

Community Relations

Political Processes

The Board of Trustees Board may actively advocate fiscal and public policy that supports the district's schools and the children in the community. To the extent possible, the Board shall be proactive in defining the district's advocacy agenda based on the needs of the district and the direction set forth in the district's philosophy and goals.

(cf. 0000 – Philosophy – Goals and Comprehensive Plans
(cf. 0200 - Goals for the School District)
(cf. 9000 - Role of the Board)
(cf. 9010 - Public Statements)

The Board may establish reasonable regulations related to Board members and employees engaging in political activity during working hours and on district premises. (Education Code 7055)

(cf. 4119.25/4219.25/4319.25 - Political Activities of Employees)

Legislation

The Board's responsibility as an advocate for the district may include lobbying at the state and national levels.

Because local governments also make decisions which impact the district's schools, the Board and the Superintendent or designee shall work to establish ongoing relationships with city and county officials and agencies, and shall inform them of the potential effect of local issues on the schools.

(cf. 1020 - Youth Services)
(cf. 1400 - Relations Between Other Governmental Agencies and the Schools)
(cf. 7131 - Relations with Local Agencies)

The Board may identify issues that will affect its schools and the children in its community, establish goals and priorities for legislative advocacy, solicit community input and adopt legislative positions. The Superintendent or designee may establish a coordinated plan for carrying out the advocacy agenda, including specific activities, target groups or individuals, staff responsibilities and timelines.

In order to strengthen legislative advocacy efforts, the district may work with organizations and coalitions and may join associations whose representatives lobby on behalf of their members.

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Political Processes (continued)

As necessary, the Superintendent or designee may draft legislative proposals which serve the district's interests.

The Board may provide fair and impartial information about legislative issues affecting schools and children and shall inform the community about its legislative advocacy activities..

(cf. 1100 - Communication with the Public)

(cf. 1112 - Media Relations)

Ballot Measures/Candidates

The Board may study the potential effect of ballot measures on the district's schools. Any Board discussion of the effect of such measures shall include an opportunity for Board members, staff and members of the public to speak on all sides of the issue. Following such study, the Board may adopt positions in support of or in opposition to ballot measures of importance to education.

(cf. 9323 - Meeting Conduct)

No district funds, services, supplies or equipment shall be used to urge the support or defeat of any ballot measure or candidate, including any candidate for election to the Board. (Education Code 7054)

(cf. 1325 - Advertising and Promotion)

The Superintendent or designee may use district resources to provide students, parents/guardians and community members with information related to ballot measures, including information about the impact of ballot measures on the district. (Education Code 7054)

The Superintendent or designee may research, draft and prepare a bond measure or other initiative for the ballot, but shall not use district resources to secure signatures in order to qualify the measure for the ballot.

Upon request, Board members and district administrators may appear at any time before a citizens' group to explain why the Board called for an election on a bond measure and to answer questions. (Education Code 7054.1)

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Political Processes (continued)

If the presentation occurs during working hours, the district representative shall not urge a citizens' group to vote for or against the bond or parcel tax measure.

For informational purposes, the Superintendent or designee may conduct a poll related to a ballot issue. Such a poll shall not advocate a particular position on the issue.

Legal Advocacy

The Board recognizes that some issues are more appropriately addressed judicially rather than legislatively. When a legal issue is likely to set a state or national precedent, the district may join with other districts or parties in order to challenge the issue through litigation or other appropriate means.

(cf. 9124 - Attorney)

Political Forums

Forums on political issues may be held in district facilities as long as the forum is made available to all sides of the issue on an equitable basis. (Education Code 7058)

(cf. 1330 - Use of School Facilities)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

7054 Use of district property

7054.1 Requested appearance

7055 Local rules

7056 Soliciting or receiving political funds

7058 Use of forum

35160 Authority of governing boards

35172 Promotional activities

GOVERNMENT CODE

50023 Attending legislature to support or oppose legislation

53060.5 Attendance at legislative body; expenses

54953.5 Right to record proceedings

54953.6 Broadcasts of proceedings

81000-91015 Political Reform Act

Policy Adopted: March 23, 1987

Policy Revised: September 26, 2005;