TUCSON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT **Tucson, Arizona** **GOVERNING BOARD POLICY**	POLICY TITLE: Board Member Authority and Responsibilities
	POLICY CODE: BBAA

Generally, and with only a few exceptions described in more detail below, activities of the Governing Board take place in the context of the meeting scheduled and held pursuant to the Arizona Open Meeting Law, A.R.S. § 38-431 et. seq. The role of the Governing Board is to establish District-wide policy and direction, appoint employees, approve budgets and compensation and otherwise to direct the affairs of the District in the manner specified by law. The Board generally delegates day-to-day management of the District to the superintendent and staff.

Officers of the Board

The Board shall elect, at its first meeting of each calendar year, a President and a Clerk to serve one-year terms.

The Board President shall preside over all Board meetings and maintain order in accordance with the Arizona Open Meeting Law and Governing Board Policy BEDB. The President shall also implement board action when a vote of the Board in an open meeting gives the President authority to act.

The Board President has the authority to review the personnel files of administrators (Assistant Principal and above), to direct the Director of Staff Services, and to consult with the General Counsel.

The Board Clerk shall perform duties during Board meetings as assigned by the Board President, or act as President in the President's absence, in accordance with Policy BEDB.

Supervision of Personnel Assigned to Work in the District Governing Board Office

The Director of Staff Services to the Governing Board Office (The "Director of Staff Services") shall report to and be supervised by the Board President. All other District personnel assigned to work in the District Governing Board Office shall report to and be supervised by the Director of Staff Services.

The job responsibilities of the Director of Staff Services shall be set forth in a job description for that position adopted by the Board.

Annually, or more frequently in the discretion of the Board, the Board President and Board Clerk shall evaluate the performance of the Director of Staff Services, after receiving input from each of the other Board members. Each Board member shall have the opportunity to add an unedited commentary of his or her individual observations or evaluation.

Only the Board President may issue directives to the Director of Staff Services.

Individual Board Members' Authority

Individual Board members exercise authority over District affairs only by way of votes taken at a legal meeting of the Board. An individual Board member has authority only when and to the extent that the Board, by vote or by its adopted policy, has so delegated such authority. Individual Governing Board members are not otherwise authorized to issue directives to or make requests of District employees.

No district employee will be disciplined for declining to comply with a request or a directive of an individual Governing Board member which is contrary to the terms of this policy, or for reporting an alleged or attempted violation of this Governing Board policy.

When engaged in individual activities such as correspondence, speaking engagements, or meeting with constituents or employees, individual Governing Board members may represent their personal opinions. They may not represent the Governing Board as a whole except to report on the Governing Board's official actions or as expressly authorized by action of the Board taken in an open meeting.

Board Members' Use of Resources

There are some instances where an individual Board member properly may request or require utilization of District resources outside of a board meeting. For the purpose of this policy, "use of district resources" means use of district equipment, materials, travel, rooms, facilities and efforts of district employees.

Governing Board members are authorized to request or require the use of District resources outside of scheduled Governing Board meetings in the following situations:

A. Requests for Information from District Employees

Individual Governing Board members are authorized to make requests for information reasonably related to issues that have been, or reasonably may be addressed by the Governing Board. All such requests for information from employees not assigned to the Governing Board office must be directed through the office of the Superintendent. The Superintendent's office will be responsible for responding to each request. The Superintendent shall forward a copy of each request for information and the response

thereto, or a summary of the response, to the entire Governing Board. Governing Board members should be considerate of staff time required to fulfill information requests.

B. Requests for Information from the Governing Board

Individual Governing Board members shall make requests for information to Governing Board staff through the Director of Staff Services. The Director of Staff Services may answer the request for information or may assign the task to other employees who report to the Director of Staff Services. Governing Board members should be considerate of staff time required to fulfill information requests.

C. Individual Governing Board Member Correspondence

An individual Governing Board member has the authority to request the preparation and mailing of any correspondence when expressly authorized by vote of the Governing Board. A Governing Board member may also request the preparation and mailing of correspondence in response to written or oral inquires from constituents of the District. Correspondence should not have the purpose of influencing the outcome of an election or furthering an individual Governing Board member's name recognition for seeking election to public office, or violating any Governing Board policy or law. All correspondence will conform to all applicable laws and regulations that address the use of District resources and all correspondence shall be available for review by all Governing Board members.

D. General Use of District Resources

An individual Governing Board member may engage in activities requiring the use of District resources only when expressly authorized by Governing Board policy or action. Such activities include District-sponsored meetings and District-sponsored forums. Unless authorized by the Governing Board in an open meeting, individual Governing Board members may not sponsor activities that require the use of District resources. An individual Governing Board member shall have an expectation to equal access to budgeted monies for authorized Governing Board activities, such as travel to approved conferences and similar purposes.

E. Signing of Warrants and Orders

Governing Board members are permitted to sign warrants and orders for salary or expenses between meetings in a manner permitted by A.R.S. §15-321 (G). The orders must be ratified at the next regular or special meeting of the Governing Board.

F. Governing Board Members Acting as Private Citizens

Nothing in this Governing Board policy is intended to restrict an individual Governing Board member in the role of a private citizen when the activity does not require the use of District resources.

Accountability

Any inappropriate exercise of board member authority shall be reported to either the Superintendent or the Director of Staff Services for the Governing Board who in turn shall report the allegation to the Board President or to the most senior Governing Board member not involved in the alleged violation.

The Governing Board member who receives the report will meet personally with the Governing Board member who is the subject of the report to discuss the content of the report, the behavior, its impact, and an understanding of the interests of the parties.

Media Relations

The Board recognizes its responsibility to provide information to the community and actively seeks to establish a good working relationship with local news media.

To promote a positive relationship between the District and the media, the Board shall provide information to the media concerning the programs and activities of the District as well as matters pending before the Board.

Guidelines for Board Member Conduct

Board members represent the District and serve as role models. Expectations include the following:

- Attend all Board meetings insofar as possible;
- Arrive at meetings on time and be thoroughly prepared;
- Encourage discussion which fully explores issues;
- Stay focused on the topic at hand;
- Debate in a constructive way, which is civil and focused solely on issues;
- Render all decisions based on the available facts and independent judgement without surrendering that judgment to individuals or special-interest groups;
- Demonstrate mutual respect for the meeting rules;
- Ensure that all Governing Board interactions with District employees, students and the public who appear before the Governing Board are respectful in tone of voice, language and demeanor;
- Encourage the free expression of opinion by all Board members, and seek systemic communications between the Board and students, staff, and all elements of the community;
- Work with other Board members to establish effective Board policies;
- Be informed about current educational issues by individual study and through participation in meetings and programs that provide useful information;
- Avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest, including compliance with all provisions of Policy BCB;

- Respect the confidentiality of information that is privileged under applicable law;
- Recognize that decisions should be made only at publicly held Board meetings;
- Remember that a Board member's first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of the students attending the public schools.

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Legal Ref: A.R.S. §15-321 - Organization; election of officers of the board; meetings; execution of warrants; exemption

A.R.S. §15-381 - Liabilities of the governing board; payment of liabilities; immunity

Cross References: BDAA – Procedures for Governing Board Members (eliminated 9-12-17) and BCB – Board Member Conflict of Interest