

Board Authority

The Board has final authority to determine and interpret the policies that govern the schools and, subject to the mandates and limits imposed by state and federal authorities, has complete and full control of the District. Board action shall be taken only in meetings that comply with the Open Meetings Act. [See BE(LEGAL)]

**Transacting
Business**

When a proposal is presented to the Board, the Board shall hold a discussion and reach a decision. Although there may be dissenting votes, which are a matter of public record, each Board decision shall be an action by the whole Board binding upon each member.

**Individual Authority
for Committing the
Board**

Board members as individuals shall not exercise authority over the District, its property, or its employees. Except for appropriate duties and functions of the Board President, an individual member may act on behalf of the Board only with the express authorization of the Board. Without such authorization, no individual member may commit the Board on any issue. [See BDAA]

**Individual Access to
Information**

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 public in accordance with the Public Information Chapter of the Government Code. [See GBA]

Limitations

If a Board member is not acting in his or her official capacity, the Board member has no greater right to District records than a member of the public.

An individual Board member shall not have access to confidential student records unless the member is acting in his or her official capacity and has a legitimate educational interest in the records in accordance with policy FL.

A Board member who is denied access to a record under this provision may ask the Board to determine whether the record should be provided or may file a request under the Public Information Act. [See GBAA]

Requests for
Records

An individual Board member shall seek access to records or request copies of records from the Superintendent or other designated custodian of records, who shall respond within the time frames required by law. When a custodian of records other than the Superintendent provides access to records or copies of records to an individual Board member, the provider shall inform the Superintendent of the records provided.

In accordance with law, the District shall track and report any requests under this provision, including the cost of responding to one

or more requests by any individual Board member for 200 or more pages of material in a 90-day period.

Requests for
Reports

No individual Board member shall direct or require District employees to prepare reports derived from an analysis of information in existing District records or to create a new record compiled from information in existing District records. Directives to the Superintendent or other custodian of records regarding the preparation of reports shall be by Board action.

Confidentiality

At the time a Board member is provided access to records or reports that are confidential or otherwise not subject to public disclosure [see GBA], the Superintendent or other District employee shall advise the Board member of the responsibility to comply with confidentiality requirements and the District's information security controls.

**Visits to District
Facilities**

A Board member shall adhere to any posted requirements for visitors to first report to the main office of a District facility, including a school campus. Visits during the school or business day shall not be permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or District operations. [See also GKC]

Purpose

To ensure that the District provides constituents the necessary services.

**Referring
Complaints**

If employees, parents, students, or other members of the public bring concerns or complaints to an individual Board member, he or she shall refer them to the Superintendent or another appropriate administrator, who shall proceed according to the applicable complaint policy. [See (LOCAL) policies at DGBA, FNG, and GF]

When the concern or complaint directly pertains to the Board's own actions or policy, for which there is no administrative remedy, the Board member may request that the issue be placed on the agenda.

Definitions

Constituents

In this policy "constituents" are parents, students, residents, community and business leaders, as well as other stakeholders of the community.

Governance

The term "governance" refers to the primary role of the Board. Governance involves ensuring the delivery of required educational and support services in the District by providing oversight and policy to the Superintendent regarding those services and desired results.

Management

"Management" is the responsibility of the Superintendent who operates within District policy established by the Board and all applicable state and federal laws and regulations. The Superintendent

directs staff, allocates resources, administers programs, and provides support services to improve school system effectiveness and successfully achieve District academic objectives. [See BJA and BP]

**System for
Constituent Service**

Recognizing the need to provide service to constituents, the need of Board members to be answerable to constituents, and the need to improve District systems, the District Board and the Superintendent shall together put into place a system for constituent service.

The goal of the District is to respond promptly and professionally to any questions or concerns of the public. The public is encouraged to use published telephone numbers to contact the appropriate District personnel regarding issues or questions. Another valuable resource is the [District's website](#)¹, which contains policy, procedures, and the status of various ongoing programs that will often answer questions.

The system for constituent service shall include the following major features:

1. A protocol for handling constituent requests for information or assistance;
2. The Superintendent's designee; that is, the primary contact person) in the Superintendent's office to whom Board members will refer constituent service requests;
3. A form for documenting requests;
4. An information management system for storing, tracking, categorizing, and analyzing requests;
5. A feedback process so that Board members know the resolution of requests;
6. Oversight of the system by the Superintendent's designee, who handles priority requests and keeps the Superintendent informed of matters that require his or her attention;
7. Periodic reports to the Superintendent and Board on constituent requests, their resolution, and patterns in requests; and
8. Periodic reports on systems improvements made, in whole or in part, as a result of constituent service requests.

**Protocol for
Constituent Service**

The District Constituent Service Flow Chart will track the recommended process flow for constituent service requests.

The protocol begins with a constituent request to a Board member for information or assistance. If the request is for information, the Board member should provide the information, if known, or explain

to the constituent where or from whom this information can be obtained.

If the information request indicates a systems issue; i.e., a request for information that is unavailable or inadequately communicated and indicates a communications issue, then the Board member should refer the issue to the Superintendent's designee for administrative action.

If the constituent requests assistance in addressing an issue or problem, the Board member must first evaluate the validity of the claim. If the request or complaint appears to be valid and is urgent, complicated, or has potential for major consequence, the Board member should refer the request to the Superintendent's designee for administrative action.

If the request or issue is not urgent, then the Board member should clearly explain to the constituent the District's chain of command, clarify the difference between governance and management, and define the Board's role in constituent service. The Board member should then direct the constituent back into the system to talk to the teacher or principal, transportation office, and the like. The Board member may need to provide the constituent with contact information. The constituent should be invited to call the Board member again if a timely response is not received from District staff.

If the constituent does not receive a satisfactory response despite good faith efforts to resolve the issue with District staff, the issue should be referred to the Superintendent's designee, who will then take appropriate administrative action.

For every issue referred to the Superintendent's designee, Board members shall receive a written report on the manner and timeframe of issue resolution. If the issue is significant or requires time to resolve, the Superintendent's designee shall notify the Board member regarding plans, steps taken and time frame for resolution. The Superintendent's designee shall be responsible for briefing the Superintendent as needed and for preparing periodic reports for the Superintendent and the Board. The reports shall show request patterns, such as number, type, percent of requests resolved to constituent's satisfaction, systems issues, and work-to-date to improve systems.

The Board and the Superintendent shall review the effectiveness of the constituent service system yearly. Board members shall consistently monitor their own and their fellow Board members' behavior to ensure compliance with the spirit and letter of this constituent service policy. Every attempt by a Board member to solve a constituent problem, obtain a favor, or influence a management decision should be brought to the attention of the Board President or, if necessary, to the full Board.

The Board shall communicate this policy to the community as appropriate. External and internal communication is located in Board Operational Procedures.

¹ District's website: www.abileneisd.org