

# Cold Spring School District Governing Board

## Board Protocol: Email Communication with Constituents

Adopted by the Governing Board: April 10, 2017

### **Purpose of Protocol**

The Governing Board members wish to ensure that their handling of constituent emails allows them to be responsive and responsible to the entire community, and to respect the Brown Act and respect the Board as a whole.

### **Protocol**

*Responding to emails directed to the Board as a whole:*

We agree that the Board President is our spokesperson and will answer emails directed to the whole Board. The Board President will acknowledge receipt of the email and, if appropriate, encourage a face-to-face meeting or phone call. The Board President will forward the email to the Superintendent/Principal, and together they will determine if the comments/issues raised in the email are within the purview of the Board or if they are best addressed and resolved by District Staff and/or Administrators.

In some cases, it may be appropriate for the Superintendent/Principal to answer an email on behalf of the Board. The Superintendent/Principal will respond and send a copy to each Board member, so they know the response.

The Board agrees to direct any District Staff issue to the Superintendent/Principal, and not contact District Staff directly. The Board agrees that all legal questions will be directed to the Superintendent/Principal.

*Responding to emails sent to less than all five Board members:*

The Board agrees that the Board member(s) who receive an email with an issue will forward it to the Board President and the Superintendent/Principal. The Board President will acknowledge receipt of the email and, if appropriate, encourage a face-to-face meeting or phone call. The Board President will forward the email to the Superintendent/Principal, and together they will determine if the comments/issues raised in the email are within the purview of the Board or if they are best addressed and resolved by District Staff and/or Administrators.

In some cases, it may be appropriate for the Superintendent/Principal to answer an email on behalf of the Board. The Superintendent/Principal will respond and send a copy to each Board member, so they know the response.

The Board agrees to direct any District Staff issue to the Superintendent/Principal, and not contact District Staff directly. The Board agrees that all legal questions will be directed to the Superintendent/Principal.

*Email concerns*

The Board recognizes that unlike a personal conversation, the Board has no control over where and to whom an email is forwarded, and that words can be cut/pasted out of context. For these reasons, the Board wants to encourage personal and direct communications.

The Board also recognizes that email is not a secure vehicle of communication. Therefore, Board members shall never use email to communicate sensitive or confidential information.

[KD April 2017]