

**CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

OPERATING PROCEDURES



“COMMON SENSE, COMMON COURTESY”
REVISED NOVEMBER 2022

CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

PREFACE

It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees, as a body corporate, to create policy for the school district, and it is the responsibility of the Superintendent and staff to manage and lead the district, and ensure that the policies adopted by the Board are implemented. In effective school systems, the Superintendent and the Board function as a “Team of Eight.” The Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District Board Operating Procedures provide guidance to the Board and the Superintendent in the operation of this “Team of Eight” so it may function as a cohesive and effective unit in its mission to accomplish the goals and priorities of the school district. The Board Operating Procedures serve as standard operating procedures that supplement the local policies of the school district. Specifically, the following policies apply directly to the Board of Trustees and are incorporated herein by reference:

BAA (Legal) BOARD LEGAL STATUS - POWERS AND DUTIES
BBA (Legal) BOARD MEMBERS - ELIGIBILITY/QUALIFICATIONS
BBC (Legal) BOARD MEMBERS - VACANCIES AND REMOVAL FROM OFFICE
BBD (Legal) BOARD MEMBERS - TRAINING AND ORIENTATION
BBD (Exhibit) BOARD MEMBERS- TRAINING AND ORIENTATION
BBD (Local) BOARD MEMBERS - TRAINING AND ORIENTATION
BBE (Legal) BOARD MEMBERS- AUTHORITY
BBE (Local) BOARD MEMBERS- AUTHORITY
BBF (Local) BOARD MEMBERS- ETHICS
BBFA (Legal) BOARD MEMBERS- ETHICS, CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE
BBFA (Local) BOARD MEMBERS- ETHICS, CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE
BBFA (Exhibit) BOARD MEMBERS- ETHICS, CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE
BBFB (Legal) BOARD MEMBERS- ETHICS, PROHIBITED PRACTICES
BBG (Legal) BOARD MEMBERS - COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES
BBG (Local) BOARD MEMBERS - COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES
BBG (Regulation) BOARD MEMBERS - COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES
BBI (Local) BOARD MEMBERS - TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS
BDAA (Legal) OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS - DUTIES AND REQUIREMENTS OF BOARD OFFICERS
BDAA (Local) OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS - DUTIES AND REQUIREMENTS OF BOARD OFFICERS
BDB (Legal) BOARD INTERNAL ORGANIZATION- INTERNAL COMMITTEES
BDB (Local) BOARD INTERNAL ORGANIZATION- INTERNAL COMMITTEES
BDD (Local) BOARD INTERNAL ORGANIZATION, ATTORNEY
BE (Legal) BOARD MEETINGS
BEC (Legal) BOARD MEETINGS- CLOSED MEETINGS
BED (Legal) BOARD MEETINGS- PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
BED (Local) BOARD MEETINGS- PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
BED (Regulation) BOARD MEETINGS- PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
BF (Local) BOARD POLICIES
BJCD (Legal) SUPERINTENDENT - EVALUATION
BJCD (Local) SUPERINTENDENT – EVALUATION

CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

BQ (Legal) PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

BQ (Local) PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

PORTRAIT OF A CFISD BOARD MEMBER

The Cypress-Fairbanks ISD School Board member provides direction and promotes student success by supporting and celebrating the characteristics cited in the portraits of the administrator, the teacher, and the graduate. The Board member is a:

- Logical Visionary who provides guidance and direction for accomplishing the vision of the District and who strives to address the District's future growth and diversity while mindful of its past and present goals and decisions;
- Reflective Investigator who understands the limits of personal knowledge, who seeks to expand that knowledge through all available resources, and who commits to continuous improvement by thoroughly, critically, and creatively examining those resources;
- Thoughtful Decision Maker who solves problems by carefully considering the information and recommendations of the District's resources, who embraces differences of opinion in the decision-making process, and who accepts and supports the resulting decisions of the Board;
- Dedicated Team Player who is trustworthy and collaborative while working with other board members, professional educators, and members of the community to arrive at consensus;
- Engaged Representative who listens to stakeholders so they can partner with District staff to be involved in the schools, make informed choices for their children, and support the District in collaboratively maintaining high expectations for student achievement; and
- Knowledgeable Advocate who promotes excellence in education by seeking to understand programs and processes, who respects student differences and developmental levels, and who supports a challenging curriculum for all students.

