



**South Orange County Community College District**  
**Board of Trustees**

Governing Board Communication Protocols

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**PROTOCOL FOR RESPONDING TO NEEDS OR COMPLAINTS EXPRESSED TO AN INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER**

1. Be accessible; listen respectfully and impartially.
2. If the concern is not urgent or does not have policy implications:
  - a. Redirect the individual or group to the appropriate district or college's process/person.
  - b. Do not make any promises to the individual or group.
  - c. Do not attempt to solve the problem.
  - d. Inform the Chancellor and receive clarification. The Chancellor can assist with ensuring the issue is addressed through appropriate avenues.
3. If the concern is urgent or could have policy implications:
  - a. Redirect the individual or group to the appropriate district or college process/person.
  - b. Do not make any promises to the individual or group.
  - c. Do not attempt to solve the problem.
  - d. Inform the Chancellor and receive clarification. The Chancellor can assist with ensuring the issue is addressed through appropriate avenues.
  - e. The Chancellor will alert the Board President.
  - f. The Chancellor and Board President will confer and decide how to handle the issue.
    - 1) May request written report.
    - 2) May place on the Board agenda for further discussion.

**PROTOCOL FOR RESPONDING TO NEEDS OR COMPLAINTS EXPRESSED IN BOARD MEETINGS DURING PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

1. The Board President thanks the speaker(s) and acknowledges that the need or complaint has been heard by the Board.
2. If appropriate, the Board President may make a brief statement about the issue.
3. The Board President will ask the Chancellor if there is any comment from the administration.
4. The Brown Act prohibits the Board from discussing or taking action on any item not on the agenda, but members may make a brief comment or ask questions in response to public comments.

5. If desired, the Board President may ask the Chancellor to look into the issue and report back to the Board. The Board's process for requesting Board reports can be utilized.
6. After receiving the report from the administration, the Board may decide to place the issue on a future Board agenda.

### **PROTOCOL FOR RESPONDING TO CONCERNS EXPRESSED DURING A CRISIS**

1. Be respectful; listen respectfully and impartially.
2. Redirect the individual or group to the appropriate district or college process/person.
3. Do not make any promises to the individual or group.
4. Do not attempt to solve the problem.
5. Inform the Chancellor and receive clarification. The Chancellor can assist with ensuring the issue is addressed through appropriate avenues.
6. Chancellor will alert the Board President.
7. The Chancellor and Board President will confer and decide how to handle the issue.
8. Any written communication with the individual or group expressing the concern, or with the media, will be made by the Chancellor.
9. The Board may request of the chancellor a more formal investigation of the concerns.

### **PROTOCOL FOR THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF CLOSED SESSIONS**

1. The confidentiality of closed session creates a safe space for the candid discussion of appropriate topics.
2. All participants in closed session are required to maintain the absolute confidentiality of closed session discussions.
3. Any suspected breach of closed session confidentiality should be referred to the Board President and Chancellor.
4. Legal implications can occur if confidentiality is breached.
5. Individual Board members can open themselves up to liability by discussing closed session matters.