

# SPRINGTOWN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



## BOARD OF TRUSTEES OPERATING GUIDELINES

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THE MISSION OF THE SPRINGTOWN ISD BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
IS TO ENSURE ALL STUDENTS RECEIVE A QUALITY  
EDUCATION THROUGH COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP,  
EFFECTIVE USE OF RESOURCES, AND A QUALIFIED STAFF.

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SPRINGTOWN ISD  
#PORCUPINEFAMILY



# BOARD OPERATING GUIDELINES



The Springtown Independent School District Board of Trustees normally meets the fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Meeting agendas are posted at the Administration Building, 301 East 5th Street, and on the school website. The public is encouraged to attend.

The Board of Trustees welcomes the advice and counsel of citizens in planning and operating the schools, although final responsibility and decisions remain with the elected School Board members.

School Board members are guardians of the public trust, and through the policies they make are ultimately responsible for the success or failure of local public education. This responsibility often entails difficult choices, self-sacrifice, and exposure to public criticism. However, it also brings a great deal of personal satisfaction in sharing with parents, staff, and students their academic successes.

This crucial responsibility and the closeness of trustees to the voters make their school board the purest example of democracy our society presents.





# BOARD OPERATING GUIDELINES



## **Our District...**

The Porcupine was selected in the mid-1920s, as were the school colors. Springtown ISD started as a one-campus with grades 1 through 12 school and now has expanded to 6 campuses. The student population was 200 and has risen to about 3,900. Springtown residents, students, and staff take pride in our district.

## **Our Motto...**

All students in Springtown Schools will be SAFE, SECURE, and SUCCESSFUL.

## **Our Vision...**

To provide efficient and effective school processes which result in success for all students.

## **Our Mission...**

To provide all students with an educational program that will allow them to develop to their potential, to be well-adjusted, and able to make positive contributions to a free enterprise society.

## **Our Goals...**

- Prepare students for life beyond high school, meet Every Student Succeeds Act standards, and strive for an Exemplary district rating in the Texas Accountability System by annually improving student achievement and other indicators on each campus.
- Provide a safe, secure, and orderly environment throughout the district for students, staff, parents, and patrons of Springtown ISD, while also making emergency preparedness a high priority.
- Expect all professional staff to effectively facilitate teaching and learning by using technological resources to engage students so that all graduates can succeed in a 21st-century environment.
- Provide salary, benefits, staff development, and working conditions conducive to recruiting and retaining a highly qualified, ethnically diverse staff.
- Encourage and assist all parents to be active partners in the education of their children and expand opportunities for parental and community input to decision-makers.

## **Our Core Beliefs...**

Always strive to put the needs of children first.

Develop a positive partnership among parents, staff, and students.

Provide a comprehensive curriculum driven by effective research-based practices that result in high levels of academic performance and achievement.

Provide all students with equal access to programs promoting student growth and achievement.

Provide a safe, secure, nurturing learning environment that enhances the social and academic growth of all students and employees.



# BOARD OPERATING GUIDELINES



## ***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:*

EQUITY IN ATTITUDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I will be fair, just and impartial in all my decisions and actions.</li><li>• I will accord others the respect I wish for myself.</li><li>• I will encourage expressions of different opinions and listen with an open mind to others' ideas.</li></ul>
TRUSTWORTHINESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I will be accountable to the public by representing district policies, programs, priorities and progress accurately.</li><li>• I will be responsive to the community by seeking its involvement in district affairs and by communicating its priorities and concerns.</li><li>• I will work to ensure prudent and accountable use of district resources.</li><li>• I will make no personal promise or take private action that may compromise my performance of my responsibilities.</li></ul>
HONOR IN CONDUCT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I will tell the truth.</li><li>• I will share my views while working for consensus.</li><li>• I will respect the majority decision as the decision of the board.</li><li>• I will base my decisions on fact rather than supposition, opinion or public favor.</li></ul>
INTEGRITY OF CHARACTER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I will refuse to surrender judgement to any individual or group at the expense of the district as a whole.</li><li>• I will consistently uphold all applicable laws, rules, policies and governance procedures.</li><li>• I will keep confidential information that is privileged by law or that will needlessly harm the District if disclosed.</li></ul>
COMMITMENT TO SERVICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I will focus my attention of fulfilling the Board's responsibilities of goal setting, policy making and evaluation.</li><li>• I will diligently prepare for and attend Board meetings.</li><li>• I will avoid personal involvement in activities the Board has delegated to the Superintendent.</li><li>• I will seek continuing education that will enhance my ability to fulfill my duties effectively.</li></ul>
STUDENT-CENTERED FOCUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I will be continuously guided by what is best for all students of the District.</li></ul>



