking on the agenda item. All such dialogue will be strictly controlled by the Presiding Officer of the Board, and all Citizens shall respect the fact that Board Members are forbidden by law from discussing or commenting upon any subject which is not on the posted Board Agenda.
  - iv. Speakers will address the Board from the podium, facing the Board members.
  - v. Board members will listen attentively to comments.
  - vi. A citizen must sign up on the appropriate form prior to the end of the "Superintendent's Report" on the agenda. The topic described on the form shall be complete and in sufficient detail as to determine appropriateness of the topic prior to addressing the Board.
  - vii. Public comments may be on items listed on the agenda or other areas of school district operations, but shall not include complaints or comments about individual students, employees or officials of the district. Likewise, the complainant shall refrain from naming individuals in his or her complaint.
  - viii. Questions asked by the public on topics on the posted agenda may be answered during the discussion of that agenda item. Comments or questions on topics not on the posted agenda may be referred to the Superintendent for consideration and a later response, if appropriate.
  - ix. The Presiding Officer shall determine the time limitation for each speaker. Typically, each speaker will be limited to three minutes, unless the time is otherwise increased or decreased prior to the beginning of the public comments portion of the agenda. Groups of five or more people wishing to speak on a single subject will be asked to appoint a spokesperson to express the views of the group.

- x. The Board vests in its Presiding Officer authority to terminate the remarks of any individual when such individual does not adhere to the established rules.
  - xi. The Board shall not tolerate disruption of the meeting by members of the audience. If any person disrupts the meeting by his or her words or actions, the Presiding Officer may request assistance from law enforcement officials to have the person removed from the meeting.
- d. Board Meeting Parliamentary Procedure
- i. The Board President serves as the Presiding Officer at Board Meetings. In the absence of the President, the Vice-President will preside.
  - ii. The Board shall be guided by parliamentary procedure as detailed in Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, or as spelled out in adopted procedure.
  - iii. The Board President has the responsibility to keep the discussion to the motion at hand and shall halt discussion that does not apply to the business before the Board.
  - iv. Except in conflict of interest, as defined by law, or ethical conflict of interest, Board members shall vote on all action items.
- e. Transacting Business
- i. When an agenda item is presented, a discussion shall be held and a decision reached through voting in accordance with prescribed procedures. Whenever possible, the Board should work toward a consensus model of decision-making. There may be dissenting votes which are a matter of record. However, once a decision has been made, all Board members should support the majority vote of the board, recognize that it carries the full authority of the Board, and individually respect that vote.
- f. Hearings
- i. Employee, community and/or student/parent grievances will be handled according to Board policy. FNG (Local), DGBA (Local), GF (Local)
  - ii. Issues not resolved adequately at the Superintendent level may be appealed to the Board for consideration at a future meeting or workshop.
  - iii. When hearing grievance matters, the Board adopts the following rules of procedure
    1. The Board is not required to consider new evidence, not established in the record at a prior level.
    2. No new complaints or points of contention or argument will be considered
    3. The Board should not substitute its judgment for that of the administration unless the administration's findings and rulings are contrary to law or policy, or are not supported by substantial evidence.

### 3. Board Workshops

**The Board will conduct Board Workshops on a regular basis.**

- a. The workshop format is intended to allow the Administration to present information to the Board that is
  - i. Time sensitive and/or discussion intensive
  - ii. Required by law, rule or policy, and
  - iii. Is necessary for the efficient and effective operation of the District
- b. Board workshops are not intended to substitute for regular monthly Board meetings, although a quorum of the Board may take action, as necessary.
- c. The workshops are intended to allow an opportunity for presentation, questions, discussion and an assessment of the Board's perspective.
- d. The Board President serves as the Presiding Officer at Board Workshops; however, it is

understood that the intended nature and format of workshops allows for the Superintendent to substantially facilitate the presentation and ordering of items under consideration. In the absence of the President, the Vice-President will preside.

#### **4. Board Committees**

- a. The Board may, from time to time as it deems necessary, create committees to facilitate the efficient and necessary operation of the Board.
- b. A committee of Board members that has supervision or control over public business or public policy is subject to the Open Meetings Act when it meets to discuss public business or policy. All committee meetings will be posted.

#### **5. Electing Board Officers**

- a. Officers are nominated and elected annually at the first meeting after the May Board election
- b. A vacancy in the office of President will be filled automatically by the Vice President, if there is a sitting Vice President, creating a vacancy in the office of Vice President
- c. In all other instances, the Board will elect an officer to fill any vacancy at the next Board meeting after the vacancy occurs.

#### **6. Board Member Vacancy**

- a. If a Board member is considering resigning from the Board, the member will notify the Board President and the Superintendent.
- b. A vacancy that occurs on the Board through death, resignation, or other means of removal may be filled by appointment by the remaining Board members until the next Board election, in accordance with BBB (Legal).
- c. At the time of the appointment, the appointee must be a registered voter and a resident of Lake Travis ISD.

