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| Title | Board Communications Policy and Procedures |  |
| Type | Board Policy and Procedures | |
| Status | Approved | |
| Adopted | February 3, 2009 | |
| Last Revised | March 19, 2024 | |
| Prior Revisions | June 2022, April 2017, March 2012 | |

PURPOSE

Effective communication is a key element of the BLRA school board’s representation and understanding of the school’s and parents’ needs when setting the general direction of school policies. The purpose of the BLRA Board of Directors (“Board”) Board Communications Policy is to codify the Board’s communication principles and describe how the principles are met through the activities of the Board. The Board and staff seek continuous and transparent communications with the community to obtain feedback and perspectives to support decision-making while keeping the community informed about policies, instructional programs, events and other topics affecting our stakeholders. This policy includes the following sections:

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| Section 1 Roles and Responsibilities Section 1.1 Public’s Right to Know and Access to Information |
| Section 2 School Board Member Contact Information |
| Section 3 Board Use of Email Section 3.1 Board Public Email Account Section 3.2 Board Individual Email Accounts |
| Section 4 Board Member Personal Use of Social Media |
| Section 5 Stakeholder Concerns and Complaints |
| Appendix A: Response Template |

SECTION 1 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board is responsible for establishing the Board Communications Policy and has the sole authority to amend it.

The Board President speaks on behalf of the Board. The Board Vice President will speak on behalf of the Board in the absence of the President. The Board President may delegate this role, as required, to any other Board member. Board members can speak on behalf of the Board with the prior approval of the Board. If Board Members are speaking to the media or other parties but not acting on behalf of the Board, they should make it clear that they are doing so in a capacity other than as a Board Member and that the information being provided is not information that the Board Member is aware of only because he or she is a Board Member.

Guidance for communications between stakeholders and BLA staff such as teachers and administrators can be found in the Student Handbooks available on the BLA website under the Resources tab.

SECTION 1.1 PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The Board respects and supports the public's right to know and ability to access information about the policies, programs and activities at the school. To enable access, the Board will utilize the BLA website as the main repository of information and will ensure routine communications are sent to stakeholders from teachers, the administration, and the Board itself. Financial information will be posted to the school's website in compliance with the Public School Financial Transparency Act. Guidance for gaining access to records and other school information can be found in the BLA Policy "School Board Meetings, Policy Adoption, and Document Retention and Access."

SECTION 2 SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER CONTACT INFORMATION

Names and titles of Board members will be provided on the BLRA website, under the School Board section. This section of the website will also list the email contact information for the public Board group email address.

SECTION 3 BOARD USE OF EMAIL

The Board's email use is required to efficiently execute the school's business. Due to legal restrictions placed on Open Meetings of public bodies, strict guidelines must be adhered to in order to remain compliant with all applicable laws. Under no circumstances shall the Board membership conduct communications through email that violates the Colorado Sunshine Law.

SECTION 3.1 BOARD USE OF PUBLIC EMAIL

The Board shall maintain a public group email address which will be published to the school community and serve as the primary means for the school community to contact the Board outside of public meetings

The Board Secretary shall monitor all incoming messages to the email account and maintain the Colorado Open Records Act (CORA) log and the Sunshine List. The Board Secretary shall alert the Board President if a response is needed. Unless otherwise instructed to another Director, the Board President will answer email inquiries on behalf of the Board but may delegate responsibilities to Directors with relevant expertise on a matter (Vice President for sanctioned organization queries, Secretary for policy questions, financial questions for Finance Committee, etc.).

- For consistency, Board members should use the template in Appendix A as the basis for a reply to a stakeholder.
- If an incoming email may be addressed through policy or does not require a board decision or opinion, the Board President or Secretary may respond to the email with the applicable policy reference.
- If an incoming email may *not* be directly addressed with policy the Board Secretary or any other Director may request that the topic be addressed in a Board meeting.

SECTION 3.2 BOARD MEMBER INDIVIDUAL EMAIL ACCOUNTS

Individual email accounts may be created for each Board Member. Individual Board Member email accounts may be used for individual Board member work. The Board will utilize the Board's group email for official messaging and sending information to broad sets of stakeholders.

To ensure the most efficient dissemination of Board incoming communications an auto forward rule from the Public Board email account to the individual Board Member email accounts may be established.

Individual Board Member email accounts may be linked or synchronized to privately owned devices including computers and phones.