# BOARD OPERATING GUIDELINES



## **Purpose**

The purpose of the “Springtown ISD Board of Trustees Operating Guidelines” is to provide Board members with information about the role and responsibilities of their office and to delineate Board policies that relate to the functioning of the Board. In all cases, if a difference exists between the “Board Operating Guidelines” and Board Policy, Board Policy always takes precedence.

## **ROLE AND AUTHORITY OF BOARD MEMBERS AND/OR BOARD OFFICERS**

(Established by State statute)

- I. No Board member or officer has authority outside the Board meeting.
- II. No Board member can direct employees in regard to performance of duties.
- III. The Board President shall:
  - a. Preside at all Board meetings,
  - b. Appoint committees,
  - c. Call Special Meetings,
  - d. Sign all legal documents required by law
- IV. The Vice President shall:
  - a. Act in capacity of President in the absence of the President.
- V. The Secretary shall:
  - a. Keep, or cause to be kept, accurate record of the proceedings of each Board meeting
  - b. Call meetings and act in the capacity of the President, in the absence of the President and Vice President.
  - c. Countersign all warrants.

## **ROLE OF BOARD IN EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- VI. Board can only discuss those items listed on the executive session agenda and as limited by law.
- VII. Board must vote in public session.
- VIII. Discussions during executive session must remain confidential.

**Authority established through the following Board Policies:** *BAA Legal - issued 11/6/19; BBE Legal - issued 6/4/19; BBE Local - issued 6/4/19; BDAA Legal - issued 12/2/02; BDAA Local - issued 11/7/06*



# BOARD OPERATING GUIDELINES



## 1. Board

### A. The Role of a School Board member (SISD Board Policy E-series)

#### 1. Teamwork

A Board working in a culture of teamwork and visionary focus is more likely to be governing a district where great strides in education are being made. The group as a whole is only as good as its individual parts, so it becomes very important that individual Board members understand our legal, philosophical, and moral responsibilities. It is important for members to know the policies that already exist in our district.

#### 2. Productive Actions

To operate most effectively, individual Board members need to understand how to conduct themselves appropriately in complex situations and at public meetings; how to deal effectively with the public and the media; and how to deal responsibly with the Superintendent and district staff. Disagreements are a natural part of teams and teamwork and can oftentimes lead to effective new solutions.

### B. Monitoring Academic Excellence

#### 1. Overview

The primary focus of this segment is monitoring academic excellence. The public expects our local schools to produce academic excellence, a condition in which students learn and achieve at the highest level possible.

#### 2. School Board as a Unit

Philosophies and strategies determined by school boards to promote academic excellence are not universally “right” or “wrong.” A school board functions as a single unit with the power and responsibility to make decisions. Academic excellence for the Board then becomes a function of the Board’s decision-making process. Individual members have our own definitions of academic excellence and preferences as to how it can and should be achieved. However, since these definitions and preferences may vary extensively, the goals and agenda which individual members believe may lead to the opposite result if individual members struggle to “promote our own cause” without regard for the “common good.” Unity and consensus of the Board is essential if the goal of academic excellence is to be realized.

#### 3. Knowledgeable Board members

Leadership is fundamental in achieving unity and consensus. Some people perceive unity and consensus as an indication that members have compromised our positions or hastily offered a “rubber stamp” endorsement for the Superintendent. If the Superintendent is an effective, sensitive leader, trust can be established and unity accomplished with few instances of disagreement. Quality decisions depend upon Board



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members becoming knowledgeable, studying the issues and providing thoughtful input into the decision-making process, reflecting the needs of all students and preferences of the community in addressing those records.

4. **Board Responsibility**

With the Board accepting its primary responsibilities of establishing instructional priorities and goals, setting policies, approving budget expenditures, and approving textbooks, the Superintendent and administration are expected to implement the policies, manage the budget, and carry out the goals of the Board. Through mutual cooperation and acceptance of accountability standards, academic excellence is a realistic goal for many Texas school districts.

