



# **BOARD OF TRUSTEES OPERATING GUIDELINES**

In concurrence with TASB Board Policies  
Reviewed by Trustees July 2019

If TASB board policies change, the concurrent  
operating guidelines shall also change.



## **Vision**

**Our vision at Hondo ISD is to develop life-long learners who are productive members of society.**

## **Mission**

**In our relentless pursuit of academic excellence, our mission at Hondo ISD is to make learning the priority for all and serve the educational needs of every student, in every classroom, every day.**

## **Hondo ISD Goals and Objectives**

**I. HISD students will achieve academic growth annually as measured by multiple indicators.**

**HISD will**

- increase academic achievement for every student as indicated by growth measures in state and/or local assessments.
- provide, develop, implement and facilitate differentiated instructional opportunities allowing students multiple avenues to interact with curriculum and demonstrate learning.

**II. HISD will prepare students for the future and inspire them to realize their highest personal and educational potential.**

**HISD will**

- provide opportunities for positive character development involving the entire community.
- provide authentic learning opportunities for career and college readiness through real-world applications at all grade levels.

**III. HISD will create a rich technology-centered educational environment that enhances individual learning.**

**HISD will**

- provide training and support to teachers for effective use of technology for instructional purposes.
- maintain and grow a viable robust network infrastructure to support instruction and related services.

#### **IV. HISD will create a safe learning environment for all students and staff.**

##### **HISD will**

- promote good digital citizenship for all users.
- utilize surveillance systems and reporting tools to maintain a safe and civil environment.
- update and communicate crisis management plans to all stakeholders.
- enhance safety through community connections and establishment of a conflict resolution plan.

#### **V. HISD will establish an effective and efficient method to allocate resources to meet the district's prioritized needs.**

##### **HISD will**

- continue to improve procedures to ensure an effective budget allocation process for all stakeholders.
- utilize effective needs assessments to prioritize resource allocations at all levels.
- maintain the technology obsolescence plan to replace equipment every 3 – 5 years.

#### **VI. HISD will increase collaborative communication and meaningful exchanges with students, staff, and the community.**

##### **HISD will**

- increase social media presence.
- seek staff and community input in the decision-making process.

#### **VII. HISD will recruit, support, and retain quality staff.**

##### **HISD will**

- review salaries to assess competitiveness with surrounding area and region.
- design staff recognition activities to promote exemplary performance.
- explore multiple opportunities for recruitment of high-quality personnel.

#### **VIII. HISD will strive to keep student and staff attendance at optimal levels.**

##### **HISD will**

- provide a positive, engaging environment.
- promote student and staff attendance.

#### **Beliefs**

- ❖ **Hondo children come first.**
- ❖ **Constant review and evaluation of current practices is essential for continued success.**
- ❖ **The success of each student is the responsibility of students, their families, the district, and the community.**
- ❖ **Environment is a key component to the educational process.**
- ❖ **Each student will be prepared for successful real world experience.**
- ❖ **Each staff member is valued and supported.**
- ❖ **Hondo ISD has a rich tradition of excellence.**

In effective school systems, the Superintendent and the Board function as a "Team of Eight." A structured approach to developing a vision for the district and setting goals is enhanced by first developing a system of standard operating procedures. The School Board is the corporate policy making body for the District, and the Superintendent and staff provide the leadership to cause Board policies to be implemented. Therefore, the Hondo Independent School District Board of Trustees and Superintendent function as a "**Team of Eight**" to provide open communication to the staff and patrons of the district.

The Hondo Independent School District Board of Trustees adopts these guidelines as standard Operating Procedures to effectively communicate with staff and patrons of the district. Unless otherwise provided in the notice for a meeting, the Hondo Independent School District regular Board meetings shall be held at the administrative office Board room on the third Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m.

### ***Delineation of "Team of Eight"***

A district is only as strong as the Superintendent/Board relationship. The Superintendent is the CEO of the organization and the Board is a governing body, much like a Board of Directors in a business setting. The Board must give the Superintendent leeway to accomplish the directives provided by the Board, without getting involved in the day-to-day minutiae.

