

MIDLAND INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Educating the Future!



Midland Independent School District

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

October 2004

1. NEW BOARD MEMBER ORIENTATION

- A. The Superintendent or his/her designee will conduct a pre-election information meeting with all school board candidates to inform them of training regulations, TASB Candidate Forum workshop dates, TASB materials for candidates, form filings, Board Code of Conduct, Board major activities calendar, first few meetings and retreat dates, and a likely agenda for the first Board meeting after the election.
- B. The Superintendent or his/her designee will conduct the District Orientation for the new Board members and will supply training materials from the Texas Association of School Boards. A copy of the Board agenda and supporting materials, excluding confidential information, will be given to Board candidates.
- C. The Board President will coordinate a meeting for the new Board members.
- D. Superintendent will coordinate a meeting for the new Board members with members of the Superintendent's executive/administrative staff.
- E. The new Board members will attend the required local and service center orientation scheduled following the election. In addition, new Board members must attend the TASB Summer Leadership Institute.
- F. The Board President will assign a Board mentor for all new Board members.

2. DEVELOPING BOARD MEETING AGENDA

- A. Who can place items on agenda
 - 1. The Superintendent and Board President meet on Wednesdays before regular Board meetings to create the

agenda. The agenda is finalized on Thursday and delivered to the Board on Friday prior to the Tuesday meeting.

2. Board members will submit to the Superintendent or Board President, no less than five working days before the Board meeting, any item they wish to have considered for placement on the regular business, workshop or retreat agendas.
3. Items will be placed on a meeting agenda at the request of any Trustee. If an item requested by a Trustee has already been considered and acted on by the Board at a previous meeting, then it requires a second Trustee to secure its inclusion on a future agenda.
4. In accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, no member can place an item on the agenda less than 72 hours in advance of the posted meeting, except in an emergency, as per the Act.

B. Placement of certain items on agenda

1. Personnel matters shall be posted for discussion in closed session unless discussion in open session is specifically required by law.
2. Agenda items shall be worded in accordance with law, with due regard for any privacy rights that may be involved.

C. Use of Consent Agenda

A Consent Agenda may be used to approve routine items. The Board should call the Administration with questions regarding consent agenda items prior to the meeting. If more discussion is warranted, that item can be pulled and considered as an action item.

3. MEMBER CONDUCT DURING BOARD MEETINGS (Board Policy BED Local)

Any time four or more Board members are gathered, it is considered a meeting (with narrow exceptions for social functions and “workshops/conventions”).

A. Citizens Addressing the Board

Audience participation at a Board meeting is limited to 2 occasions: (1) the portion of the first meeting of each month designated for that purpose, and (2) at other times during a Board meeting when a citizen requests to be heard on a specific agenda item and that citizen has been recognized by the presiding officer. The presiding officer will establish an appropriate length of time at each meeting for citizen presentations/participation. Delegations of more than five persons shall appoint one person to present their views before the Board.

At the first regular meeting of each month, the Board shall allot 15 minutes to hear persons who desire to make comments to the Board (public forum). Persons who wish to participate in the public forum shall sign up before the meeting begins and shall indicate the topic about which they wish to speak.

Persons who wish to address a specific agenda item shall sign up before the meeting begins and shall indicate which agenda item they wish to address.

The presiding officer of a Board meeting always retains the ability to manage the conduct of the meeting, including citizen presentations during the public forum or the regular business portion of the meeting.

B. Board’s Response (public forum)

Board members will be attentive and respectful of citizens during the public forum. Specific factual information or recitation of existing policy may be furnished in response to inquiries, but the

Board shall not deliberate or decide regarding any subject that is not included on the agenda posted with notice of the meeting.

C. Complaints and Concerns

Complaints and concerns for which other resolution channels are provided shall be directed through those channels. The presiding officer or designee shall determine whether a person who wishes to address the Board has attempted to solve a matter administratively. If not, the person shall be directed to the appropriate policy to seek resolution before bringing the matter to the Board at a subsequent meeting. The Board shall not entertain complaints regarding individual personnel or students in open session unless requested to do so by such personnel or the parent or guardian of the student.

D. Disruption

The Board shall not tolerate disruption of the meeting by members of the audience. If, after at least one warning from the presiding officer, any person continues to disrupt the meeting by his or her words or actions, the presiding officer shall request assistance from law enforcement officials to have the person removed from the meeting.

E. Discussion of Motions

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 does not apply to the business before the Board. Board members should always use the microphone when speaking.