## 2. SUPERINTENDENT/BOARD RELATIONS

### A. Overview

The Board's responsibility is to define the district's policies and goals that shall reflect the district's advocacy for all students. Board members serve as advocates for all students by providing leadership at the local, state, and national level. The policies set by the Board will ensure that the mission and goals are achieved. It is the Board's responsibility to hire a Superintendent, who then implements the policies and goals adopted by the board. The Board shall evaluate the Superintendent's job performance based upon these policies and goals.

### B. Effective Working Relationships

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 empower the Superintendent 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 take action and resolve situations. Board members should not violate the chain of command, causing disrespect and unclear expectations between staff, the Superintendent, and the Board.

### C. Superintendent and Board member Communication

#### 1. Board to Superintendent

- a. Board members will keep the Superintendent informed of concerns in a timely manner.
- b. Board will communicate with its community through public hearings, regular Board meetings, and regular publications.
- c. Individual Board members cannot speak in an official capacity outside the Boardroom.



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2. Superintendent to the Board
  - a. Superintendent will communicate information to all Board members in a timely manner.
  - b. Superintendent will distribute requests from the Board President to all Board members in a timely manner.
3. Superintendent Liaison Between Board and Staff
  - a. The only employee the Board is responsible for directing is the Superintendent.
  - b. The Superintendent will direct the activities of all staff.
  - c. The Superintendent is the liaison between Board members and staff.

## **D. Requests for Information**

1. Chain of command
  - a. Verbal requests for information should be made to the Superintendent.
  - b. Written requests for information should be submitted to the Superintendent.
  - c. ALL Board requests must be made with the Superintendent's knowledge.

## **3. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **A. Board Member Responsibility**

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

### **B. Superintendent Responsibility**

1. Accept administrative responsibility and leadership for the planning, operation, supervision, and evaluation of the education programs, services, and facilities of the district.
2. Accept authority and responsibility for the assignment and evaluation of personnel and make recommendations for employment and termination of employees.
3. Prepare and submit a proposed budget to the board.



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4. Recommend policies to be adopted by the board and develop administrative procedures to implement those policies.
5. Provide leadership for the attainment of student performance.

## 4. DEVELOPMENT OF BOARD MEETING AGENDA

### A. GUIDELINES *Board Policy BE (Local), BED (Legal), BED (Local)*

1. In consultation with the Board President, the Superintendent shall prepare the agenda for all Board meetings. Before the official agenda is posted for any meeting, the Superintendent shall consult the Board President to ensure that the agenda and the topics included meet with the President's approval.
2. In reviewing the agenda before posting, the President shall ensure that any topics the Board or individual Trustees have requested to be addressed are either on that agenda or scheduled for deliberation at an appropriate time in the near future.
3. Any Trustee may request that a subject be included on the agenda for a meeting, and the Superintendent shall include on the agenda of any meeting all Trustee-requested topics that have been timely submitted. The Board President shall not have authority to remove from the agenda a subject requested by a Trustee without that Trustee's specific authorization.
4. The deadline for submitting items for inclusion on the agenda is noon of the fifth working day before regular meetings and noon of the third working day before special meetings.

### B. ITEMS THAT CANNOT BE HEARD IN OPEN SESSION

#### *Board Policy BEC (Legal)*

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

### C. EXAMPLES OF CONSENT AGENDA *Board Policy BE (Local)*

- Routine items
- Tax Resale Deed(s)
- Financial Information
- Routine personnel items
- Routine bid recommendations
- Grant applications
- Budget amendments
- Gifts & bequests, donations
- Student transfers
- Student expulsions
- Routine waivers



# BOARD OPERATING GUIDELINES



## 5. MEMBER CONDUCT DURING BOARD MEETINGS

### *Board Policies BE (Local), BED (Legal), BED (Local)*

#### A. Patron addressing the Board

Patrons may present information to the Board at the open forum portion of regularly scheduled Board Meetings.

1. The Board shall allot 30 minutes to hear persons wishing to make comments to the Board.
2. No presentation shall exceed five (5) minutes.
3. Delegations of more than five persons shall appoint one person to present our views before the Board.
4. Patrons 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 will speak.

