

B/SL-2: UNITY OF CONTROL

Adopted: 7/26/00

Revised: 03/13/03; 11/13/03; 09/22/16; 05/25/17; 09/09/21

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear direction on the procedures individual Trustees can exercise when making request for information or requesting actions by school personnel and how to resolve concerns when requests are denied. In the broader purpose, the policy reinforces the fact that official requests by the majority of the Board are binding on the Superintendent, but individual Trustees possess no authority. The goal of the procedures in this policy is to balance providing ready access of information to the Board and the community while avoiding requests by individual Trustees that expend significant district resources and may not be supported by the majority of the Board. Individual Trustee requests for **significant** information should focus on information needed for monitoring progress on strategic goals with a focus on student learning goals rather than operations and management issues.

Accordingly:

1. Decisions or directives of individual Board members, officers, or committees are not binding on the Superintendent except when the Board has specifically authorized such exercise of authority.
2. The Superintendent is the Board's only link to operational management and conduct so that all authority and accountability of staff, as far as the Board is concerned, is considered the authority and accountability of the Superintendent.
 - a. The Board may communicate with but shall not give instructions or request actions from persons who report directly or indirectly to the Superintendent.
 - b. Request for information shall be made through the Board Liaison following agreed upon protocols
 - c. Trustees shall redirect staff, individuals, and groups in the community to seek information using the available systems starting at the most directly connected entry point based on the information they desire (e.g. teacher/staff, then principal, then Association Superintendent...)

3. In cases where Board members or committees request significant reports, information, assistance or employee action without explicit Board approval, the Superintendent shall obtain Board approval when such requests, in the Superintendent's opinion, have already been provided, are outside the proper authority or role of the requester, or require a material amount of staff time or funds to fulfill.
 - A. In cases where a Trustee requests from an employee, significant reports, information, assistance or employee action without explicit Superintendent approval, the employee is directed to report the request to the Superintendent or the Board Liaison, and proceed as directed.
 - B. The Board Liaison shall request that the Trustee(s) complete the Information Request Form.
 - C. If the request comes from a member of any Board sanctioned committee, the Board Liaison will request the form to be filled out by the committee's chair.
 - D. If the Superintendent does not agree with the request of an individual Board member to create reports or commit employee time and energy, the Board member has the option to accept that decision; follow the Progressive Response Protocols, or Board Meeting Action outlined below.

Types of Information Requested

It is possible that a Trustee may want to ask a staff member for simple or **insignificant** information just as any community may ask. This may be defined as information that is available and readily accessible to the public and can be provided in 10 minutes or less. In cases where the information would require **significante** time or resources, the staff member should seek direction from the Superintendent or the Board liaison on whether to redirect time and resources to provide the requested information or action. The staff member determines whether the information requested is significant or insignificant.

Significant information requested should follow the Request for Information Process outlined below. This will allow the Board President and Superintendent to monitor the quantity and nature of Trustee requests for information to avoid duplication of requests and monitor staff work capacity needs.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION PROCESS

In order for a Trustee, Trustees, or committees to request reports, significant information, assistance or employee action, the request should be made **directly to the Board Liaison** using the following protocols:

1. The Board liaison shall develop and maintain an *Information Request Form* in Smartsheet that includes the below information:
 - a. Trustee(s) Name(s)
 - b. Date of Request
 - c. Detailed description of the information requested
 - d. Indicate the Strategic Goal linked to the request (Dropdown menu)
 - e. Indicate the initiate of the request (Check all that apply)
 - i. Request initiated by staff or staff group.
Name _____
 - ii. Request initiated by community member or group.
Name _____
 - iii. Personal interest
 - f. Describe the reason for or purpose of the request.
 - g. If initiated by staff or community member (parent/guardian) or group, indicate which chain-of-command steps were already taken prior to initiating this Trustee request (Check all that apply).
 - i. Worked through teacher/staff
 - ii. Worked through building administrator
 - iii. Worked through program administrator
 - iv. Worked through Associate Superintendent
 - v. Worked through Central Office Director
 - vi. Worked through Superintendent
 - vii. Worked through Association representative
2. Trustees shall use the Information Request Form when requesting information and note if the request is an urgent matter and/or an emergency.
3. The Board Liaison shall send the Information Request Form to the Superintendent and a copy to the Board President and/or all Trustees. All Trustees will be granted access to Smartsheet tracking system to review requests for information as needed.

4. Within 5 business days, the Superintendent can accommodate the request or decline the request if, in the Superintendent's opinion, the information:

- has already been provided,
- is outside the proper authority or role of the requester, or
- requires a material amount of staff time or funds to fulfill.
- If the Superintendent declines the request for information, the following shall occur in the sequence listed:
 - i. The Superintendent informs the Board Liaison including the reason(s) for declining.
 - ii. The Board Liaison shall then forward the declination and the reasons listed to the requesting Trustee(s) and send a copy to the Board President.

Protocols when a Request for Information Declined

If a request for information is declined, the Trustee has the following options in response to the declination:

1. The Trustee can accept the decision to decline
2. The Trustee can pursue a reversal of the Superintendent's decision through the *Progressive Response Protocols*.
 - a. Trustees(s) making the request shall meet individually with the Superintendent and Board liaison to discuss the request.
 - b. If not satisfied, the Trustee(s) shall meet to discuss the request with the Board President, Board liaison, and Superintendent together
 - c. If the Board President is the requestor, the Superintendent can select another Board member to include in the meeting to discuss the request.

3. After the Trustee completes the Progressive Response Protocols, when the request for information is still denied the Trustee can request *Board Meeting Action* on a request of information governed by the following protocols:

- a. The request for information shall be listed as a potential Action Item on the next scheduled Board meeting.
- b. The scope of the agenda item shall be limited to discussion of whether or not the request for information should be granted.
- c. All Trustees shall be provided the Request for Information form.
- d. All Trustees shall be provided with the declination explanation from the Superintendent.

- e. The Board meeting discussion shall allow for the Superintendent to address reasons for the declination of the request.
- f. The Board discussion shall allow the requesting Trustees(s) to provide further details for items included on the *Information Request Form* categories only.
- g. The Request for Information can be authorized by a majority vote of the Board of Trustees.