F. The Board President will recognize a Board member prior to giving their comments.

4. VOTING

- A. The Board President will vote on all action items.
- B. Board members will vote on every item on the agenda unless there is a conflict of interest.
- C. In case of a split vote, each Board member will support the Board's decision on the matter.

5. INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER REQUEST FOR INFORMATION OR REPORT

- A. Board members will request information through the Superintendent or his designee.
- B. If possible, requests for non-existent reports should be given to the President at least five days before the agenda is developed in order to be listed on the agenda.
- C. A request for a detailed report from staff must be discussed and voted on during a regular Board meeting. The President may request a special detailed report in case of an emergency.
- D. Written information/reports will be disseminated through the Superintendent's Office and shared with all Board members.

6. CITIZEN REQUEST/COMPLAINT TO INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER

- A. The Board member should hear the citizen problem for full understanding of persons involved, date, and place.
- B. The Board member will remind the citizen of the appropriate process and that the Board member must remain impartial in case the situation goes before the Board.

- C. The Board member will refer the citizen to the appropriate person/chain of command. The citizen **MUST GO THROUGH THE CHAIN OF COMMAND.**
- D. Significant requests/complaints received by Board members will be reported to the Superintendent.
- E. Board members will not conduct investigations on their own of complaints by citizens. If a Board member is dissatisfied with the response of the Administration to a complaint, he/she should raise the matter with the Superintendent and, if still dissatisfied, he/she may then raise the matter with the Board, as a whole. Any decision to conduct an investigation and the manner in which the investigation is conducted shall rest with the Superintendent or the Board.

7. EMPLOYEE REQUEST/COMPLAINT TO INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER

- A. The Board member will remain impartial.
- B. The Board member will refer the employee to the appropriate person/chain of command. The employee **MUST GO THROUGH THE CHAIN OF COMMAND** as described in the Employee Handbook.
- C. Written requests/complaints will be reported to the Superintendent for appropriate follow-up.
- D. Board members will not conduct investigations of complaints by employees.

8. BOARD MEMBER VISIT TO SCHOOL CAMPUS

- A. All Board members are encouraged to visit all schools and school events. Board members must check in with the principal's office upon arrival to the building.

- B. A Board member will not meet with personnel during their hours of work without first notifying the Superintendent and the building Principal (or supervisor of the facility) in advance. This does not apply to parent/teacher conferences dealing with a child of the Board member.
- C. Board members will not undertake to observe the performance of employees, including classroom teachers, for the purposes of “evaluating” their performance.
- D. When invited to a school function, Board members are encouraged to RSVP to the appropriate person.

9. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. The Board will keep the Superintendent informed through telephone, fax, and email. If a Board member has a concern, he/she should go to the Superintendent and discuss that problem.
- B. Board members will direct concerns about staff to the Superintendent, rather than individual staff members.
- C. Board members will not attempt to exert pressure or influence on the staff in order to coerce them into making particular recommendations or decisions.
- D. The Board will communicate with the community through public hearings, presentations to PTAs and civic clubs, regular Board meetings, and regular publications.
- E. Individual Board members shall not directly communicate with vendors or bidders to the District regarding any school business without the express prior authorization of the Board.
- F. Board members will not conduct individual interviews with prospective employees.
- G. Individual statements and responses by Board members are only individual statements and are not representative of the

entire Board and the member will emphasize such to the media and others.

- H. Board members will share with each other the legal opinions received from training sessions and conferences.

10. BOARD MEMBERS' STANDARD OF BEHAVIOR

- A. The President will present a copy of the "Code of Conduct" to each Board member annually.
- B. Board members will be knowledgeable of the Board of Trustees' Code of Conduct and the code's implications of their day-to-day actions.
- C. Board members will sign a "Statement of Disclosure" according to Board Policy whenever necessary.
- D. Board members will endeavor to inform themselves about the requirements of the Texas Open Meetings Act and will seek to comply with this law at all times. Questions regarding compliance, including questions regarding the postings of matters on Board agendas, will be addressed to the Superintendent or Board President as early as possible.
- E. Under normal circumstances, violations of the guidelines contained herein regarding Board member behavior, or the "Code of Conduct," will be addressed informally by fellow members, or the Board as a whole. For repeated violations, or for violations which the Board determines to be sufficiently egregious to warrant more severe action, the Board may initiate a complaint with the Texas Education Agency or appropriate law enforcement, and in extreme situations may pursue legal action against the individual Board member in order to protect the District and the Board from unnecessary exposure to legal liability.
- F. Board members will report violations of Board Operating Procedures or Board Code of Conduct to the Board President.

11. EVALUATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

By law, each year the Superintendent must be evaluated by the Board of Trustees. The instrument is updated annually to reflect new priorities of the district, long-term goals and objectives of the Board, and state student performance information.

12. CRITERIA AND PROCESS FOR SELECTING BOARD OFFICERS

The Board shall elect a President, Vice-President and Secretary who shall be members of the Board. Officers shall be elected by majority vote of the members present and voting. Board officers shall serve for a term of one year or until a successor is elected. Officers may succeed themselves in office, but shall be limited to two consecutive terms in a single office.

13. ROLE AND AUTHORITY OF BOARD OFFICERS

A. PRESIDENT

1. Shall preside at all Board meetings.
2. Has the right to discuss, make motions and resolutions, and vote on all matters coming before the Board.
3. Shall appoint committees.
4. Shall call special meetings.
5. Shall sign all legal documents required by law.
6. First time Board Presidents must attend Board President training within 90 days of election.
7. Shall make the Board aware of any violations to the Board Operating Procedures.

B. VICE PRESIDENT

1. Shall act in capacity of President in absence of the President.
2. May participate in agenda preparation with the President and Superintendent.
3. Automatically become President if a vacancy in that office occurs.

C. **SECRETARY**

1. Shall preside in absence of President and Vice President; shall call meeting and act as presiding officer.
2. Shall sign all legal documents required by law.
3. Shall ensure that an accurate record is kept of the proceedings of each Board meeting.
4. Ensure that notices of Board meetings are posted and sent as required by law.

14. ROLE OF BOARD IN CLOSED SESSION

- A. The Board can only discuss those items listed on the executive session agenda as limited by law.
- B. The Board must vote in open session.
- C. Information received during closed session **MUST REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL**, as required by law.

15. MEDIA INQUIRIES TO THE BOARD

- A. The Board President shall be the official spokesperson for the Board to the media on issues of media attention.
 1. Board members may direct media calls to the Board President and District spokesperson.
 2. Individual statements and responses by Board members are only individual statements and are not representative of the entire Board and the member will emphasize such to the media.

16. PHONE CALLS/LETTERS

The Midland ISD Board of Trustees encourages input; however, anonymous letters or calls may not receive Board attention, discussion or response, and will not result in directives to the Administration.

17. REVIEW OF BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Standard Board Operating Procedures will be reviewed and updated as needed.

18. BOARD MEMBER CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

New Board Members (see page 2):

1. Must receive a local district orientation within 60 days of being elected;
2. Must receive a Texas Education Code orientation (3 hours) from Region 18 Education Service Center;
3. Must participate in the annual Team Building Training Session (at least 3 hours) with the Superintendent;
4. Must receive a legislative update following each session of the Texas Legislature; and
5. Must receive at least 10 additional hours of continuing education.

Existing Board Members:

1. Must receive a legislative update following each session of the Texas Legislature;
2. Must receive a basic orientation to the Texas Education Code and relevant legal obligations;
3. Must participate in the annual Team Building Training (at least 3 hours) with the Superintendent; and
4. Must receive at least 5 additional hours of continuing education.

Board President (see page 10):

The Board President must receive continuing education related to leadership duties as some portion of the annual requirement.

19. BOARD TRAVEL GUIDELINES

- A. Board members may contact the Superintendent's Secretary to make arrangements to travel on Board business.
- B. Board members will be reimbursed for actual personal expenses, not for family members.
- C. Board members should retain expense receipts.
- D. Board members should be prudent in spending taxpayer's money.

20. CAMPAIGNING FOR REELECTION

- A. School Board incumbents running for reelection should not request or accept support from District employees during work time.
- B. School Board candidates will not accept or solicit help from District employees during work time, or to be performed during work time.

21. GOAL SETTING

- A. Goal-setting workshops will be conducted annually to develop long and short-term goals. The format and content will be developed prior to the workshop.
- B. Superintendent priorities will be based on goals each year.

22. BOARD COMMITTEES

- A. The Board has created the following standing committees: Facilities, Finance, Communications, Policy, Technology, and Transfer. The President may appoint special committees as necessary to fulfill specific assignments. All committees shall meet in compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.

- B. The chairpersons of each of the committees may schedule joint committee meetings whenever the chairs believe it is necessary. In addition, the committee chairs may create ad hoc subcommittees from time to time as needed.

- C. The committee chairpersons are responsible for ensuring that an accurate record of the committee meetings is kept and a copy distributed to all school board members via e-mail and/or board meeting agendas.

Adherence to the Standard Board Operating Procedures is a duty each Board member must take seriously in order for the Board to operate efficiently and effectively.