#### B. Board response to patrons addressing the Board

1. Board members can hear comments.
2. Board President should direct the administration to investigate item(s) and report back to Board at a designated meeting.
3. Board members cannot enter into discussions with patrons except to make a factual statement(s) or quote policy.
4. Board President designates a five-minute time limit for patrons unless extended by majority consent of Board of Trustees.

#### C. Discussion of employee performance (Board/audience)

1. The Board will not entertain comments on individual personnel in public session.
2. The Board will not entertain comments on individual students in public session.
3. The Board will not make comments or ask questions regarding individual personnel or individual students in public session. Any concerns will be addressed to the Superintendent in private.

#### D. Hearings and Open Forums

1. The speaker will address comments to the President of the Board.
2. During hearings and/or open forums, the Board is assembled to gather input only.
3. The Board will not answer questions or enter into two-way dialogue except with our attorney in the case of an employee hearing.
4. Rules for the open forum will be strictly adhered to:
  - a. Board will limit each participant to five minutes.
  - b. Board will accept written and/or oral testimony.
  - c. Board will not allow duplicate testimony.
  - d. Board President and/or attorney are sole judge.
  - e. Board will not allow any derogatory comments directed at staff members.
  - f. Board members cannot enter into discussion with speakers except the Board President can make factual statement(s) or quote policy.



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- E. Board shall observe the parliamentary guidelines in Robert's Rules of Order. A copy of Robert's Rules of Order will be provided to each Board member.
- F. Discussion of Motions
  - 1. All discussion shall be directed solely to the business currently under deliberation.
  - 2. 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.
- G. The Board President has the right to recognize a Board member prior to that member giving his/her comments.
  - 1. Board members will refrain from asking questions of the presenter until the presentation is complete.
  - 2. Board will direct questions and comments to the presenter.

## 6. VOTING

### ***Board Policy BE (Local)***

- i. The President may vote on all action items and can make or second motions.
- ii. In case of a tie vote, the item is postponed. The President shall bring the item back to the board on a subsequent agenda.
- iii. When only four board members attend a meeting, a unanimous vote of those four members is required to pass motions.

## 7. BOARD COMMITTEES

### ***Board Policies BDB (Legal), BDB (Local)***

- A. The Board President shall appoint members to special committees created by the Board to fulfill specific assignments unless otherwise provided by Board action.
  - 1. The function of these committees shall be fact-finding, deliberative, and advisory, but not administrative. Committees will report our findings to the Board and then be dissolved upon completion of the assigned task or vote of the Board.
  - 2. Committees may include Audit, Facilities, and any other such committee as the Board finds necessary.
  - 3. The President of the Board and the Superintendent shall be *ex officio* members of all Board committees, unless otherwise provided by Board action.
  - 4. Committees may transact business only within the specific authority granted by the Board. To be binding, all such business must be reported to the Board at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.

## 8. INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER REQUEST FOR INFORMATION OR REPORT ***Board Policy BBE (Local)***

- A. An individual Board member, acting in his or her official capacity, shall have the right to seek information pertaining to District fiscal affairs, business transactions, governance, and personnel matters. The Superintendent will gather the information and/or report and disseminate it in a timely manner to the Board.



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9. **CITIZEN REQUEST/COMPLAINT TO INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER**  
*Board Policies BBE (Local)*
  - A. The Board member should hear the citizen problem and then:
    1. Explain the chain of command to citizens.
    2. Remind the citizen of due process and that the Board member must remain impartial in case the situation goes before the Board.
  - B. Refer citizen to appropriate person/chain of command. Citizens **MUST GO THROUGH COMMAND CHAIN.**
  - C. Board members must inform Superintendent of the complaint in a timely manner.
  - D. If appropriate, the Superintendent will respond to citizens in a timely fashion.
  
10. **EMPLOYEE REQUEST/COMPLAINT TO INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER**  
*Board Policies BBE (Local)*
  - A. The Board member will hear employee's problem and then:
    1. Explain chain of command to employee.
    2. Remind employee of the due process procedure and remain impartial in case situation goes before the Board.
  - B. Refer employee to appropriate person/chain of command. Employee **MUST GO THROUGH COMMAND CHAIN.**
  - C. Board member must inform the Superintendent or designee of complaint relaying communication.
  - D. If appropriate, the employee will receive a response from the Superintendent in a timely manner.
  