An effective Board member communicates with the Superintendent about a concern. It is the Superintendent's job to address concerns. Board members should not violate the chain of command, causing disrespect and unclear expectations between staff, the Superintendent and the Board.

### **Board Member Responsibility**

- Adopt goals and priorities for the district and monitor success in achieving them.
- Adopt policies that govern the district and review these policies for effectiveness.
- Hire a superintendent to manage the district and evaluate the superintendent's effectiveness.
- Adopt an annual budget for the district and set a tax rate appropriate to fund it.
- Employ and terminate personnel at the recommendation of the superintendent.

### **Superintendent Responsibility**

- Accept administrative responsibility and leadership for the planning, operation, supervision, and evaluation of the education programs, services, and facilities of the district.
- Accept authority and responsibility for the assignment and evaluation of personnel and make recommendations for employment and termination of employees.
- Prepare and submit a proposed budget to the Board.
- Recommend policies to be adopted by the Board and develop administrative procedures to implement those policies.
- Provide leadership for the attainment of student performance.

The Hondo ISD School Board and the Superintendent shall work together to:

- Advocate for the high achievement of all District students;
- Create and support connections with community organizations to provide community-wide support for the high achievement of all District students;
- Provide educational leadership for the District, including leadership in developing the District vision statement and long-range educational plan;
- Establish District-wide policies and annual goals that are tied directly to the District's vision statement and long-range educational plan;
- Support the professional development of principals, teachers, and other staff; and
- Periodically evaluate Board and Superintendent leadership, governance, and teamwork.

[BAA Legal]

### ***Board Member Code of Ethics*** [BBF Local]

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 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.

### ***Governance***

The Hondo ISD School Board is committed to a participative process-driven governance style. Board level decision making processes shall therefore include the following elements to whatever extent is practical and appropriate for the matter at hand.

- Clearly stated objectives
- Reconciliation with policy and past practices
- Timelines
- Community input
- Communication plan
- Define the mission and goals of the district
- Set policy and goals to accomplish the mission

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

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

Board members as individuals shall not exercise authority over the District, its property, or its employees.

No individual member may commit the Board on any issue without the express authorization of the Board. [BBE (Local)]

In addition to the duties required by law,  
The President of the Board shall:

1. Preside at all Board meetings unless unable to attend,
2. Have the right to discuss, make motions and resolution and vote on all matters coming before the Board,
3. Call Special Meeting,
4. Sign all legal documents required by law.

The Vice President shall:

1. Act in the capacity and perform the duties of the President of the Board in the event of the absence or incapacity of the President.
2. Automatically become President of the Board if a vacancy in that office occurs.

The Secretary of the Board shall:

1. Ensure that an accurate record is kept of the proceedings of each Board meeting.
2. Ensure that notices of Board meetings are posted and sent as required by law.
3. In the absence of the President and Vice President, call the meeting to order and act as presiding officer.
4. Sign or countersign documents as directed by action of the Board.

[BDAA Local]

### **Board Meetings** [BE Local]

“Meeting” means a deliberation among a quorum (*Four members present constitutes a quorum for a meeting, regardless of the number of vacancies*) of the Board, or between a quorum of the Board and another person, during which public business or public policy over which the Board has supervision or control is discussed or considered, or during which the Board takes formal action.

#### **Agenda**

##### **Placing Items On Agenda**

- The preliminary agenda is developed by the Superintendent and discussed with the Board President prior to posting.
- Any Board member may request that a subject be included on the agenda for a meeting, and the Superintendent shall include on the preliminary agenda of the meeting all Trustee requested topics that have been timely submitted.
- The President shall ensure that any topics the Board or individual Trustees have requested to be addressed are either on the agenda or scheduled for deliberation at an appropriate time in the near future.
- The Board President shall not have the authority to remove from the agenda a subject requested by a Trustee without that Trustee’s specific authorization.
- The deadline for submitting items for inclusion on the agenda is noon of the sixth calendar day before regular meetings and noon of the sixth calendar day before special meetings.
- Board agendas will be ready for review and members given notice at least 72 hours in advance of a regular or special meeting and at least two hours prior to the time of an emergency meeting.