### **ANNUAL EVALUATIONS**

#### **1. Superintendent Evaluation**

- a. Formative evaluations will be conducted in closed session twice annually, in July or August and January.
- b. The agenda for each formative evaluation shall be developed by the Superintendent and Board President to address such things as Superintendent performance issues, current and future challenges faced by the Board and Superintendent team, litigation updates, operating procedures, and any other matters deemed necessary to promote the effective functioning of the Leadership team. All discussions will be held in a manner not to violate the Texas Open Meetings Act. The Board may discuss the Superintendent's contract at any formative evaluation.
- c. A summative evaluation will be conducted in closed session annually in January, and will include a discussion of the Superintendent's contract.
- d. The Board will use the approved evaluation instrument for the summative evaluation. A copy of the evaluation document will be completed in advance by each Board member, and submitted to the Board President no later than seven days prior to the formal review. All comments and ratings will be compiled into a single document to be given to the Superintendent for discussion during the closed meeting.
- e. The Board shall strive to accomplish the following objectives during each summative evaluation
  - i. Clarify to the Superintendent his or her role, as seen by the Board.
  - ii. Clarify to Board members the Superintendent's role, according to the Board's written criteria, as expressed in the Superintendent's job description and the

- District's goals and objectives
- iii. Foster an early understanding among new Board members of the evaluation process and the Superintendent's current performance objectives and priorities
- iv. Develop and sustain a harmonious working relationship between the Board and the Superintendent
- v. Ensure administrative leadership for excellence in the District

## **2. Board Evaluation/Team Building**

- a. There will be a routine assessment of the status of the Board/Superintendent team annually, ideally in June.
- b. Evaluation will be conducted in closed session at a time and place determined by the Board
- c. To the extent that the meeting does not violate the Texas Open Meetings Act, the evaluation may include
  - i. Board operating procedures
  - ii. Board member training
  - iii. Conflict resolution
  - iv. Working relationships with the Superintendent
  - v. Conduct of Board meetings
  - vi. Long-range planning and goal setting
  - vii. Relationship with the community

## **INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS**

### **1. Access to Information (BBE Local)**

- a. An individual Board member, acting in his or her official capacity, shall have the right to seek information pertaining to District fiscal affairs, business transactions, governance, 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 Board Members shall not have access to confidential student records, unless there is a legitimate educational interest in the records in accordance with policies FL (LEGAL) and (LOCAL).
- c. Directives to the Superintendent or other District employees regarding the preparation of reports shall be by Board Action. All requests by a Board member for compilation of data, other than copies of existing records, shall be referred to the Superintendent for Board approval. The Superintendent will confer with the Board President to place the request on the upcoming agenda for discussion.
- d. Requests for copies of existing reports or other data shall be directed to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall notify the other Board members of any such request so they are aware and have the opportunity to request the same information.

### **2. Authority**

- a. Board members as individuals do not have the power to exercise authority over the District, its property or its employees.
- b. Except for appropriate duties and functions of the Board President, an individual member may not act on behalf of the Board without the express authorization of the Board. Without such authorization, no individual member may commit the Board on any issue.
- c. Board members will avoid personal involvement in activities the Board has delegated to the Superintendent.



### **3. Communication with Other Board Members**

- a. Board electronic and written communications regarding District issues should be routed through the Superintendent's office so that information can be disseminated and/or questions can be addressed in this manner, rather than among and between Board members.
- b. Board member may discuss a District issue with no more than two other Board members unless in a duly posted Board meeting.

### **4. Communication with the Media**

- a. The Board President serves as the official spokesperson for the Board team to the media/press on issues of media attention.
- b. Media calls should be directed to the Board President or Superintendent.
- c. Board members asked for individual comments or opinions by the media/press are to qualify those statements as being the opinion of the individual Board member and not representative of the Board as a whole or the District.

### **5. Complaints to Board Members**

- a. Employees, students, parents or other members of the public who bring concerns or complaints to an individual Board member for the purpose of seeking remedy or perspective shall receive guidance that reflects:
  - i. A commitment by the Board individually and collectively be approachable and open to members of the public;
  - ii. An understanding by each Board member that information provided to a Board member, in some specific situations, could cause the Board member receiving the information to be disqualified from participating in future hearing(s) or action by the Board specific to the issue;
  - iii. Adherence to the Board's policies (DGBA, FNG and GF) regarding complaints and grievances.
- b. Board members shall notify the Superintendent's office of any complaint.
- c. As necessary, the Superintendent or designee shall guide the complainant to the appropriate staff member.
- d. When the concern or complaint directly pertains to the Board's own actions or policy, for which there is no administrative remedy, the Trustee may request that the issue be placed on the agenda
- e. Anonymous calls or letters will not receive the Board's attention, discussion or response and will not be referred to the administration for action.

