

Building Lives Utilizing Education



Natalia ISD Board Operating Procedures

Board approved: 12/16/2024

Vision

The BLUE Way: Challenging and empowering students for global success.

Mission

Natalia Independent School District, in partnership with the community, is committed to providing a safe and challenging environment that promotes productive and successful life-long learners.

Theory of Action

If Natalia ISD creates a “**Team**” culture of support, in which every child can succeed regardless of existing challenges and grants varying levels of autonomy to its campuses, then the campuses will be able to accomplish the Board's student outcome goals.

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Board Member Ethics - BBF (LOCAL)

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 or 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 not disclose information that is confidential 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 avoid personal involvement in activities the Board has delegated to the Superintendent.
- 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

Board Self-Evaluation

- The Board will self-evaluate annually.
- Once annually (each November), the Board affirms that it has reviewed all policies governing Board operating procedures.

Board Authorized Public Meeting

- The Board shall hold no more than 3 Board-authorized meetings per month with the expectation that board meetings would not exceed 2 hours.
- The Board shall schedule no more than 3-5 topics during any one Board-authorized public meeting.

Developing the Board Agenda

- Placing items on Agenda
 - 2 or more Board members must request to the Board President or the Superintendent in advance any item they wish to have considered for placement on the agenda.
 - Tentative agendas are created by the administration and presented to the Board seven calendar days prior to the regular Board meeting.
 - If needed, Board members are encouraged to request clarity from the Superintendent prior to the public posting of the agenda.
 - In accordance with the Texas Open Meeting Act, no member can place an item on the Agenda less than 72 hours in advance of the release of the tentative agenda, except in an emergency
- Items that cannot be heard in open session
 - All personnel issues must be conducted in Executive Session unless specifically required by Texas Open Meetings Act.
 - Anything that violates an individual's right to privacy cannot be placed on the Agenda.
- Consent Agenda
 - Consent agenda items are routine or recurring items and are generally acted upon by one vote.
 - Board members are furnished with all background material related to consent agenda items 7 calendar days in advance of any regular meeting.

Member Conduct during a Board Meeting

- Patrons addressing the Board through Public Comment, BED (LOCAL)
 - Audience participation is limited to the portion of the meeting designated as Public Comment.
 - At regular Board meetings, the Board shall permit public comment, regardless of whether the topic is an item on the agenda posted with notice of the meeting.
 - An individual's comments to the Board shall not exceed three minutes per meeting.
 - At all other Board meetings, public comment shall be limited to items on the agenda posted with notice of the meeting.
 - Persons who wish to participate in Public Comment shall sign in with the presiding officer or designee before the meeting begins and shall indicate the topic about which they wish to speak on the sign-in sheet.
 - All patrons will have a 3-minute time limit to address the board.
 - A timer will be set by the board president's designee to monitor the time for each patron.
 - The Board will not entertain comments on individual students in public session.
 - The Board will not entertain comments on individual personnel in public session.

- Items that cannot be heard in open session
 - Board members can hear comments.
 - Board members cannot enter into discussions with Patrons.
 - Board President may direct the Superintendent to investigate item(s) and report back to the Board at a designated meeting.
- Hearing and Open Forums
 - The Board will conduct all hearings or presentations in accordance with the applicable Board Policies. (DGBA, FNG, GF)
 - During hearings, Board members will seek legal counsel as deemed necessary.
 - The board shall observe the parliamentary guidelines in Robert’s Rules of Order.
 - A copy of Robert’s Rules of order will be provided to each Board member.
 - For grievances against a board member, the District’s attorney represents the Board as a group and not an individual board member.
- Discussion of Motions
 - All discussion shall be directed solely to the business currently under deliberation.
 - 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.
 - The Board President has the right to recognize a Board member prior to giving their comments.

Role of the Board in Executive Session

- The Board shall not conduct the Executive Session unless
 - A quorum of the Board first convenes in a properly called and posted open meeting,
 - The presiding officer has publicly announced that the Executive Session will be held and has identified the section or sections of the Texas Open Meetings Act or other applicable law under which the Executive Session is held.
- The Board can only discuss those items listed on the Executive Session Section of the posted Agenda.
- Board must vote in public session.
- Information during Executive Session must remain confidential.

Voting

- The Board President has the right to discuss, make motions and resolutions and vote on all matters coming before the Board. BDAA (Local)
- In case of a tie vote, the item is tabled and returned on the next agenda as an action item.

