

## **BOARD COMMUNICATIONS WITH STAFF MEMBERS**

**191**

It is the intent of the Pojoaque Valley School Board and District to establish effective relationships between the Board of Education and all district employees. It is recognized that a positive and open line of communication is a strong asset in any organization.

The first underlying principle of this policy is that a Board member has legal authority only when a quorum of the Board is present at a duly noticed meeting in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. Outside a duly noticed meeting, an individual Board member cannot act in any official capacity. This policy does not preclude individual Board members from being available to their constituents and directing constituents to the proper district channels in order that the issue may be addressed. The second underlying principle of this policy is that open communication among all parties assists in immediate and effective resolution. The Board requires all employees to follow the proper channels of authority in reporting or attempting to resolve problems. Board members are encouraged to work with the Superintendent to ensure effective lines of communication among all parties.

When a staff member goes directly to a Board member with a school-relation question or concern, the Board member may listen to the staff member and guide them back through the District's chain of command or communication, beginning with the staff member's immediate supervisor. For information purposes, the Board member may also inform the Superintendent of the staff member's question or concern.

If the question or concern is related to personnel or the operations of the school, the administration of the District – beginning with the immediate supervisor and ending with the Superintendent – is charged with addressing the issue. If the question or concern is related to policy, the Board may initiate a policy discussion and subsequent policy action as permitted by the Open Meetings Act..

Board members may also be parents and may communicate with staff members and visit schools in their parental role. If the Board member intends to visit a school as an individual Board member, the Board member will inform the Superintendent prior to the visit. At no time shall the Board member imply or assert board authority during the visit. Board members shall refrain from entering the district's properties for the purpose of investigating, inspecting, or supervising an employee.

All requests for information shall be directed by the Board to the Superintendent.

In order to safeguard an employee's due process, Board members, the Superintendent, and an employee who has filed a formal complaint, grievance, or appeal should refrain from any informal communication or discussions amongst the aforementioned parties.

Whenever an employee has a complaint, knowledge or wrongdoing in the workplace, a problem which requires administrative attention or information pertaining to their job assignment or location, they must follow the chain of command in reporting to their supervisor.

No supervisor is to retaliate against any employee who follows this policy and is acting in "good faith".

LEGAL REF.: 22-5-4 NMSA

CROSS REF.: 153A Rules for Public Participation