



ITALY

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board Operating Procedures

Adopted April 2007

Reviewed October 2017

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Table of Contents

Mission Statement

The IISD Team of Eight

Assignments for TASA/TASB Convention

Approval of Budget

Board Member Authority

Board Meeting Agenda and Preparation

Board Meeting Decorum and Procedures

How to Request Information Not Related to Agenda Items

How to Participate as a Trustee in “Public Comment” Portion of Board Meeting:

Board Member Visits to IISD Sites

Board Officers

Board Review of the Instructional Program

Board Review of Non-Instructional Programs

Board Travel Guidelines

Citizen/Employee Concerns/Requests to Individual Board Members

How to Respond to Community or Employee Complaints:

Communication between Board Meetings

Confirming Personnel

Contact with Companies Providing Services to the District

Evaluation of the Board

Evaluation of the Superintendent

Interacting with the Media

Open Meetings Act

Trustee Elections

Code of Ethics for Board Members

Mission Statement

The mission of the **Italy Independent School District** is to prepare all students academically.

Italy High School will prepare students for the 21st Century by engaging all learners in meaningful learning experiences that meet the highest

educational and ethical standards in a caring, collaborative learning community including parents and families, businesses, civic organizations, and higher education.

The mission of **Stafford Elementary** is to maintain high expectations for academic success resulting in a solid educational foundation for each student. Our instructional program produces a mastery of basic skills, a positive attitude, a sense of personal self-competence, and a desire to continue learning.

The IISD Team of Eight

In effective school organizations the superintendent and the board function as a “team of eight”. A structured approach to developing a vision, mission, and goals for the district is enhanced by developing an agreed-upon system of standard operating procedures. The board is the policy-making body for the district and the superintendent and staff provides the leadership to cause policies to be implemented.

In an attempt to provide for the orderly conducting of business and to provide for open communication to staff and constituents of the district the board voluntarily follows this set of Board Operating Procedures. These procedures are intended, in spirit, to create more efficient meetings; more effective board members; and greater focus among the team of eight.

The procedures will be reviewed each year, as soon as possible following the election of new trustees. Following the review, a majority of board members must agree to any changes made.

Assignments for TASA/TASB Convention

In a duly called meeting of the Board, assignments shall be made for the annual TASA/TASB Convention or other association activities needing board representation (delegate, alternate, etc.).

Approval of Budget

The superintendent is the budget officer for the district and utilizes the director of finance and staff to develop a planning process for the development of the district budget(s). This process is approved by the superintendent.

The president of the board calls a public meeting, giving legal public notice, for public hearing and the adoption of the district budget. The board adopts a budget that incorporates sound business and fiscal practices and then establishes a tax rate providing resources to achieve the district’s mission and goals.

Board Member Authority

By the state statute, no board member has authority outside of the board meeting. Board members cannot direct employees in regard to performance of duties in their individual capacities.

Individual board members cannot speak in an official capacity outside of the board room unless the board votes a member to be an official representative of the board for a specific purpose.

Board Meeting Agenda and Preparation

It is the practice of the board to conduct regular meetings at 7:00 p.m. on the third Monday of each month at the IISD Administration Building at 300 College, Italy, TX. Meetings may start earlier when there is a Closed Session. In these cases, the meeting will be scheduled to reconvene in Open Session at 7:00 PM. The meetings may be moved to accommodate business of the district or the board. Special meetings will be called as needed and duly posted.

The superintendent posts a notice of the date, hour, place, and subject(s) of each meeting at least 72 hours (at least 2 hours before emergency meetings) prior to a meeting in a place convenient for public inspection at the IISD Administration Building

The agenda is created by the superintendent in consultation with the board president. The superintendent or board president will place an item on the agenda if requested by a board member. The deadline for submitting items is noon of the fifth calendar day before regular meetings and noon of the third calendar day before special meetings.

All personnel issues must be conducted in closed session unless specifically required by Texas Open Meetings Law.

Board Meeting Decorum and Procedures

The board operates according to the procedures contained in *Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.

The order of business for meetings is set out in the agenda. The order in which the items are taken may be changed by consent of board.

A complete Board Meeting Agenda Packet will be distributed to board members at least three days before scheduled board meetings.

Requests for additional information regarding agenda items are to be submitted to the superintendent in time to allow the information to be collected, analyzed, and assembled.

How to Request Information Not Related to Agenda Items

- A. Members should request information not related to a meeting agenda item directly from the superintendent.

- B. The superintendent will determine if the information requested is available from existing sources or records or if it requires that a special, one-time only report be developed.
- C. If the requested information can be provided from readily available data with no diversion of staff time, then it will be provided as soon as reasonable.
- D. In the event the request requires a special report that will divert staff time from established priorities, the superintendent will notify the requestor and the board president of this fact.
- E. If the board does agree that the information is important for future decision making, then the superintendent will direct that a report be developed and provided as requested by the board.
- F. All team members will receive a copy of any report generated by a board member's request in accordance with this procedure.