### **6. Continuing Education**

- a. Board members are required to complete training as specified in the Texas Education Code §11.159 according to assessed needs
- b. New Board members shall participate in a local orientation session within 60 days before or after their election or appointment. Three (3) additional hours of orientation to the Texas Education Code are to be completed within the first year.
- c. New Board members shall also complete ten (10) hours of continuing education during the first year of service.
- d. Sitting Board members shall receive three (3) hours of orientation to the Texas Education Code and relevant legal obligations and at least five (5) hours of continuing education each year following the first year.
- e. The President of the Board of Trustees shall receive continuing education annually related to leadership duties of a Board President.
- f. Prior to the seating of newly elected Board members, there will be an orientation concerning meeting processes and parliamentary procedures.

- g. To the extent possible, the entire Board shall participate in continuing education programs together.
- h. Annually, as prescribed by law, the name of each Board member who has completed the required continuing education, who has exceeded the required hours, and/or who is deficient in the required hours shall be announced and read into the minutes.

## **7. Meetings with the Superintendent and other District Employees**

- a. All Board members shall respect the Superintendent's daily schedule, keeping phone calls and meeting requests to a minimum. "Drop-in" visits will not necessarily be accommodated.
- b. All meetings that a Board member wishes to have with the Superintendent shall be scheduled through the Administrative Assistant with a list of items that the Board member desires to discuss included, and with an estimate of the time needed for each item. The meeting shall be scheduled to allow for an adequate discussion of those items, but with due regard being given to the Superintendent's other time commitments.
- b. Board members shall observe the allocated time limits for scheduled meetings with the Superintendent.
- c. These same general rules apply when a Board member wishes to meet with any other district employee, with the meeting being prearranged to respect the employee's daily schedule. Meetings shall be scheduled through the Superintendent's Administrative Assistant.
- d. Other six Board members are notified when a meeting is requested by a Board member.

## **8. Reimbursable expenses**

- a. Board members shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred for:
  - i. Carrying out the business of the Board at Board request
  - ii. Attending meetings as official representatives of the Board
- b. Reimbursement for travel and expenses related to conventions/conferences will be limited to six nights per year.
- c. Reimbursement for additional conventions/conferences and associated allowable expense will require prior Board approval.
- d. Priority shall be given to attend conferences as a group.
- e. Arrangements necessary to register for a conference/convention and related accommodations (hotel, travel, etc.) shall be arranged through the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent.
- f. Late registration will be allowed for any Board member whose professional schedule may be unpredictable.
- g. Reasonable expenses are defined to mean:
  - i. Hotel – not to exceed the standard negotiated rate available through the conference sponsor. If no standard negotiated rate has been established, the reimbursable rate shall not exceed the rate allowed for state employees in accordance with the General Appropriation Act (77<sup>th</sup> Legislature).
  - ii. Parking – Self parking charges of the hotel in which the Board member is a guest, unless no self-parking is available.
  - iii. Meals – A per diem reimbursable rate or \$33 for meals shall be allowed, including tax, tips and/or cost of room service.
  - iv. Telephone calls – reimbursed at the exact cost only for calls made for school business.
  - v. Tips – not more than \$1.00 per bag for airport and hotel bellmen shall be reimbursed
  - v. Mileage – not to exceed the allowable IRS rates for use of a personal car or the

- actual cost of the lowest fare for commercial transportation plus parking.
- h. No reimbursement will be made for
    - i. Non-district fax or phone calls
    - ii. Entertainment or in-room movies
    - iii. Alcohol
    - iii. Souvenirs
    - iv. Spousal/family expenses
  - i. Cancellation of conference registration, hotel and travel accommodations, etc. must be completed within the allowable "cancellation" timeline established by the vendor or sponsoring entity. Every attempt must be made by the Board member to notify the Superintendent's Administrative Assistant of such cancellation plans as soon as plans need to be changed
    - i. For cancellations not completed within the designated timeline, the loss of reimbursement eligibility and/or monetary commitment of the district shall be borne by the individual Board member responsible for the cancellation, unless the cancellation is the result of personal illness or a family emergency.
  - j. A statement shall be submitted for all authorized expenses incurred, including receipts to the extent feasible, documenting actual expenses and in accordance with procedures applicable to employee expense reimbursement.

## **9. Visits to Campuses**

- a. Board members are encouraged to attend any and all school events as their time permits, and to show support of school activities.
- b. Board members must notify the campus principal prior to visiting a campus in an official capacity.
- c. Board members shall not visit a campus in an attempt to evaluate personnel on that campus.
- d. It is often difficult for staff members to view Board members as parents rather than as Board members. When visiting a campus or classroom as parents, Board members shall
  - i. Make it clear that they are acting as parents.
  - ii. Follow the same rules and guidelines for all parents regarding campus visits.
  - iii. Never request nor accept extraordinary consideration for their friends or family