BOARD MEMBER'S CREED AND ETHICS

The Board Member's Creed

"My first priority is to foster student success. I will endeavor to support student, staff, parent, and community involvement to that end. My decisions will focus on what is in the best interests of our students, staff, parents, and taxpayers so that we can deliver an outstanding education to our students and equip them well for their futures. My desire is that Cypress- Fairbanks ISD continue to be a destination community for students, parents, employees and community members.

CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

I will support a strong working environment for our teachers, support staff, and administrators. My desire is that Cypress-Fairbanks ISD continue to be a career destination for our team; my decisions will seek to enable our educational and support teams to deliver an outstanding work environment and education and opportunity for all of our students.

I am a citizen elected to represent the people of the entire school district, not just a specific group of people, geographic area, or political party.

I realize that my authority as a member of the Board of Trustees only exists during a legally announced meeting, or when authorized by Board action to speak on behalf of the District or the Board.

I do not need to know all the facts of the educational process or of general school administration. I am not expected to do this work, but I am responsible for seeing that the work is done.

My work as a member of the Board of Trustees consists of assisting in choosing a competent superintendent to guide the District, deciding within the provisions of the applicable laws what is to be done, setting educational priorities, and appraising the work to see that it is done competently and economically.

The administration of the educational program and the conduct of school business shall be left to the superintendent and his or her staff. I deal directly with the superintendent or through the board president and do not attempt to handle school business matters with other District employees.

I listen impartially to all persons who come to me with questions, problems, and/or comments on the capabilities or personalities of school employees, direct them to the appropriate employees of the school district, and apprise them of the administrative procedure for all grievances.

I must make my own decisions.”

The Board Member’s Code of Ethics

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:

- 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.
- I will be accountable to the school community by accurately communicating District policies, programs, priorities, progress, and enabling community feedback for the purpose of guiding District priorities.
- 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.
- 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.

CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

- 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.
- 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.
- I will be continuously guided by what is best for ALL students of the District.

BOARD MEMBER’S STANDARD OF BEHAVIOR

- Board members should be knowledgeable of the Board’s Creed and Code of Ethics, which will be provided and acknowledged by each newly elected Trustee during new Trustee Orientation.
- Board members will review the Board Operating Procedures annually during the Team of Eight training and sign acknowledgment any time the procedures are amended and re-adopted by the Board.
- During Board meetings, Board members, working in concert with the Superintendent, should strive to create and maintain a meeting atmosphere that allows the District’s “Team of Eight” to work in harmony and serve as an example to students and employees.
- Board members should maintain the confidentiality of documents and discussions from closed session items and meetings.
- Board members are responsible for policing each other. When a Board member fails to adhere to the standards of behavior or the Board operating procedures, the Board president should address the concern privately and informally with the member.
- The repeated failure to adhere to the standards of behavior or Board operating procedures will result in the Board president meeting with the Board member to formally address the concerns.
- When appropriate, the Board may also issue a private written warning to the offending Board member and, in the case of continued violations or violation(s) of a sufficiently egregious nature, the Board may publicly reprimand or censure the Board member by formal action of the Board.

SUMMARY OF KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD

- Recognize the respective roles of the Texas Legislature, State Board of Education, the Texas Education Agency and the local Boards of Trustees in the governance of the public schools;

CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

- Fulfill the statutory duties of the local Board of Trustees and uphold all laws, rules, ethical procedures and court orders pertaining to schools and school employees;
- Focus its actions on policy making, planning and evaluation of the District's vision, mission and goals;
- Adopt a planning and decision-making process consistent with state statutes that uses participation, information, research and evaluation to help achieve the District's vision;
- Ensure that the District planning and decision-making process enables all segments of the community, students, parents and staff to contribute meaningfully to achieving the District's vision;
- Develop and adopt policies that provide guidance for accomplishing the District's vision, mission and goals;
- Adopt a budget that incorporates sound business and fiscal practices and provides resources to achieve the District's vision, mission and goals;
- Adopt goals, approve student performance objectives and establish policies that provide a well-balanced curriculum resulting in improved student learning;
- Approve goals, policies and programs that ensure a safe and disciplined environment conducive to learning;
- Oversee the management of the district by employing a superintendent and evaluating the Superintendent's performance in providing educational leadership, managing daily operations and performing all duties assigned by law;
- Adopt policies and standards for hiring, assigning, appraising and compensating school district personnel in compliance with state laws and rules; and
- Attending district activities (such as graduations, spotlight awards, and school dedications) whenever possible.

