

Board Operating Guidelines for Board of Education Public Engagement (Attachment for Policy 007)

Purpose

The purpose of the Board Operating Guidelines is to effectuate Policy 007: Public Engagement, which sets forth 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”).

Procedures

Communications

The goal of the Board’s public engagement will be to regularly and consistently communicate with stakeholders using shared messages that highlight Board priorities, decision-making, key engagement events, and progress or results.

To execute the Board’s goals for public engagement, Board staff will regularly communicate with the public in the below ways in alignment to its current strategic communications plans:

Communication Channel
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Facebook
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● X (formerly known as Twitter)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● News and Press Releases (language translation available through the toolbar at the top of the page)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Newsletter and Supplemental E-Blasts (sent to all District staff, families, and students and available in the District’s predominant languages; to request to be added as a community member, contact the Board here)

In addition to the above opt-in communication channels, Board staff will regularly conduct media and external relations activities including but not limited to:

- Pitch stories to news media outlets, send out media advisories, and provide media availability for Board President, Board Vice-President, and Board Members
- Strategically position opinion pieces in news media to make the opinions of the Board known

- Engage elected officials and other key stakeholders to build coalition around the work and priorities of the Board

Constituent Services

The below methods can be used by constituents and will be monitored regularly by Board staff to triage the intake of any constituent outreach:

- Call the Office of the Board of Education during regular business hours at: (215) 400-4010
- Leave a message during non-regular business hours at: (215) 400-4010
- Contact the Board of Education [here](#)
- Send mail or visit the Board of Education’s physically accessible office located at: 440 N. Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19130, Suite 101

The Board’s regular office hours are Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm. Constituents reaching out to the Board can expect a response in no more than 48 hours, and oftentimes much faster. Constituents who speak a language other than English will be supported through a translator when contacting the Board’s office.

Board staff will connect the constituent to the most appropriate contact in the District for the question or concern that is raised. Board staff will also follow up with District staff to ensure the constituent’s needs were adequately met. These follow up timelines will align with the resolution benchmarks set by the District.

Constituent outreach will be tracked by Board staff in a spreadsheet log that is shared weekly with Board Members. Additionally, quarterly summaries of outreach received will be provided to Board Members including:

- Types of constituents reaching out (i.e. students, parents/caregivers, staff, etc)
- Trending issues being raised
- Steps taken or recommendations made to District staff to alleviate trending issues
- Resolutions and response time

School Visits

School visits are organized for all Board Members by Board staff 1-2 times per month. To respect the school leader’s time and their ability to manage their day-to-day responsibilities, each visit will last no more than sixty (60) minutes. Board Member school visits intentionally include both District and charter-run schools of all grade types and occur throughout the academic year.

During school visits, Board Members are greeted by the school’s leadership, provided a tour of the school, visit classrooms, and meet with the school’s leadership to discuss areas of success and opportunities for growth and improvement within the school communities. These discussions will be rooted in the Board’s adopted Goals and Guardrails to understand how the experience of school communities can inform progress towards the Board’s vision for the District.

Prior to each visit, transportation can be provided for Board Members if requested and pre-approved in line with relevant Board Operating Guidelines. School information sheets are also provided to Board Members in advance of school visits including information such as:

- Principal name
- Learning network

- Assistant Superintendent
- Enrollment
- Demographics
- Attendance
- Special Education data
- English Language Learner data
- Suspension data
- SPREE (District-run) or ACE (charter-run) data
- Any school-specific program data

Following each school visit, Board staff shall provide the Board with a summary including attendees and highlights from the visit.

Public Hearings

Public hearings are held at least two (2) times per year and are posted on the [Board website](#), [Board calendar](#), and public notice of the meeting is provided in accordance with the Board's [Meetings policy](#). Included in the public notice will be the speaker protocols and registration instructions for each public hearing which will also be available on the [Board website](#).

Written comment can be submitted to the Board as outlined on the [Board website](#) in advance of each public hearing.

If an individual registers to speak and speaks a language other than English, a translator will be coordinated. If an individual submits written comment in a language other than English, the comment/s will be translated into English for Board Members.

Public hearings do not have defined topics and instead provide an opportunity for the public to raise topics of interest with the Board.

Public hearings will take place at the physically accessible Education Center located at 440 N. Broad Street or at other physically accessible locations in different parts of Philadelphia. All public hearings will be streamed live on the [District's website](#) and feature live American Sign Language translation.

Maintenance Schedule

Staff of the Office of the Board will conduct at least annual reviews of the above communication and constituent services guidelines to update these guidelines to put in place the best practices for public engagement.