

Bylaws of the Board

Public Statements

The Board of Education recognizes the responsibility of Board members in their role as community leaders to participate in public discourse on matters of civic or community interest, including those involving the District, and their right to freely express their personal views. However, to ensure communication of a consistent, unified message regarding District issues, Board members are expected to respect the authority of the Board to choose its representatives to communicate its positions and to abide by established protocols.

All public statements authorized to be made on behalf of the Board of Education shall be made by the Board President or, if appropriate, by the Superintendent or designee at the direction of the Board President. No individual Board member shall make public statements in the name of the Board.

When speaking for the District, the Board encourages its spokespersons to exercise restraint and tact and to communicate the message in a manner that promotes public confidence in the Board's leadership.

Board spokespersons shall not disclose confidential information or information received in closed session except when authorized by a majority of the Board. (Government Code 54963)

Before voting on any issue, all Board members shall be encouraged to present whatever evidence they may feel important to the matter at hand. The Board shall fully consider the implications and relevancy of all information so presented. All opinions, reactions and positions shall be openly discussed, so that each member may understand all aspects of the issue before the Board makes its decision. Any Board member who may wish to criticize or oppose any specific Board action should do so during the Board meeting.

When speaking to community groups, the media, or other members of the public, individual Board members should recognize that their statements may be perceived as reflecting the views and positions of the Board. Board members have a responsibility to identify personal viewpoints as such and not as the viewpoint of the Board.

Once a Board decision has been reached, all Board members shall abide by that decision until it is amended or rescinded by subsequent Board action. When Board members express their opinions outside of the Board meeting, it is their responsibility to respect the democratic nature of Board decision-making and always identify personal viewpoints as such.

In addition, the Board encourages members who participate on social networking sites, blogs, or other discussion or informational sites to conduct themselves in a respectful, courteous, and professional manner and to model good behavior for District students and the community. Such electronic communications are subject to the same standards and protocols established for other forms of communication, and the disclosure requirements of the California Public Records Act may likewise apply to them.

BB 9010(b)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

35010 Control of District; prescription and enforcement of rules

GOVERNMENT CODE

6250-6270 California Public Records Act

54960 Actions to stop or prevent violation of meeting provisions

54963 Confidential information in closed session

Adopted: (7-88 10-92 7-96 12-05) 9-14

ORANGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Orange, California