

# **REAGAN COUNTY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

### **STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

#### **MISSION STATEMENT:**

*District schools are organized for the purpose of meeting the needs, interests and abilities of the students. The curriculum and policies are made with the welfare of the student always the determining factor.*

*The District is committed to the principle that the educational opportunity is an American birthright to be bestowed upon the individual without regard to economic status, race, creed or color. Education is a process of growth, a liberation of capacity.*

*The District shall instill an appreciation of democracy, the American heritage, and the American way of life. The participation of all school children in a democratic school society will train them to assume the privileges and duties of citizenship, which is considered vital to the intelligent preservation of the democratic order.*

#### **EDUCATION OBJECTIVES:**

- 1. Open communication will be encouraged between parents and faculty to promote a full partnership in the education of students.*
- 2. Maintain safe, disciplined, and equitable environment conducive to student learning.*
- 3. Students will be encouraged and challenged to meet their full educational potential. Each student's needs will be met by the provision of a well-balanced curriculum.*
- 4. Technology will continue to be implemented and used to increase the effectiveness of students learning, instructional management, staff development, and administration.*
- 5. Maintain qualified and effective personnel. Educators will keep abreast of the development of creative and innovative techniques in instruction and administration; the techniques will be used, as appropriate, to improve student learning.*

#### **EDUCATION GOALS:**

- 1. Challenge each individual student to attain his/her highest potential.*
- 2. Facilitate and promote the development of respectful, productive, and patriotic citizens of our community, state, and nation.*
- 3. Strive for academic excellence and meet the standards set forth by the state.*
- 4. Prepare our students to be able to adapt and achieve now and in the ever-changing future.*

**REAGAN COUNTY ISD  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

**I. TYPE OF BOARD MEETINGS**

- A. Regular- Held the second Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m., in the Board Room, at RCISD Administration building. (72 hour notice required).
- B. Special- Held at the President's discretion or on request of two or more Board members. (72 hour notice required).
- C. Emergency- Held when the President or two or more members determine an emergency or urgent public necessity exists. (2 hour notice required).

**II. DEVELOPING BOARD MEETING AGENDA**

- A. Who can place items on agenda?
  - 1. Agendas are created by the administration and presented to the Board.
  - 2. Any member of the Board of Trustees, with the concurrence of the President of the Board or one other member, may request that a subject be included on the agenda for one meeting. That request shall be forwarded to the Superintendent or President of the Board.
  - 3. The Superintendent shall include on the agenda, all trustees-requested items that have been timely submitted.
- B. When is the agenda finalized?
  - 1. No item can be placed on the agenda less than seven calendar days in advance of the meeting, unless delay in acting or discussing an added agenda item could seriously effect the operations of the District.
  - 2. No item is placed on the agenda less than 72 hours in advance of the meeting, unless an emergency or urgent public necessity exists.
  - 3. Any agenda item added to the agenda after the original posting shall be done so in accordance with state laws.
- C. When are Board members notified of a Board meeting?
  - 1. Board members shall be notified of a meeting:
    - At least 72 hours prior to a regular or special meeting.
    - At least 2 hours prior to an emergency meeting.
  - 2. Board members will be advised through the administrative reports as the agenda summary and complex agenda items are being developed.
- D. Items for Executive Session
  - 1. All personnel issues must be conducted in an executive session unless specifically required by the Texas Open Meeting Law, or
  - 2. Anything that violates right to privacy, i.e., Texas Open Meeting Act,

Texas Open Record Act cannot be placed on the open agenda.

**Items that may be discussed in executive session:**

- Private consultation with the board's attorney.
- Discussing purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property.
- Discussing negotiated contracts for prospective gifts.
- Discussing personnel or to hear complaints against personnel.
- To confer with employees of the school district to receive information or to ask question.
- Considering the deployment, specific occasions for, or implementation of, security personnel or devices.
- Considering discipline of a public school child, or complaint or charge against personnel.
- Considering the standards, guidelines, terms, or conditions the board will follow, or will instruct its representatives to follow, in consultation with representatives of employees groups.
- Excluding witness from a hearing.

E. Use of Consent Agenda:

For items listed under the consent agenda, the Board has been furnished with background material on each item and/or it has been discussed at a previous meeting. All items on the consent agenda shall be acted on by one vote without being discussed separately unless requested by a Board member, in which the item shall immediately be withdrawn for individual consideration.

Items that can be included on the consent agenda are:

- Routine items
- Annual renewals of Region XVIII Contracts
- TEA items
- Budget amendments
- Gifts, donation and bequests
- Financial information
- Minutes of regular and special Board meetings
- Minutes of joint meetings with City or other government units
- Updates of Board policy
- Other items deemed appropriate by Board President and Superintendent

F. Consolidated action items.

1. The Superintendent may consolidate items on the agenda summary for possible Group action, or any Board member may suggest group action on items to expedite the Board meeting.
2. A request by any trustee shall remove any item from the suggested consolidated action list.