##### **Items That Cannot Be On The Agenda**

- All personnel issues must be conducted in a closed session, unless specifically required by Texas Open Meeting Law.
- Anything that violates the right to privacy, i.e., Texas Open Meeting Act, Texas Open Record Act, cannot be placed on the agenda.

##### **Closed Session**

- The Board can discuss in closed session ONLY those items specifically allowed by law [BEC Legal]
- A final action, decision, or vote on a matter deliberated in closed meeting shall be made only in an open meeting for which proper notice has been given. [BEC Legal]

- By law, closed session discussions may not be disclosed or discussed outside the board's closed session. [BEC Legal] Members who disclose confidential information discussed during closed session violate the Board Member Code of Ethics [BBF Local]. Depending upon the nature of the information and the method by which it is released, a Board Member could be held liable for both civil and criminal sanctions.
- A certified agenda will be kept for each closed session. The certified agenda must include a statement of the subject matter of each deliberation, a record of any further action taken, and an announcement by the presiding officer at the beginning and end of the closed meeting indicating the date and time.

#### **Rules of Order**

- The Board shall observe the parliamentary procedures as found in *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except as otherwise provided in Board procedural rules or by law. [BE Local]

#### **Voting**

- Voting shall be by voice vote or show of hands, as directed by the President. [BE Local]

### ***Board Meeting Expectations***

#### **Citizens Addressing the Board** [BED Local]

- The Board President shall recognize persons who sign up to address the Board.
- At this point, the Board President shall announce time limits and guidelines.
- Audience participation at a Board meeting is limited to the public comment portion of the meeting designated for that purpose. At all other times during a Board meeting, the audience shall not enter into discussion or debate on matters being considered by the Board, unless requested by the presiding officer.
- At regular meetings the Board shall allot 30 minutes to hear persons who desire to make comments to the Board. Persons who wish to participate in this portion of the meeting shall sign up with the presiding officer or designee before the meeting begins and shall indicate the topic about which they wish to speak.
- No presentation shall exceed three minutes. Delegations of more than five persons shall appoint one person to present their views before the Board.
- Written materials related to public comment are to be submitted to the Superintendent's Secretary
- The Board will not discuss concerns with individuals at the meeting.
- During hearings and/or open forums, the Board is assembled to gather input only.
- The Board will not answer questions or enter into two-way dialogue except with their attorney in the case of an employee hearing.
- Board members cannot enter into discussion with speakers except the Board President can make factual statement(s) or quote policy.

#### **Discussion of Individual Employees or Students by the Board or Audience**

- Board will not entertain negative comments written or verbal individual students in public session.

#### **Board Response to Persons Addressing the Board**

- The Board President, when necessary, may direct the Superintendent to investigate item(s) and report back to the Board through transmittal or at a designated meeting.

#### **Discussion of Agenda Items**

- 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 can request the Superintendent to respond to concerns expressed.

- The Board President shall recognize Board members prior to any member asking clarifying questions of the audience or making statements to the Board.
- The President shall not interfere with debate so long as members wish to address themselves to an item under consideration.
- The Board may act only by majority vote of the members present at a meeting. A majority vote is generally determined from a majority of those present and voting, excluding abstentions.

**Public Hearings**

- During public hearings, the Board is assembled only to gather information.
- Rules for public hearing will be strictly adhered to.

***Individual Board Member Request for Information or Reports***

- Individual members shall seek access to records or request copies of records from the Superintendent or other designated custodian of records.
- When a custodian of records other than the Superintendent provides access to records or copies of records to individual Trustees, the provider shall inform the Superintendent of the records provided.
- Individual members shall not 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 custodian of records regarding the preparation of reports shall be by Board action.
- The Superintendent will gather the information and/or report and disseminate it in a timely manner to the Board.
- Board members are encouraged to advise the Superintendent of questions or concerns on agenda items before the Board meeting.