Due to the potential for protected or sensitive information being forwarded to the individual Board Member email accounts if a privately owned device is linked to the account the following guidelines apply to these devices:

Directors will accept all security configurations from the email server when connecting their privately owned device to the corporate email server

If a device is made, maintained, kept or issued for a director's official capacity and/or in the "custody and control" of the school, their device may become subject to legal proceedings.

- Directors acknowledge that by storing or accessing public information with their privately owned device their device may become subject to legal proceedings.

The corporation is not responsible for any loss, damage, or fees associated with loss of use as a result of legal action.

Devices will be password or otherwise protected from unauthorized access

Directors will notify the Board Membership of any theft, loss, or unauthorized access to a privately owned device which has been linked to their individual Board Member email account

SECTION 4 BOARD MEMBER PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The Board acknowledges that some Board Members may use social media tools for personal or professional use in their capacity other than as a Board Member. Board Members will ensure that their online activity does not conflict with the Code of Conduct or this Board Communication Policy.

Board Members will not affiliate themselves with the BLRA Board on any social media account profiles to avoid being identified as a spokesperson for the Board. Board Members may forward documents through social media that are publicly available; however, in accordance with Board policy, may not comment on them.

Board Members who use social media tools for personal use will consider how it may affect BLRA and other Board Members, recognizing that social media content is pervasive, often permanent and in many cases out of personal control once posted.

Board Members will ensure that no material is posted to their personal pages or sites that could jeopardize the reputation of BLRA or the Board.

SECTION 5 STAKEHOLDER CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

The Board and staff welcome constructive criticism with an interest in improving school experiences and programs. Stakeholders with concerns or complaints should utilize the BLA Grievance Policy and procedures for addressing concerns and complaints. If a stakeholder sends a complaint or concern to the Board, the Board will ask them to utilize the Grievance Policy which seeks to address and resolve concerns and complaints at the lowest level. The Grievance Policy can be found on the BLA website on the School Board page.

Revisions to Content

| Revision Date | Change | Rationale |
|---------------|---|--|
| March 2012 | Revised for individual board member email accounts | Add new communication means |
| April 2017 | Updated and added social media | Provide guidance for its use |
| June 2022 | Expanded on Board use of public email/responses to email, and duties Clarified/expanded language around privately-owned devices based on legal guidelines Clarification on appendix B to align with previously revised policies | Added necessary guidance for responding to stakeholders and use of privately owned devices |
| March 2024 | Removed banned parents list Added Section 1.1 Public’s Right to Know and Access to Information Added Section 5 Stakeholder Concerns and Complaints Modified Appendices for Board Response Template Added Governing Authority, References and Cross-References | The Board will not maintain a banned list. Added Grievance Policy reference to encourage use of that process. Modified the Board Response template to set expectation and standard for Board responses to concerns sent directly to the Board. |

Governing Authority and References:

- Colorado Revised Statute (CRS) 24-6-401 Open Meetings Law (or Sunshine Law): [open-meeting-requirements-of-the-colorado-sunshine-law](#)
- D49 Board of Directors Policies and Procedures, Section KD “Public Information and Communications” [Featured - School District 49 BoardDocs® Plus](#)

- D49 Board of Directors Policies and Procedures, Section KE “Stakeholder Concerns and Complaints” [Featured - School District 49 BoardDocs® Plus](#)

Cross-References (related BLA documentation):

- BLA Grievance Policy “Stakeholder Grievance Policy and Procedures” [School Board - Banning Lewis Ranch \(blracademy.org\)](#)
- BLA Policy “School Board Meetings, Policy Adoption, and Document Retention and Access.” [School Board - Banning Lewis Ranch \(blracademy.org\)](#)

File Location: BLA School Board Website

APPENDIX A: RESPONSE TEMPLATE WITH SPECIAL MEETING

Purpose: The Board will send this template message to stakeholders who submit concerns directly to the Board email. The Board asks stakeholders to utilize the Grievance Policy to seek remedy, which allows the staff to perform their assigned responsibilities.

Thank you for sharing your perspectives and recommendations with the Board. Your message is accessible by all of the Board of Directors for review.

We are very interested in hearing from our many stakeholders as we seek to continually improve the experience for our students, staff and families. We seek openness, transparency and stability. We are certainly interested in better understanding _____ issues (*add relevant type of issues*) so they can be addressed.

We instituted a Grievance Policy that guides stakeholders through a path for addressing concerns. It requests stakeholders engage at the lowest level first and work their concerns up via personal one-to-one communications through the administration. If still not satisfied, a stakeholder can submit a grievance form to the ACCEL Regional Vice President, and another one subsequently to the Board. We believe in handling grievances as they occur, and attempting to work directly with individuals involved. The Board will allow the administration to resolve concerns, and the Board won't intervene until a grievance form has been submitted.

