

Commonly Asked Questions about School Boards and School Board Meetings

What is the role of the school board?

The Gunter ISD Board of Trustees is a seven-member elected panel that functions mainly as our District's policy-making body. Although it is comprised of individuals, it acts officially as a group. Working as a team with our District's school administrators, personnel and community, the Board strives to provide the necessary policies and procedures that will allow Gunter ISD to make quality decisions that are related to the students. Education and safety is the key focus for the District. School Board members are elected by the citizens who reside within Gunter ISD to three-year staggered terms.

An important thing to remember is that they not only represent the public, but Board members are also charged to translate the needs of students into policies, goals and strategies that reflect the standards and values of the community. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to: hiring and evaluating the Superintendent of Schools; approving the District's budget; establishing goals and evaluating results; levying taxes and issuing bonds; ordering elections and communicating with the community.

When does the Board meet?

Regular meetings of the Board of Trustees are open to the public and are usually scheduled for 6 p.m. the third Monday of the month in the Board Room of the Gunter ISD Administration Building. Occasionally, a regular meeting date is changed, or a special meeting is called, but in all cases a notice of the change is posted on the door of the Administration Building at least 72-hours in advance. In accordance with the Texas Open Meeting Law, the Board has the privilege of meeting privately in a closed meeting to discuss matters related to personnel, student discipline, security, land acquisition or to consult with legal counsel. However, no action may be taken in closed session.

Who can attend school board meetings?

Citizens are welcomed and encouraged to attend all school board meetings. Occasionally during a meeting, legally specified circumstances may call for an adjournment into closed session for discussion and consideration. Again, however, all votes are taken in open session.

Public participation at board meetings is welcomed, but this participation is limited to the open forum portions of regular meetings and public hearing agenda items. The audience may not, at any other time during a board meeting, enter into discussion on matters being considered by the school board.

Whom should you contact with concerns?

Individuals who have questions, concerns, or suggestions should first contact the teacher or school administrator. Matters not resolved satisfactorily at the campus level should then be brought to the Superintendent before the individual should request a forum with the Board. It is important that citizens follow this protocol to best ensure they will be heard in an efficient manner.

How can a citizen address the Board?

Citizens may request to speak before the Board of Trustees in open forum by contacting the Superintendent's administrative assistant before the meeting begins. This may be done by phone or before the meeting at the meeting site.

Those addressing the Board are asked to adhere to a five-minute limit. The speaker should identify themselves and their group affiliation (if any), and make a brief presentation with a suggested solution if one is sought. Remarks should be addressed to the Board as a whole.

The Board is prohibited by state law from deliberating, discussing or taking action on any item that is not on the meeting's agenda.

The School Board will not hear complaints about individual district employees or permit discussion of such matter at a Board meeting. If a citizen has not first spoken of the employees most directly connected to the issue being presented, i.e. the teacher, principal, coordinator, and superintendent, the citizen will be asked to do so before coming to the Board.

Once an individual has gone through the proper levels, and they may request to be placed on the agenda to present specific concerns or suggestions to the Board during a regular meeting. The individual must direct the request to the office of the Superintendent no later than noon on the Thursday prior to the specified meeting date.

If you have other questions or would like more information concerning Board meetings or procedures, please contact the Superintendent's Office at 903 433 4750.

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