***Citizen Request/Complaint to Individual Board Member***

- The Board member should hear the full complaint for understanding of person involved, date, time, and place.
- Listen briefly and respectfully repeating the problem back to the citizen.
- Explain the chain of command to the citizen. Refer the citizen to the appropriate person in the chain of command. Citizen MUST GO THROUGH COMMAND CHAIN.
- Remind the citizen of due process and that the Board member must remain impartial in case the situation goes before the Board.
- Board member must inform Superintendent of the complaint within 24 hours.
- The administrators shall communicate with the citizen in a timely manner and follow up with the Superintendent, if necessary.

***Employee Request/Complaint to Individual Board Member***

- The Board member will hear employee's problem for full understanding.
- Listen briefly and respectfully repeating the problem back to the employee.
- Explain the chain of command to the employee. Refer the employee to the appropriate person in the chain of command. Employees MUST GO THROUGH COMMAND CHAIN.
- Remind employee of the due process procedure and remain impartial in case the situation goes before the Board.
- Board member must inform Superintendent of the complaint within 24 hours.

***Board Member Visit to School Campus***

- Board members are encouraged/expected to attend school events on campuses to represent the Board in support of activities.

- Board members are not to go into teachers' classrooms or campuses for the purpose of evaluation or investigation.
- Board members must follow district procedure when visiting schools.
- Board members should notify the Superintendent and building principal before or after their official visits.

#### ***Communications***

- Superintendent will meet with the Board President on an as needed basis.
- Superintendent will communicate information in a timely fashion to all Board members.
- Superintendent will keep Board members informed via telephone calls, faxes, e-mail, or personal visits.
- Requests to Superintendent from Board President will be distributed to all Board members.
- Board members will keep Superintendent informed via telephone calls, faxes, e-mail, or personal visits.
- Board members will communicate with the community through public hearings, regular Board meetings, and regular publications.
- Individual Board members cannot speak in an official capacity outside the Board room.

#### ***Evaluation of Superintendent***

- The Board President obtains input from all members of the Board on the approved indicators on the Superintendent's evaluation.
- Evaluation will be conducted annually (verified in BJCD Local that no month is specified)
- Evaluation is conducted in closed session.

#### ***Evaluation of the Board***

- Superintendent and Board evaluations have the same purpose to solidify "TEAM OF EIGHT" concept.
- Evaluation of the Board is an assessment of completion of goals established by the Board and working relationship with the Superintendent to take place annually.

#### ***Anonymous Phone Calls and/or Letters***

- The Hondo 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 the administration.
- Confidentiality is strictly maintained when possible.

#### ***Response to Signed Letters***

- The Hondo ISD Board of Trustees encourages input. A signed letter will be forwarded to the Superintendent and a response using standard format will be sent to the originator of the letter. The superintendent will respond and send a copy to the full Board.

#### ***Addressing Issues Involving Your Own Children***

While members of the Board of Trustees have no authority as individuals, it is sometimes difficult for staff members to see them as ordinary parents. Therefore, Board members should adhere to the following:

- Board members should make it clear that they are acting as a parent.
- Board members should not request nor accept extraordinary consideration for their children.
- Board of Trustee members follow the same chain of command as non-board members.

### ***Reimbursable Expenses***

Board members shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses for:

- Carrying out the business of the Board at Board request.
- Attending meetings and conventions as official representatives of the Board.
- Reimbursable expenses include mileage, commercial transportation, parking, lodging, meals, and other incidental expenses. Rates for reimbursement will comply with the HISD requirements for employee reimbursements. Spouse's travel will not be a reimbursable expense.

### ***Reviewing Board Operating Procedures***

Standard Board Operating Guidelines will be reviewed and updated annually.

### ***Required Board Member Training***

- Board of Trustee members are required to complete training as specified in Board Policy BBD: Board Members Training & Orientation.
- Board Members will accrue continuing education training from January 1 to the end of December each year for reporting purposes.