**III. CONDUCTING BOARD MEETINGS-** Anytime four or more Board members are gathered to gathered to discuss school district business, it is considered a meeting.

A. Patrons addressing the Board.

1. Any person may address the Board at any regular monthly Board meeting at any time identified by the Board President.
2. Persons who wish to address the board shall sign up with the presiding officer or designee before the meeting begins and shall indicate the topic which they wish to speak.
3. Patron comments may be on items listed on the agenda or other areas of school district operation, but shall not include complaints/comments about employees or officials of the district.
4. Each patron will be limited to five minutes, with the total time allocation for audience participation limited to thirty minutes (unless the time is increased or decreased by majority vote of the Board.)
5. If three or more persons sign up to address the Board on a single item, a spokesperson will be selected to speak for the group.

- B. Board response to patrons addressing the Board.
  - 1. Board members will listen attentively to comments.
  - 2. Board President may ask Superintendent to clarify an item.
  - 3. Board members will not respond or enter into discussion with the audience during the meeting as:
    - a. Items on the agenda will be discussed as appropriate and scheduled on the agenda.
    - b. Items not on the agenda do not permit Board members to respond.
- C. Non-allowable comments (Board/audience)
  - 1. The Board will not entertain comments on individual personnel or officials in public session (employees or Board members).
  - 2. The Board will not entertain comments on individual students in public session.
- D. Hearings
  - 1. During public hearings the Board is assembled only to gather input.
  - 2. The Board will not answer questions or enter into dialogue except with their attorney in the case of employee hearing.
  - 3. At the conclusion of the hearing or at a subsequent meeting the Board will determine the results of the hearing.
  - 4. Rules for hearing will be strictly adhered to:
    - a. Board will limit response to 5 minutes per testifier (or as assigned/modified by Board President, as allowed by Board Policy)
    - b. Testimony is to be presented orally or in writing, as detailed in Board policy.
    - c. Board will not allow duplicate testimony.
    - d. Board will not allow derogatory comments.
    - e. Board members will not ask questions since they are acting as a tribunal.
  - 5. Hearings held in executive sessions follows essentially the same procedures, but public audience is prohibited.
- E. The Board shall be guided by parliamentary procedure as detailed in Robert's Rules of Order or as spelled out in Board policy.
  - 1. All discussion shall relate to the business currently under deliberation.
  - 2. The Board President shall halt inappropriate discussion.
  - 3. The Board President shall:
    - a. Recognize members prior to them giving their comments.
    - b. Be responsible for asking clarifying questions during hearings.
- F. Town Meetings/Open Forums
  - 1. Procedures for town meetings/open forums shall be determined on a case-by-case basis.
  - 2. The Board President, Superintendent or designee shall lead discussions.
- G. Board Reports
  - 1. The administrative staff will give monthly reports.
  - 2. The administrative reports are for information only.
  - 3. The administrative reports must be outlined in detail on the approved Board Agenda.
  - 4. No action, only discussion can take place only on items outlined in administrative reports.
- H. Discussion of motions
  - 1. 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.
  - 2. All discussion must be detailed on the approved Board Agenda.
  - 3. The Board President may make motions, second motions and enter into debate.
  - 4. The Board President will vote on all action items.
  - 5. Except in a conflict of interest as defined by law, Board members shall vote.

#### **IV. COMPLAINTS**

1. Complaints should be resolved at the lowest administrative level as possible.
2. Three policies provide a specific, clear process to handle complaints: Employee complaints/grievances-DGBA; Student and parent complaints-FNG; Public Complaints-GF.
3. All three policies rely on the “Employee Complained Against-Principal-Superintendent-Board” chain of command and resolution. A formal procedure is used in which written complaints are filed first with the principal.
4. A presentation before the Board is the final step in the complaint process.
5. Sometimes complaints inadvertently are brought first before the Board during the Open Forum portion of a regular Board meeting. The Board is under no obligation to hear such complaints before administrative remedies have been pursued. The Board President should direct the person to the appropriate complaint process.
6. Complaints are heard in Board meetings as scheduled agenda items, which allows the Board to take action on the complaint during the same meeting.
7. The lack response by the Board upholds the administrative decision at Level Two. Announcing a decision in the complainant’s presence constitutes communication of the decision.
8. Board member’s that have complaints involving their own children are expected to following the same procedures as other parents are required to follow.

#### **V. INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER REQUEST FOR INFORMATION OR REPORT**

- A. Board members shall request information and/or reports through the Board President or Superintendent. If the Board President or Superintendent questions the request, the request goes to the full Board for a majority vote.
- B. Members may also request information by Board action or by the request of an individual member made in a Board meeting after discussion by the Board as a whole
- C. The Superintendent, as request or as directed by the Board President, will gather the Information and/or report and disseminate it in a timely manner to the entire Board.