Board members are to have studied the agenda materials prior to the meeting and be prepared to discuss and take action on agenda items. Board members will ask agenda item related questions of the superintendent at least two hours before the scheduled board meeting. Board members are not precluded from asking relevant questions about agenda items during board meetings; however, the right to question should not serve as an excuse.

Up to thirty minutes are provided at the beginning of meetings for patrons to have an audience with the board (policy **BED** – local). Groups of more than five should appoint a representative to speak for the group. A patron must sign up on the form provided for that purpose at least fifteen minutes prior to the beginning of the meeting and are to limit remarks to no more than five minutes. The topic described on the form shall be of sufficient detail as to determine appropriateness of topic prior to addressing the Board. If the patron has not tried to solve the concern at the lowest level possible then he may be directed to do this before addressing the board.

Patrons are permitted to speak to posted agenda items and are to register fifteen minutes prior to the board meeting. Speakers are limited to three minutes.

Patron comments may be on items listed on the agenda or other areas of school district operations, but shall not include complaints/comments about employees or officials of the district.

How to Participate as a Trustee in “Public Comment” Portion of Board Meeting:

- A. During the “public comment” section of the meeting, board members will listen to comments but, as the designated spokesperson, only the president may respond if a response to the speaker is required.

Those responses are limited to:

1. Correcting misstatements of fact presented by the speaker.
 2. Referring the speaker to applicable board policy
 3. Placing the items on a future board agenda for discussion if not listed on the current board agenda.
- B. With the approval of the board, the president may direct the superintendent to investigate matters brought forward during public comment and report findings to the board at a later meeting.
- C. If a member of the public has been afforded an opportunity to speak and his or her comments reflect a complaint about an individual district staff or board member, the president will refer the speaker to the appropriate formal grievance policy.
- D. The board must bear in mind that residents who speak during public comments have First Amendment rights. The board should seek legal advice before disallowing a resident's contribution to public comment based solely on the content of the speaker's comments.

Board members not in agreement with a recommendation should state so prior to voting. Once the board has voted, each decision is an action by the board and is binding upon all members.

Board members should refrain from debating with one another during deliberation of an agenda item. Statements should be based on facts presented and not in response to comments made by other board members.

Voting will be by voice vote or show of hands, as directed by the president. Any member may abstain from voting, and a member's vote or failure to vote may be recorded.

Board action is carefully recorded by the secretary of record. When approved, minutes of meetings serve as the legal record of board action and are retained on file in the superintendent's office and are available for public inspection.

Board Member Visits to IISD Sites

Board members are encouraged to attend special activities at IISD sites and other events to represent the board in support of activities.

Board members are not to go into IISD sites for the purpose of evaluation or investigation unless organized as a full board activity.

Board members are to notify the superintendent/campus principal in advance of visits to IISD sites when they are not attending a scheduled activity.

Board Officers

President

- Presides at all meetings of the board.
- Appoints all committees, with approval of the board.
- Has the right to discuss, make motions and resolutions, and vote on all matters coming before the board.
- Signs all legal documents required by law.

Vice-President

- Acts in capacity of president in absence of president.

Secretary

- Makes certain that accurate records are kept of board meetings.
- Acts in absence of president and vice-president.

Board Review of the Instructional Program

The board, in collaboration with the superintendent, will establish a calendar for the purpose of scheduling instructional program reports to the board by the superintendent or his/her designee. The purpose of the reports will be to provide information on how well the instructional programs are supporting student achievement and district goals and what, if any, plan or programmatic adjustments have been or will be made to ensure effective and efficient instructional programs.

Board Review of Non-Instructional Programs

The board, in collaboration with the superintendent, will establish a calendar for the purpose of program reports to the board by the superintendent or his/her designee. The purpose of the reports will be to provide information on how well programs are supporting student achievement and district goals and what, if any, plan or programmatic adjustments have or will be made to ensure effective and efficient use of resources in support of the district mission and goals.

Board Travel Guidelines

The district will pay the registration fees, lodging at conference hotels, and other related expenses for board members to attend approved conferences and meetings.

Tolls and parking fees will also be reimbursed.

When air travel is used, the district will pay coach class airfare and associated ground transfers (cabs, shuttles, etc.)

Customary gratuities (not in excess of 15%) will be reimbursed.

The district will not consider the following expenses for reimbursement:

- Entertainment (movies, etc.)
- Alcoholic beverages.

- Telephone calls, local or long distance, unless for properly verified district business.
- Expense of family members or other persons who do not presently serve on the board.

Citizen/Employee Concerns/Requests to Individual Board Members

The board member may listen to a concern or request being mindful of retaining his/her objectivity as a member of the Board of Trustees.