11. **BOARD MEMBER VISIT TO SCHOOL CAMPUS**  
*Board Policy GKC (Local)*
  - A. Board members are encouraged to attend as many school events as their time permits.
  - B. Board members are not to go into teacher's classrooms or individual buildings for the purpose of evaluation.
  
12. **EVALUATION OF SUPERINTENDENT**  
*Board Policies BJCD (Legal), BJCD (Local)*
  - A. New Board members receive training annually on locally developed process for superintendent performance evaluation.
  - B. Board President obtains input from all other members on Board-approved indicators.
  - C. Summative evaluation is conducted in executive session by consensus.
  - D. Formative evaluation is conducted every six months.



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## 13. EVALUATION OF THE BOARD

### *Board Policies BBD (Legal), BBD (Exhibit)*

- A. Superintendent and Board evaluations have the same purpose to solidify “TEAM OF EIGHT” concept.
- B. Evaluation is conducted annually during a called meeting.

## 14. PROCEDURES FOR SEATING OF NEWLY ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS

### *Board Policy BBB (Legal)*

- A. Newly elected Board member(s) shall receive the Oath of Office at the next Board meeting following our election in May. They will also sign the “Executive Session Contract” for Board members.
- B. Following the Oath of Office, the newly elected Board member(s) shall be seated with the Board of Trustees to conduct the regular May Board meeting.
- C. Following the May election and prior to the June Board meeting, the newly elected Board member(s) shall attend an orientation session conducted by the superintendent.

## 15. CRITERIA AND PROCESS FOR SELECTING BOARD OFFICERS

### *Board Policies BDAA (Legal), BDAA (Local)*

- A. No Board member can hold office without one-year minimum Board experience.
- B. Election is held in May of each year.
- C. Election of Board Officers:
  1. The Board shall elect a President, a Vice-President, and a Secretary who shall be members of the Board. The Board may assign a District employee to provide clerical assistance to the Board. Officers shall be elected by majority vote of the members present and voting.
  2. A vacancy among officers of the Board shall be filled by majority action of the Board.
- D. Responsibilities of Board Officers
  1. **President:** In addition to the duties required by law, the President of the Board shall:
    - a. Preside at all Board meetings unless unable to attend.
    - b. Follow the parliamentary guidelines in Robert’s Rules of Order.
    - c. Appoint all Board committees unless otherwise provided by policy or Board consensus.
    - d. Provide mentoring for new Board members.
  2. **Vice-President**
    - a. 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.
    - b. Become President only upon being elected to the position.
    - c. Perform other duties as prescribed by the Board.



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### 3. Secretary

- a. In the absence of the President and Vice-President of the Board, call the Board meeting to order and conduct the election of a president pro tem.
- b. Countersign all warrants for District money drawn upon the depository by order of the Board.
- c. Perform other duties as directed by the Board.

### 16. ROLE AND AUTHORITY OF BOARD MEMBER AND/OR BOARD OFFICERS – SET BY STATE STATUTE

*Board Policies BA (Legal), BAA (Legal), BBE (Legal), BBE (Local)*

- A. Because the Board is a body corporate, members can perform no valid act except as a body at meetings properly convened and conducted.
- B. No Board member can direct employees in regard to performance of our duties.

### 17. ROLE OF BOARD IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

*Board Policies BA (Legal), BAA (Legal), BBE (Legal), BBE (Local)*

- A. Board can only discuss those items listed on the executive session agenda and as limited by law.
- B. Board must vote in public session.
- C. Members who disclose confidential information discussed during closed session violate the Board member Code of Ethics [Board Policy 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.
- D. Board members will sign “Executive Session Contract for Board members” immediately after being sworn in for their term of office. (see attached form)

### 18. MEDIA INQUIRIES TO THE BOARD

*Board Policy BBE (Local)*

- A. The Board President shall be the official spokesperson for the Board to the media on issues of media attention.
  1. All Board members who receive calls from the media should direct them to the Board’s spokesperson and notify the Board President and Superintendent of the call.
  2. If at all possible, media inquiries to the Board President should be directed to the Superintendent or district spokesperson.