GOVERNANCE

- Board members, as individuals, may not exercise authority over the school district or its property, students or employees. Except for appropriate duties and functions of the Board President, an individual member may not act on behalf of the Board without the express authorization of the Board. Without authorization, no individual member may commit the Board on any issue and may not use District resources or the District name or logo in a way that infers authority to speak on behalf of the Board. [BBE (Local)]

CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

- When Board members attempt to insert themselves into the day-to-day details of administering the District, they are not fulfilling the Board’s responsibility to look to the future. The Board should let the Superintendent oversee and operate the District’s daily operations. This is stated as a reminder by the Board President before every school board meeting.
- Board Meetings
 - The Board will observe the modified parliamentary procedures in Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised for Small Assemblies. [See attached *Practical Parliamentary Procedures* by the Texas Association of School Boards.]
 - In consultation with the Board President, the Superintendent shall prepare the agenda for all Board meetings.
 - Board member requests for agenda items should be submitted to the Board President one week before the committee of the whole work session, and the Board President will review and approve the agenda item before it is presented to the Superintendent for inclusion on the agenda.
 - The Superintendent, in consultation with the Board President, may call a special-called meeting with at least 72 hours notice.
 - To make meetings more efficient, reports to the Board will be written unless they are either required by law, compelled by importance, or politically significant. Additionally, if an individual trustee requests that the administration prepare a report, the Board President will seek to determine if it is the consensus of the Board that the report is needed. The Board President will inform the Board of his/her determination regarding the request.
 - The Board will develop a consent agenda, determined by the Board President, which may contain those items that are recurring or routine in nature, or for which there are no further questions after discussion of the Board during a committee of the whole work session.
 - Board members should make every effort to have requests for additional information or clarification of an agenda item submitted to the Superintendent no later than 48 hours prior to the committee of the whole work session.
 - Board members should notify the Superintendent in advance of any interest in removing an item from the consent agenda.
 - Board members may make comments during the Board comment portion of the board meetings regarding the District and District-related activities, issues and events but these comments cannot be the subject of discussion or deliberation unless they are otherwise posted as an agenda item (in which case the discussion would occur when the agenda item was addressed).
- Board Meeting Invocations
 - The Board of Trustees has long maintained a tradition of solemnizing its proceedings by allowing for a brief opening prayer before each meeting, for the benefit and blessing of the Board. The Board desires to clarify and codify its invocation practice because solemnizing prayers before deliberative public bodies has been consistently upheld as constitutional by federal courts, including the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. The Board intends to establish procedures that reflect its past practice of offering invocations that do not proselytize or advance any faith or show any purposeful preference of one religious view to the exclusion of others.

CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

- In order to solemnize meetings of the Board of Trustees, it is the desire of the Board to allow for, but not to mandate, an invocation to be offered at its meetings for the benefit of the Board.
- No Board member, employee of the school district or any other person in attendance at the meeting shall be required to participate in any prayer that is offered.
- The invocation shall be voluntarily delivered by an eligible member of the Faith-Based community in the Cypress-Fairbanks area. To ensure that such person (the “invocation speaker”) is selected from among a wide pool of the District’s Faith-Based leaders, on a rotating basis, the invocation speaker shall be selected according to the following procedure:
 - a. The Superintendent shall compile and maintain a database of the Faith-Based leaders with an established presence in the Cypress-Fairbanks area (“Faith-Based Leaders List”).
 - b. The Faith-Based Leaders List shall be compiled by referencing the listing for “churches,” “congregations,” or other religious assemblies in the annual Yellow Pages phone book(s) published for the Cypress-Fairbanks area, research from the Internet, and consultation with local chambers of commerce. All religious congregations with an established presence in the local community are eligible to be included in the Faith-Based Leaders List, and any such congregation can confirm its inclusion by specific written request to the Superintendent.
 - c. The Faith-Based Leaders List shall be updated, by reasonable efforts of the Superintendent, in May of each calendar year.
 - d. On or about July 1 of each calendar year, the Superintendent shall send an invitation to each spiritual leader listed on the Faith-Based Leaders List and invite each to schedule on a first-come, first-served basis to deliver an invocation for a future Board meeting.
 - e. If no eligible member of the clergy is available to provide the invocation, a member of the Board may deliver the invocation. The designated Board member shall deliver the invocation in his or her capacity as a private citizen, and according to the dictates of his or her own conscience.
 - f. No viewpoint, guidelines or limitations shall be issued regarding an invocation’s content, except that the Board shall request by the language of this guideline that no prayer should proselytize or advance any faith or disparage the religious faith or non-religious views of others.
 - g. The Superintendent shall make every reasonable effort to ensure that a variety of eligible invocation speakers are scheduled for the Board meetings. No invocation speaker shall be scheduled to offer a prayer at consecutive meetings of the Board, or more than two (2) times per school year.

CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

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

- As prohibited by law, an individual Board member may not require District employees to prepare reports derived from an analysis of existing information or records, or create new records compiled from existing information or records. The Board, through Board action, may direct the Superintendent to prepare reports.

COMMUNICATION

- Communications Among Board Members
 - Board members may have informal telephone, email, or personal communications with other Board members in groups less than a quorum of the Board on any subject, including topics that have or may come to the attention of the Board, without violating the Texas Open Meetings Law if there is no attempt made to take action on behalf of the Board, and no attempt is made to garner support from other Board members for particular positions on items to be considered by the Board.
 - A quorum of Board members may be invited to or be present at social events; district or campus functions; or regional, state, or national conventions or workshops without violating the Texas Open Meetings Law if no formal action is taken as a Board, and any discussion of public business is incidental to the social event, district or campus function, convention or workshop.
- Communications with the Superintendent:
 - The Superintendent will communicate with all Board members at least weekly via Board Notes in order to update the Board regarding District events and/or information or reports requested by the Board.
 - The Board shall promptly communicate any questions or concerns to the Superintendent and should not wait until the Superintendent's formal evaluation to address concerns.
 - The Board shall evaluate the Superintendent at least annually in accordance with local policy [BJCD (Local)] utilizing the Board Monitoring System [AE (Local)].
- Board Communications with the Staff and Community:
 - The Board communicates with the staff and community through Board meetings, public hearings of the Board, Board-authorized presentations to the community, Participation in a Districtwide Special Committee and District publications. [BED (Local)]. Except for the appropriate duties and functions of the Board President, individual Trustees do not have the authority to act or speak on behalf of the Board or the District without prior approval of the Board.

CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

- Board members may serve on Districtwide Special Committees, both standing and ad hoc, appointed by the Superintendent under BDB (Local) in addition the Board President who serves as an ex official member on all District and Board committees. For standing Special Committees, the Board President shall annually assign a maximum of three Board members to each committee. For ad hoc Special Committees, the Board President may assign a maximum of three Board members to serve on the committee for its duration.
- Trustee Communications with the Staff and Community
 - Trustees may provide factual information in response to communications they receive individually from staff or community members, but should not attempt to speak on behalf of the Board or predict the Board’s position on an issue or item. Written communications received by the entire Board from staff or community members will be acknowledged by the Board President and directed to the appropriate administrator for action or follow up as needed.
 - Board members should use District-provided email to communicate with staff and community members when at all possible and should avoid using personal email or text messages for District business. If personal email or text messages are utilized for District business, Trustees must preserve the messages according to the time established by the District’s record retention schedule or transfer the messages to the Trustee’s District-provided email.
 - In response to a question or concern raised by a staff or community member, an individual Trustees should refrain from stating, “I’ll look into it.” Rather, individuals should be reminded of due process and that the Board member must remain impartial in case the situation comes before the Board. The citizen should then be directed to contact the appropriate campus principal, District administrator, or the Superintendent. Board members should contact the Superintendent and advise him/her of the referral.
 - Board members should always refer the individual back to the lowest possible level to resolve the problem, and if the staff or community member indicates that he/she has already addressed the concern with the campus-level administrator, then the individual should be referred to the Superintendent’s Office.
 - The Board of Trustees encourages employee and community input, however, anonymous phone calls, emails or letters will typically not receive a written response from the District. Anonymous calls, emails or letters that allege employee misconduct should be referred to the Superintendent, who will refer the matter to Human Resources for review and action as appropriate.
 - Trustees who wish to utilize one or more social media platforms to communicate regarding District business should strongly consider creating social media accounts solely for posting and/or communicating regarding the District. Use of a personal social media account by a Board member for communicating about the District and/or allowing or encouraging public interaction about the District on the personal social

CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

media platform may create a limited public forum on the Trustee's personal social media platform and inhibit the Trustees ability to moderate comments on the personal account.

