

UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY
Policy Number: 2004
Policy Name: Board Member Communications
Date Last Approved:

By this policy, the Utah State Board of Education, “the Board,” respecting First Amendment rights, establishes the following internal rules and procedures for Board members’ communication and expected decorum. Board members may speak, write, debate, listen, challenge, and learn while maintaining civility and mutual respect.

1. External Advocacy
 - a. A member’s communications as described in Board Bylaws Article V subsection (4)(a) and (b) shall not, as determined by Board Leadership:
 - i. Place the Board at risk of legal liability;
 - ii. Defame Board staff or individuals;
 - iii. Promote inaccurate information;
 - iv. Place Board staff or individuals at risk for harm; or
 - v. Incite or encourage violence.
2. Additional Board Member Ethical Responsibilities
 - a. A member shall comply with the Board’s Acceptable Use Policy regarding use of USBE electronic devices.
 - b. A member should not communicate anything that violates R277-217 Educator Standards or Title 67 Chapter 16 Utah Public Officers’ and Employees Ethics Act.
 - c. A member is encouraged to accept participation requests and not block public commenters on social media.
 - d. A member should hold themselves to a higher standard than the general public in areas of conduct and ethics, including in their communications generally and in their use of social media.
3. Board and Member Communications
 - a. When a constituent communication does not identify a member’s district, Board staff will provide an informational response;
 - b. When a communication identifies a member’s district, the applicable member is encouraged to respond;

- c. A member may not share pre-meeting materials with the public until such time that the document or its contents are made public through the established process;
 - d. A member may not share or forward to anyone outside of the Board or Board staff, communications in draft form until the Board makes the communications or contents public; and
 - e. A member is encouraged to respond in a timely manner to communications from constituents and:
 - i. may utilize Board staff to assist with constituent communications; and
 - ii. If 25 or more emails regarding the same topic are received, rely upon an informational reply sent by Board staff, approved by Board Leadership.
4. Incoming Correspondence with Board Leadership
- a. ~~[Board leadership shall forward to the Board Secretary within 48 hours all correspondence, whether electronic or otherwise, which is directed to the Board Chair and Vice Chairs, and would otherwise be subject to GRAMA, from an elected public official; but only if the sender has consented to distribution to the full Board.]~~
If an elected public official, sends correspondence addressed to all members of Board leadership, whether electronic or otherwise, which would otherwise be subject to GRAMA, leadership shall:
 - i. Request permission from the elected official to share the communication with the Board within 48 hours; and
 - ii. Forward the correspondence to the Board secretary if the sender consents to distribution to the full Board within 48 hours of receiving consent to share.
 - b. The Board secretary shall forward all correspondence provided under Subsection 4.a. to all members of the Board.
5. Outgoing Correspondence from Board Leadership
- a. The entire Board shall be copied on correspondence sent to elected public officials that communicates an official Board position when [sent] signed by or sent under the name of all members of Board leadership.
 - b. The entire Board shall be copied on correspondence sent to [LEA leadership] a district superintendent or charter school director when signed by or sent under the name of all members of Board leadership.

- c. The Board secretary shall forward all correspondence under Sections (5)(a) and (5)(b) to the full Board within 24 hours of the correspondence being sent.