Individual Board Member Request for Information or Report

- Board members shall request information and/or reports through the Superintendent.
- Two board members are required to request a new report.
- Requests for information or a report must be addressed within 10 days.
- Requests that exceed two hours to compile require board approval to proceed.
- The Superintendent will gather information and/or report and disseminate it in a timely manner to the entire Board.

- The cost of any board member request shall be reported to the board. The cost will be determined by calculating cost of materials and labor cost based on hours and the employees' hourly rate.

Citizen/Employee Request/Complaint to Individual Board Member

BBE (LEGAL)(LOCAL), DGBA (LEGAL)(LOCAL)

- If employees, parents, students, or other patrons bring concerns or complaints to an individual Board member, he/she shall refer them to follow the chain of command.
- When the complaint directly pertains to the Board's own actions or policy, for which there is no administrative remedy, a Board member may request that the complaint be placed on the Agenda.
- Employees shall not be prohibited from communicating with a Board member regarding Natalia District operations.
- Communication between an Employee and a Board member would be inappropriate pending a hearing or appeal related to the employee.
- All Board members shall remain impartial in the event the situation comes before the Board.
- All Board members shall notify the Superintendent as quickly as possible in regard to any request or complaint.
- All Board members will be notified by the Superintendent of the disposition of the complaint/requests.

Official Board Member Visit to School or Campus

- Board members are encouraged to attend as many school events as their time permits.
- Official board member visits to campuses are scheduled through the superintendent.
- Board members must sign in at any district/campus office.
- Sign-in steps
 - Present a valid driver's license, school-issued identification, or government-issued photographic identification.
 - State the purpose of the visit.
 - Wear a visitor badge while on campus.
 - Check out with the district/campus office when leaving the site.
- Board members are not to go into teachers' classrooms or individual buildings for the purposes of evaluation or investigation of employees.
- Board members visiting with teachers of their own children will make it clear to the school and staff that they are visiting as a parent, not as a Board member.

Communications

BBE (LEGAL)(LOCAL), GKC (LEGAL)(LOCAL)

- Superintendent will communicate with the Board President on an as-needed basis to review the agendas, etc.
- Superintendent will communicate vital information in a timely fashion to all Board members.
- If a Board member has a concern regarding any aspect of the Superintendent's duties or performance, he/she should discuss it with the Superintendent directly.

- Board members will not reprimand or provide direction to the staff.
- Board members will not attempt to exert pressure or influence on the staff in order to coerce staff into making particular recommendations or decisions.
- Board members will not contact or conduct interviews with prospective employees.
- Board members will not give unsolicited recommendations for candidates for jobs throughout the district.
- Directives to the Superintendent shall be in the confines of a duly called Board Meeting.
- Individual Board members cannot speak in an official capacity outside the Boardroom.
- Board members will not direct personnel to consider vendors other than those recommended through the competitive bid process or proposal process.
- Board members will not communicate with each other through email/text or in any other medium in a manner that is not in compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.
- Board will communicate with the community through public hearings and regular Board meetings.

Communication with Legal Counsel

- Individual Board members shall channel legal inquiries through the Superintendent or Board President.
- A report of legal advice received shall be presented to the Board when deemed appropriate by the Superintendent or upon Board request.

Evaluation of the Superintendent

- Board members receive training annually on locally developed processes for Superintendent performance evaluation.
- The Board considers Superintendent performance as indistinguishable from school system Performance. The Superintendent's annual evaluation is based on the Board-adopted strategic objectives, as developed in the Strategic Plan/ScoreCard, using data reported as scheduled via the Board's monitoring calendar.
- Board approves Superintendent Appraisal Instrument.
- Board President obtains input from all other members on Board-approved indicators.
- Superintendent Evaluation is conducted every January.

Criteria and Process for Selecting Board Officers

- The Board shall elect a President, Vice-President, and Secretary.
- Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the members present and voting.
- No Board member can hold office without one year of minimum board experience.
- Following the November Trustee election, officer elections will be held at the first regular meeting.
- Board officers shall serve a term of one year or until a successor is elected.
- Board officers may succeed themselves in office.

Role and Authority of Board Member and/or Board Officers

BBE (LEGAL)(LOCAL), BDAA (LEGAL)(LOCAL)

- No Board member or officer has authority outside the properly called and posted Board meeting.
- No Board member can direct employees in regard to the performance of their duties.
- The Board supervises and evaluates the Superintendent, its one employee.
- In addition to the duties required by law,
 - The President shall
 - Preside at all Board meetings unless unable to attend,
 - Have the right to discuss, make motions and resolutions, and vote on all matters coming before the Board.
 - The Vice President shall
 - Act in the capacity and perform the duties of the President in his/her absence or incapacity of President
 - Automatically become the President of the Board if a vacancy occurs in that office.
 - The Secretary shall
 - In the absence of the President and Vice-President, call the meeting to order and act as presiding officer,
 - Sign and countersign documents as directed by Board action.