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## 19. PHONE CALLS/LETTERS

### *Board Policy BBE (Local)*

- A. The SISD 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.

## 20. RESPONSE TO LETTERS

### *Board Policy BBE (Local)*

- A. The SISD 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.



# BOARD OPERATING GUIDELINES



## 21. REQUIRED BOARD MEMBER TRAINING *Board Policy BBD (Legal), BBD (Exhibit)*

### Overview of Continuing Education Requirements for Board members

<b>Continuing Education Required of Board members</b>	<b>First Year Board members</b>	<b>Experienced Board members</b>	<b>Provider</b>
Local District Orientation	Required within 120 days of election or appointment	Not required	Local district
Orientation to Texas Education Code	3 hours within 120 days of election or appointment	Not required	Education Service Center
Update to Texas Education Code	Not required	<i>After legislative session</i> : length determined by issues addressed in legislation	Any registered provider
Team-building Session/Assessment of Continuing Education Needs of the Board-Superintendent Team	At least 3 hours	At least 3 hours	Any registered provider
Additional Continuing Education, based on assessed needs and the Framework for Governance Leadership	At least 10 hours	At least 5 hours each year	Any registered provider
<b>Continuing Education Required of All Elected Public Officials</b>	<b>First Year Board members</b>	<b>Experienced Board members</b>	<b>Provider</b>
Open Meetings Training	1 hour required within 90 days of election or appointment		Attorney General's Office or other approved provider
Public Information Act Training (Boards may delegate this training to the district's public information coordinator)	Check local district policy for any Board requirement (BBD Local)		Attorney General's Office or other approved provider
Evaluating and Improving Student Outcomes	3 hours within 120 days of election or appointment	3 hours every two years	Authorized Providers
Sexual Abuse, Human Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children	1 hour within the first 120 days in office	3 hours every two years	Authorized Providers Registered Providers
Cybersecurity	Varies by provider	Every year	Department of Information Resources



# BOARD OPERATING GUIDELINES



## 22. BOARD MEMBER MENTORING GUIDELINES

Newly elected Board members should be assigned a Board Mentor, appointed by the Board President, during our first year of service. The purpose of this mentorship is to strengthen the new Board member's contributions and responsibilities during our first year of service on the Board. The Board President and the Superintendent will serve as ex-officio mentors to all new Board members.

- A. Responsibilities of the Board member mentor
  - 1. To contact the new Board member during the week of the Board Meeting to inquire if there are questions or concerns about the agenda.
  - 2. To share experiences as they relate to board service in an informal setting
  - 3. To provide any necessary background for issues in the District
  - 4. To serve as a sounding board for questions, concerns, or ideas
  - 5. To answer questions and identify resources for the new Board member
  
- B. Responsibilities of new Board member
  - 1. To contact the Board member mentor when questions or concerns arise
  - 2. To listen to Board Meeting proceedings and to the Board member mentor
  - 3. To review the board agenda early enough to allow time for asking questions about it
  - 4. To seek information from the mentor, the Superintendent, or the Board President when needed

## 23. BOARD DIALOGUE

- A. Guidelines for Raising a Concern
  - 1. The Board shall have an agreed-upon guideline for a Board member to officially raise a concern regarding the working relationship of the Board
  - 2. When a Board member invokes the Guideline for Raising a Concern, all other Board members must treat the concerns seriously and respectfully
  
- B. Atmosphere
  - 1. Board members must be willing to listen to the substance of the identified concern
  - 2. Board members must strive to remain non-defensive about concerns being raised
  - 3. Board members raising concerns should state their concerns in calm, non-inflammatory language
  - 4. All Board members should stay focused on what is best for the education of the students and avoid personal agendas
  
- C. Procedures
  - 1. In the event communication at this level is unsuccessful in resolving the concern, the Board must have a procedure for going to the next level



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## 24. ASSISTED BOARD DIALOGUE

### A. Facilitator

1. In the event an issue cannot be constructively resolved, the Board may consider engaging a Facilitator
2. The Facilitator's role would be to aid and direct the discussion, not take sides
3. Typically, an effective Facilitator will be a professional from outside the district (TASB can assist in identifying a Facilitator)
4. In the event the Board is unable to resolve the concern with the assistance of a Facilitator, the Board must have a procedure for going to the next level