Please consider working through the Grievance Policy that is located on our website here: [School Board - Banning Lewis Ranch \(blacademy.org\)](http://School Board - Banning Lewis Ranch (blacademy.org))

If you are still concerned after conversations with the Principal, please consider submitting a Grievance Form here: [Banning Lewis Academy Grievance Form \(google.com\)](http://Banning Lewis Academy Grievance Form (google.com))

Thank you for making us aware of your concerns. We appreciate knowing how you, and our other stakeholders, feel and think so that we can make more informed decisions in the interest of our many stakeholders.

~~Your message is accessible by all of the Board of Directors for review. Due to the nature of your message, a special meeting has been called to discuss your concern(s). We would like to invite you to the meeting so that you can discuss your message directly with the Board of Directors and to provide any clarifying information as necessary to the Board.~~

~~Given the governance structure of the Banning Lewis Ranch Academy Board of Directors, the majority of a quorum of Directors present is needed to provide a formal reply. Once a decision is made, a formal reply will be sent to you in the same manner that the Banning Lewis Ranch Academy received your initial comment, idea, or suggestion.~~

~~Please understand that certain areas, such as those areas involving personnel issues and issues involving security are addressed in executive session in accordance with Colorado~~

~~law. If such executive session occurs, you will be briefed regarding what you may or may not say about the executive session after its conclusion. This is in no way to prohibit free speech, but to conform to legal mandates. Violation of such legal mandates may bring forth legal action(s) with civil and/or criminal remedies. Generally, no direct personnel or security matters that are discussed in executive session are to be released.~~

~~The Banning Lewis Ranch Academy Board of Director's special meeting will be held on XX-XXX-20XX at X:XX x.x. MST in [Location of meeting].~~

~~Additionally, the Banning Lewis Ranch Academy Board of Director's regularly scheduled meetings are conducted the third Tuesday of each month. The next meeting date is XX-XXX-20XX at 6:00 p.m. MST in the Banning Lewis Ranch Academy Library.~~

~~We look forward to seeing you there!~~

~~Sincerely,
Your BLRA Board
(List individual Board Member names)~~

APPENDIX B: RESPONSE TEMPLATE WITHOUT SPECIAL MEETING

~~Thank you for sending a message to the Banning Lewis Ranch Academy Board of Directors.~~

~~Your message is accessible by all of the Board of Directors for review. We invite you to reference the Board policy named "School Board Meetings, Policy Adoption, and Document Retention & Access", which included a section on the resolution of issues, should the Board deem your request warrants an investigation. Your message may be brought up as a discussion item during the next Banning Lewis Ranch Academy Board of Director's regularly scheduled meeting. If you choose, we would like to invite you to the meeting so that you can discuss your message directly with the Board of Directors and to provide any clarifying information as necessary to the Board.~~

~~Given the governance structure of the Banning Lewis Ranch Academy Board of Directors, the majority of a quorum of Directors present is needed to provide a formal reply. Once a decision is made, a formal reply will be sent to you in the same manner that the Banning Lewis Ranch Academy received your initial comment, idea, or suggestion.~~

~~Please understand that certain areas, such as those areas involving personnel issues and issues involving security are addressed in executive session in accordance with Colorado law. If such executive session occurs, you will be briefed regarding what you may or may not say about the executive session after its conclusion. This is in no way to prohibit free speech, but to conform to legal mandates. Violation of such legal mandates may bring forth legal action(s) with civil and/or criminal remedies. Generally, no direct personnel or security matters that are discussed in executive session are to be released.~~

~~The Banning Lewis Ranch Academy Board of Director's regularly scheduled meetings are conducted the third Tuesday of each month. The next meeting date is XX XXX 20XX at 6:00 p.m. MST in the Banning Lewis Ranch Academy Library.~~

~~If your email was received within forty-eight hours of the next scheduled Board meeting it cannot be formally added to the agenda until the following scheduled meeting. However, as always, you are welcome to attend the meeting and sign up for public comment to discuss your message.~~

~~We look forward to seeing you there!~~

~~Sincerely,
Your BLRA Board
(List individual Board Member names)~~

~~Procedures:~~

- ~~1. Board Comms — emails, etc~~
- ~~2. Administration Comms — newsletters, emails, teachers, admin~~