

# THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

No. 007

SECTION: Board Bylaws

TITLE: Public Engagement

ADOPTED: August 16, 2018<sup>1</sup>

REVISED: October 19, 2023

## 007 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

### **Purpose**

This policy sets forth the mechanisms for meaningful, two-way communication between members of the Board of Education (“Board”) and the public about issues impacting education in The School District of Philadelphia (“District”).

### **Authority**

The Public School Code and Philadelphia Home Rule Charter permit the Board to adopt and enforce such reasonable rules and regulations as it may deem necessary and proper for its governance as well as the management of the affairs of the District and its operations. [1][2][3][4][5]

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

The Office of the Board of Education shall create and maintain Board Operating Guidelines that describe the procedures to communicate, manage, and track public engagement.

Primary contact information on how to submit comments from constituents shall be shared on the Board’s website. Board staff shall be available to collect and manage constituent services at the Board Office at 440 N. Broad Street, Suite 101, Philadelphia, PA 19130.

### **Core Requirements**

#### *Communications*

The Board shall engage in effective internal and external communication with key stakeholder groups, constituents, and members of the larger school community. The Board and Board staff shall establish and implement timely and organized communications about new initiatives, emergency communications, changes to Board policies, statements on behalf of the Board, and other matters that sustain key relationships. [6][7]

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<sup>1</sup> This policy was originally adopted as Policy 006: Public Engagement

## *Constituent Services*

The Board and Board staff shall provide constituent services through protocols that allow the Board to:

- Hear from school community members;
- Recognize and understand trends;
- Escalate to appropriate District staff when necessary; and [8]
- Identify opportunities for systems improvement.

Board Members shall not confer special advantage on any employee, parent/guardian, student, vendor, or any other person or entity that is outside of the regular decision-making processes established by Board policy or by the District.

## *School Visits*

Board Members recognize that school visits are a fundamental component of Board business and their work. Board Members shall commit to regularly attending school visits organized to include a diverse range of schools. Board Members shall conduct school visits to inform official business of the Board and shall follow protocols to respect the day-to-day operations of schools. [10]

## *Public Hearings*

The Board shall hold not less than two (2) public hearings during the year, in addition to other regularly scheduled hearings, for the specific purpose of considering all school issues or problems of public interest. [9]

At least thirty (30) days prior to the scheduled hearing, the Board shall advertise the hearing in accordance with applicable law. At least fifteen (15) days prior to the scheduled hearing, interested participants may present written statements to the Board relating to proposed issues to be considered at the hearing through the Office of the Board of Education. [9]

## **Legal References:**

1. [24 P.S.](#) §4-407
2. [24 P.S.](#) §5-510
3. [Home Rule Charter](#) – § 12-209
4. [Home Rule Charter](#) – § 12-200
5. [Home Rule Charter](#) – § 12-300
6. [Policy](#) 901 - School-Community Relations Objectives
7. [Policy](#) 902 - Publications Programs
8. [Home Rule Charter](#) – § 12-310
9. [Policy](#) 906 - Addressing Student and Constituent Concerns
10. [Policy](#) 907 - School Visitors

## **Related Information:**

1. Policy 007 Public Engagement Board Operating Guidelines