

NEW POLICY

DRAFT Governance Manual 4R: Board Requests for Information Process

4R: Communications Between Board Members and Staff and Requests for Information

The Albuquerque Public Schools Board of Education requires accurate and timely information to fulfill its board responsibilities and has the right to request district information, documents, and records. The board and the district prioritize transparent and honest communication. The superintendent, as the board's sole executive officer, is responsible for keeping the board informed about district activities.

Accordingly,

1. The board believes an efficient and effective request for information process supports informed decision-making without unduly burdening staff resources.
2. Board members will respect the delineation between governance responsibilities (board oversight) and operational duties (staff management and execution). Requests for information or analysis will align strictly with the Board's governance responsibilities.
3. Board members will evaluate the necessity, urgency, and alignment with board responsibilities before requesting information. They are encouraged to first utilize existing reports, dashboards, or communication channels to locate the information independently.
4. If the information is not readily available, board members may request it from the superintendent. "Readily available" is defined as information that exists within current reports, dashboards, databases, or routine communications and can be provided with minimal staff effort.
5. If the information is not readily available, they may submit a formal Request for Information (RFI). Formal RFI requests are defined as requests requiring significant time or new analysis, data compilation, or report creation that go beyond readily available channels.
6. The superintendent may assign the request to the appropriate staff.
7. Information requested by one board member will be shared with all members within a reasonable timeframe without disrupting district operations. Exceptions may be made if the information is specific to a school within the board member's district.
8. Board members must maintain the confidentiality of information, documents, and records in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Addendum to 4R: Request for Information Process

Requests for Information

Albuquerque Public Schools Board of Education members will follow this process when requesting information from the administration:

1. If an information request is necessary, board members should submit it through the district's Let's Talk platform. The request should include details about the information needed, the purpose of the request, and the desired timeline. The superintendent will coordinate with support staff as needed to fulfill the request.
2. Requests deemed routine or non-urgent will be addressed through standard updates or existing reports, such as the board's weekly newsletter, while only essential governance-related information will require the formal RFI process.
3. Board members will participate in a transparent process quarterly to evaluate requests made to staff. This data will be periodically reviewed to identify trends, assess staff impact, recommend policy adjustments, and foster shared accountability.
4. The district may withhold or redact items if they are confidential or exempt under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or other laws.
5. Board members are not required to submit formal public information requests under the New Mexico Inspection of Public Records Act (IPRA).
6. Requests for easily accessible information will typically be processed within 1-3 business days. The superintendent or designee will work to fulfill requests as quickly as possible.
7. For information not readily accessible, the district must provide the requested materials within 20 business days. If this is unreasonably difficult due to factors like volume or location, the district may extend the timeline to 30 business days but must notify the board member of the reason for the delay.
8. If a request is denied, and the board member wishes to pursue it, they may email the Board President and superintendent to request it be placed on a future board agenda for consideration.
9. If the majority of the board supports the request, the superintendent will assign staff to fulfill it, and the information will be shared with the entire board. If the majority does not agree, the request should be revised or dropped.
10. If a board member's request totals 200 or more pages of material within a 90-day period, the district must publicly display the costs incurred in fulfilling those requests.

Board of Education Internal Requests

Board members are allowed to communicate with each other to ask questions, provide information, or socialize as long as it does not violate the New Mexico Open Meetings Act (OMA).

In this instance, board members should:

1. Communicate in a timely manner consistent with established procedures to avoid surprise or embarrassment.
2. Respond in a timely manner to requests from other board members and from staff working with the board.
3. Allow other board members sufficient time to consider issues, as well as sufficient time to complete verbal statements or responses.
4. Reach a decision only when fully informed of the facts.

5. To the extent possible, protect the integrity and promote a positive image of the District and the board.

Appendix Laws and Regulations

- New Mexico Open Meetings Act
- New Mexico Inspection of Public Records Act
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)