#### **VI. CITIZEN AND EMPLOYEE REQUEST/COMPLAINT TO INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER**

- A. The Board member should hear the citizen/employee problem for full understanding of person involved, date and place.
  1. Repeat problem back verbatim to citizen/employee.
  2. Refer citizen/employee to the appropriate person/chain of command and the complaint procedure as outlined in Board policy.
  3. Remind the citizen/employee of due process and that the Board member must remain impartial in the event the situation comes before the Board.
  4. Board member should advise Superintendent of substantive or significant complaint within 72 hours.
  5. **Board members and Superintendent must communicate in regards to complaint. The key issue is to provide “no surprises” for the Board members or Superintendent.**

## **VII. BOARD MEMBER VISIT TO SCHOOL CAMPUS**

- A. Board members are encouraged to attend any school events as their time permits and to support activities.
- B. Board members are not to go into teacher's classrooms or campuses for the purpose of investigation or evaluation.
- C. Board member shall make reasonable efforts to contact the appropriate administrator prior to their visits, when not attending a scheduled activity.

## **VIII. COMMUNICATIONS**

- A. Superintendent will attempt to communicate with all Board members via letter, e-mail, telephone, fax, or personal visits.
- B. Superintendent will meet with Board President on a routine basis to discuss issues of the District.
- C. Superintendent will communicate information in a timely fashion to all Board members.
- D. Board will keep Superintendent informed via mail, e-mail, telephone, fax, or personal visit.
- E. Board will communicate with its community through regular Board meetings, regular publications, public hearings, and other methods as needed.
- F. All Board agendas and minutes will be distributed to members of the school staff.
- G. Board agendas and minutes will also be posted on the RCISD Web Page.
- H. All monthly Board Packets will be posted on the RCISD Web Page at least 72 hours before the board meeting.
- I. Individual Board members cannot speak in an official capacity outside the Boardroom.

## **IX. EVALUATION OF SUPERINTENDENT**

- A. Each Board member will complete an RCISD Superintendent Official Appraisal Instrument.
- B. The Board will then complete a cumulative RCISD Superintendent Official Appraisal Instrument in executive session.
- C. Evaluation shall be conducted annually in October.
- D. Superintendent's contract and compensation shall be acted on annually in October.

## **X. EVALUATION OF THE BOARD**

- A. Routinely assess status of Board/Superintendent team of eight.
- B. Evaluation is conducted in executive session on a schedule determined by the Board.
  - Are we following the code of conduct?
  - Are we following operating procedure?
  - Is the team of eight functioning?
  - Were goals effective?

## **XI. PROCESS FOR INSTILLATION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS**

- A. Board members shall be sworn after the May Canvassing meeting.
- B. A Notary Public shall swear in board members.
- C. Board members shall begin duties at the June Regular board meeting.

## **XII. PROCESS FOR SELECTING BOARD OFFICERS**

A. Officers are nominated and elected annually following the reorganization of the Board



after the regular trustee election, which is held the second Saturday in May.

B. Current Board President shall declare all offices open for nominations.

Offices shall be filled in this order:

- President
- Vice-President
- Secretary

### **XIII. ROLE AND AUTHORITY OF BOARD MEMBER AND/OR BOARD OFFICERS**

*Established by State Law*

A. No Board member or officer has authority outside the Board meeting.

B. No Board member can direct employees in regard to performance of their duties.

C. President:

- Shall preside at all Board meetings
- Appoint committees
- Shall call special meetings
- Sign all legal documents required by law or Board policy

Vice President:

- Shall act in capacity of President in absence of President

Secretary

- Cause accurate record of Board meeting to be kept
- Call meeting to order and conduct election of President Pro-Term in absence of President and Vice-President
- Sign notices of official minutes and other documents as required.

### **XIII. ROLE OF BOARD IN CLOSED SESSION**

A. Board can discuss only those items listed on the agenda as limited by law.

B. Board must vote in open session.

C. Information during closed session must remain confidential.

### **XVI. MEDIA INQUIRIES TO THE BOARD**

A. The Board President or his/her designee shall be the official spokesperson for the Board to the media/press on issues of media attention.

- (1) All Board members who receive calls from the media/press should direct them to the Board's spokesperson and notify the Board President and the Superintendent of the call.

### **XVII. ANONYMOUS PHONE CALLS/LETTERS**

A. The Board of Trustees encourages input; however, anonymous calls or letters will not receive Board attention discussion or response and will not result in directives to administration.

### **XVIII. REVIEWING BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

A. Standard Board Operating Procedures will be reviewed and updated as needed or on an annual basis.

B. When this publication is in conflict with Reagan County Independent School District adopted Board Policies, Board Policy shall be the governing document.