How to Respond to Community or Employee Complaints:

- A. Listen briefly and respectfully. Remind the complainant of the board's responsibility to remain impartial and noncommittal because complaints may ultimately be brought to the board on appeal. Remind the complainant that only the board, not individual board members, can take action to correct a situation.
- B. Complaints should be directed or referred to the appropriate policy outlining grievance procedures and informed that the steps listed in policy are necessary to protect everyone's rights while following an orderly process.
- C. Complaints should be directed to the "Chain of Command" outlined in district policy.
- D. The district's "Chain of Command" provides the following information:
 1. The complainant should first discuss the problem with the person in authority closest to the problem.
 2. If not satisfied with the resolution of the problem, the complainant should go to the administrative supervisor of the person noted in "1."
 3. The administrative supervisor will help the complainant initiate any correspondence or forms required in policy and attempt to resolve the complaint.
 4. If still not satisfied, the complainant may appeal to the superintendent or designee for resolution.
 5. If the superintendent or designee is unable to resolve the issue or the complainant is still not satisfied, the formal complaint is brought to the board following local policy.
- E. Board members may inform the superintendent of complaints from staff and community but will not direct the superintendent to take specific actions.
- F. In cases of safety, liability, or if a concern has been taken through the "Chain of Command", the board member will notify the superintendent as soon as possible.
- G. The superintendent shall inform the board of the resolution of complaints referred by board members if the complaint requires the superintendent's intervention.

Communication between Board Meetings

The superintendent will meet with the board president on a routine basis.

The superintendent will communicate with all board members via special bulletins and weekly transmittals as appropriate. These notifications may be transmitted via mail, e-mail, telephone, fax, courier delivery, or personal visit.

Board members will keep the superintendent informed via telephone, e-mail, fax, mail, or personal visit.

Board members are free to communicate with each other on a one on one basis, but will not communicate with each other in a manner that either explicitly or implicitly could be deemed to be a violation of the Texas Open Meetings Act. When in doubt as to the legality of communications of board members between meetings, contact the superintendent.

Communications between board members and/or the superintendent are subject to Texas Public Records laws.

Confirming Personnel

It is not a function of the board to select or evaluate personnel other than the superintendent.

The board or individual board members should not suggest, interview, or otherwise be involved with the selection process.

The board's role is to approve/reject personnel recommendations of the superintendent.

Contact with Companies Providing Services to the District

Individual board members are not to communicate regarding district business with those who provide services to the district unless authorized by the board to do so.

Evaluation of the Board

The board will conduct an annual review of its performance based on the Texas Education Agency Framework for School Board Development. Required board training should be based on this review.

Evaluation of the Superintendent

The superintendent will submit to the Board the evaluation instrument for superintendents by December.

The board president will obtain input from all board members on indicators that are a part of the district's superintendent evaluation form in December and January.

All evaluation deliberations will be held in closed session.

A summative evaluation of the superintendent will be conducted in January and will be based on the total year's performance.

A formative evaluation will be completed each July.

Updates on progress toward mutually agreed upon priorities for the superintendent shall be presented quarterly. This may be done at a board meeting (closed session), planning sessions, or in written reports provided to all board members.

Interacting with the Media

- A. The IISD Superintendent or the Board President is the official spokesperson for the district. Any official statements from the district to the media are to be handled by these individuals.
- B. All board members who receive calls from the media should direct them to the Superintendent for District business and to the board president for board-specific issues.
- C. If speaking to a media representative, board members should clarify as the beginning of the interview that they are speaking as individual rather than as authorized representatives of the board of trustees.
- D. When speaking as an individual, the board member will remind media representative of the official position or action already taken on the issue by the board of trustees and refer media to the spokesperson for further information.
- E. It is inappropriate for a board member to state an opinion on an upcoming issue that is scheduled for discussion at a board meeting.

Open Meetings Act

Board members are expected to follow the rules and procedures contained in the Texas Open Meetings Act. Provisions are found in the District Policy Manual. Additional information can be obtained from the superintendent's office. Each board member should have the required one-hour training provided by the attorney general's office for the Open Meetings Act.

Trustee Elections

Trustee elections are held for two or more places each year. Filing for a place on the ballot occurs in February and March with the election held the second Saturday in May. Filing for election occurs in the office of the Superintendent at the district's administration offices. Information regarding the election can be obtained from this office. It is recommended that candidates for the Board of Trustees attend a TASB Board Candidate Workshop.

Code of Ethics for Board Members: Board members, in maintaining the dignity of the office, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty. Board members will follow the Code of Ethics for board members found in IISD Board Policy **BBF** (Local)

Code of Ethics for Board Members: As a member of the Board, I shall promote the best interests of the District as a whole and, to that end, shall adhere to the following ethical standards:

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 confidential information that is privileged 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.