- Individual Board members may communicate with staff members on any topic without posting or concern for the Texas Open Meetings Act. However, if four or more Board members wish to communicate with a staff member at the same time and engage in discussion on the topic at hand, the discussion should be reserved for an agenda item posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.
- Media requests: The District works with the local media to provide information to the community regarding the goals, achievements, and needs of the District. All written requests for information should be forwarded to the General Counsel in the Legal Services Office, who serves as the District's Public Information Officer and Superintendent's designee for public information act requests.
 - If a Board member receives a telephone call from the media, the call should be directed to the Board's spokesperson, the Board president, if it involves particular Board action, or the Superintendent's Office if it relates to district operations, personnel, students, or other issues separate from specific Board action.

BOARD TRAVEL GUIDELINES

The Board shall adhere to the meal reimbursement procedures and rates outlined in BBG (Legal), (Local) and (Regulation). Additionally, the following expense-reimbursement guidelines are agreed upon by the Board members:

- All Board members may attend the annual state TASA/TASB Convention, and the Board's TASB representative(s) may attend appropriate TASB meetings in accordance with CFISD's representation on the TASB board of directors.
- Pending any necessary budget considerations, all Board members may attend NSBA Convention.
- The Board's representative(s) may attend the Texas School Alliance meetings for Board members.
- The Board's representative(s) may attend the Gulf Coast School Board Association meetings (Region 4).
- All Board members may attend the Region IV Education Service Center Board training sessions and/or meetings.
- The Board's representative(s) may attend the legislative sessions and/or meetings of the State Board of Education as appropriate.

CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

- The Board's representative(s) may attend any bond rating presentations, with a maximum of three Board members at any one presentation. The representation at the bond rating presentations shall be determined on a rotating basis.
- Board members may attend one additional Board training seminar or educational seminar of their choice within the continental United States in addition to TASB, NSBA and Region IV trainings. Board members who apply and are accepted into Leadership TASB may also attend this training. Additional training or educational seminars may be requested by individual Board members and approved by a majority of the Board through Board action. The Board president may attend additional training specific to this role.
- Board members may attend regional or state UIL activities representing the District, with a maximum of one over night lodging expense per event.
- Board members may attend local breakfast, lunch, or dinner meetings that are education-related or related to Board and/or District business.
- Hotel stays, when more conducive to participation, are allowable in Houston or the greater-Houston area.
- Exceptions to the above must be approved by a majority of the Board members.

ORGANIZATIONAL EVALUATION/TRAINING

- During the Team of Eight training, the Board shall establish a plan for Board training for the following year, which should include a self-evaluation instrument at least every two years.
- Quarterly meetings may be scheduled as needed to discuss team building and how we are doing business, as determined by the Board.
- The Board will identify a process for educating new Board members annually during the Team of Eight training. New Board members will be provided with a list of requirements for their review and implementation and the Board President shall assign new Board members a mentor.
- The Board will evaluate the Board's processes annually during the Team of Eight training.
- The Board's officers will meet with new Board members in order to educate new members on the Board's Operating Procedures. This should ideally occur prior to the first regularly-scheduled Board meeting following the new member's election or appointment.

***CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES***

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Cypress-Fairbanks ISD Board of Trustees has adopted these operating procedures in the spirit of collaboration and teamwork that guide our work on behalf of all the students of the District. These procedures are adopted to supplement the local policies of the District and are consistent with our Code of Ethics (Board Policy BBF (Local)) and with all other laws and policies governing the operation of the Board and the District. The procedures are adopted by a formal vote of the Board and they may be amended in the same fashion.

I hereby acknowledge that it is my responsibility to review the Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District Board Operating Procedures, and my signature indicates that I agree to do so and to abide by the standards, policies and procedures contained therein.

Name

Date