## 25. BOARD SANCTIONS

### A. Private Censure of Behavior

1. In the event a Board member does not change the inappropriate behavior, the Board may choose to censure or sanction the Board member
2. The Board may do this privately in a closed session
3. The censure will consist of a factual statement of:
  - a. The inappropriate behavior of the named Board member
  - b. The desired behavior
  - c. A statement of agreement by a majority of the Board members that the behavior is inappropriate

### B. Public Sanction of Behavior

1. The Board may choose to issue a public sanction, either:
  - a. Concurrently with the private censure
  - b. After the Board member has still not modified the behavior, even following a private censure
2. The sanction would consist of a factual statement of:
  - a. The inappropriate behavior of the named Board member
  - b. The desired behavior
  - c. A statement of agreement by a majority of the Board members that the behavior is inappropriate

### C. Withdrawal of Resources

1. The Board may choose to withdraw financial resources from the offending Board member
2. Examples might be disallowance of attendance at conventions, seminars, or travel to other districts

### D. Requests for Resignation

1. Under extreme conditions, the Board may agree to ask the offending Board member to resign



# BOARD OPERATING GUIDELINES



## 26. ADDRESSING ISSUES INVOLVING BOARD MEMBER'S OWN CHILDREN

- A. 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:
  - 1. Board members should make it clear that they are acting as a parent.
  - 2. Board members should not request nor accept extraordinary consideration for our children.
- B. Board of Trustee members will follow the same chain of command as non-Board members.

## 27. REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

### *Board Policies BBG (Legal), BBG (Local)*

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



# BOARD OPERATING GUIDELINES



## 28. FILLING A BOARD VACANCY OCCURRING BEFORE THE END OF TERM OF OFFICE

### *Board Policy BBC (Legal)*

#### A. Overview

New Board members join the Board following annual elections as required by law. Vacancies on the Board may and do occur at times other than the end of a term.

During a transition in membership, the Team of Eight needs to know what procedures or practices to follow in order to make the transition as quickly, legally, and efficiently as possible. The least disruption and the smoother the transition, the less impact it will have on the overall operation of the district.

#### B. Procedure for Accepting Board Vacancy

1. A Board member submits in writing his/her resignation to the Board. A letter expressing intent to resign will be accepted as a resignation.
2. The full Board will take action on the resignation at the next Board Meeting after receipt of the letter. The Board cannot refuse to accept a letter of resignation.
3. If a Board member submits a resignation or intent to resign, whether effective or immediately or at a future date, a vacancy occurs on the date that the resignation is accepted by the Board or on the eighth day after the date of its receipt by the Board, whichever is earlier. *Election Code 201.001(a), 201.023*

#### C. Procedure for Filling Board Vacancy

1. At the next Board Meeting, the remaining Board members will discuss the vacancy to determine the Board's course of action regarding that vacancy. Those possible actions are:
  - a. Appointment – Remaining Board members may fill the vacancy by appointment until the next regular Board election. If more than one year remains in the term of the position vacated, the vacancy shall be filled no later than the 180<sup>th</sup> day after the vacancy occurs. *Tex. Const. Art. XVI, Sec. 27*
  - b. Special Election – Remaining Board members may order a special election to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term. That election shall be conducted in the same manner as the general election on the next uniform election date that will afford enough time to hold the election in the manner required by law. *Education Code 11.060 (c), Election Code 41.001 (a), 41.004 (a)*

## 29. REVIEWING BOARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

- A. Standard Board Operating Guidelines will be reviewed and updated as needed.



# BOARD OPERATING GUIDELINES



## SPRINGTOWN ISD 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.

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Signature

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Date



# BOARD OPERATING GUIDELINES



## SPRINGTOWN ISD EXECUTIVE SESSION CONTRACT FOR BOARD MEMBERS

I hereby certify that my participation in executive sessions of the Springtown ISD Board of Trustees will not compromise the confidentiality of those sessions.

I promise I will not divulge information discussed during the executive sessions, nor shall I distribute confidential materials received in those meetings.

As a Board Member, I will strive to ensure that issues discussed in Executive Session meet the criteria defined by the Freedom of Information Commission.

I recognize that this is my responsibility under the Code of Ethics for board members.

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**Signature**

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**Date**