Media Inquiries to the Board and the Superintendent

- The Board President shall be the official spokesperson for the Board-related requests.
- All Board members who receive calls from the media should direct them to the Board's spokesperson and notify the Board President and Superintendent of the call.
- Board members retain the right to speak to the media as individuals.
 - Before speaking to the media, Board members should make a distinction between speaking as an individual and a member of the Board.
 - When speaking as an individual, it is important for the media representative(s) to be reminded of the position or action of the Trustees as a Body Corporate.
- The Superintendent or designee shall be the official spokesperson for District-related requests.

Phone Calls and Letters

- Anonymous
 - Anonymous calls or letters will not receive Board attention, discussion, or response and will not result in directives to the administration.
- Signed letters or calls with names
 - Signed letters or calls with names will be forwarded to the Superintendent.
 - The Superintendent will respond and forward the response to the full Board.

Required Board Member Training

First 90 days	
Open Meetings Act (OMA) 1–2 hours	Available through TASB's Online Learning Center or other registered providers.
Public Information Act (PIA) 1–2 hours	PIA training may be delegated by district policy.
First 120 days	
Local District Orientation 3 hours	Provided by your school district.
Orientation to the Texas Education Code 3 hours	Provided through your local Education Service Center (ESC).
Evaluating and Improving Student Outcomes 3 hours	Available through TASB or other registered providers.
Child Abuse Prevention 1 hour	Available through TASB or other registered providers.
Within first-year	
Cybersecurity 1 hour	See the Texas Department of Information Resources for providers.
Team Building 3 hours	Available through TASB or other registered providers.
Additional Required Elective Training 10 hours	Available through TASB: Additional education based on Framework for School Board Development is available through TASB's conferences, events, and continuing education programs. Also available through other providers.

- *Safety Training HB 690
- * NEW Leg Session

Reimbursable Expenses (BBG)

- Board members shall be reimbursed at the State of Texas rate for allowable expenses.
- Board members shall use Natalia Independent School District vehicles before driving their own vehicle to approved Board events such as attending meetings and conventions.

- Board members shall
 - contact the Superintendent for securing the use of a District vehicle.
 - ask the Superintendent to ensure the District vehicle is not needed for student/staff use.
 - request on the premise that student needs come first.
- Reimbursable expenses at the State of Texas rate include mileage, commercial transportation, parking, lodging, meals, and other incidental expenses as stated in district procedures.

Board Member BOP Violations

- If a Board member has a serious, specific, concern about the performance of another member which appears to be in violation of Board Operating Procedures or Policies, the recommended process for addressing such concerns shall be the following:
 - The concerned member shall have a private conversation with the member in question in order to work out the differences or resolve the issue(s).
 - If the concern(s) remain, the concerned member will meet privately with the Board President and outline the specific issue(s). The Board President and concerned member will meet with the member to question and attempt to resolve the issue(s). If the concern is with the performance of the Board President, the Vice President will be notified and meet with the concerned member.
 - If the issue is still not resolved, the concerned member will hold a conference with the Board President (or the Vice President with concerns regarding the President)
 - The President and Vice President (or the Board Officer's designee) to develop a plan of action to resolve the concerns.
 - If the steps listed above do not remedy a board member's performance or behavior, the board may place an item on the agenda at a lawfully noticed and called board meeting to consider a public censure of the board member.

Board Members' Concerns about the Performance of Employees other than Superintendent

- When a Board member becomes concerned about the performance of district employees and/or student welfare, he/she must bring his/her concerns directly to the Superintendent. Such concerns must be limited to the following:
 - Actions which are illegal;
 - Egregious violations of Board policy;
 - Actions that are harmful to the district's or the Board's reputation.
- Board members must remain cognizant that district personnel and student welfare are the responsibility of the Superintendent, not the Board.
- The Superintendent is obligated to listen to such concerns, review the matter, and notify the Board member of the resolution of the matter to the extent allowable by policy and law.

Social Media

- Trustees should follow the guidelines suggested in the TASB document, "[Social Media Guidelines for School Board Members](#)".

Advocacy and Engagement

Board members are encouraged to be advocates, not only for Natalia ISD but for all of public education. Through training and conferences, Board members will become familiar with those issues affecting Natalia ISD and other districts across the state.

Working with legislators and other elected officials locally and on the state and national level is part of what we do as Board members. Building these partnerships serves to strengthen all of public education.