

**DOUGLAS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD ITEM**  
**BOE Meeting: May 6, 2025**

**Subject:** GP 1.7, Board Committee Structure

**Recommended Action:** The Board of Education may submit comments, ask for clarification, and request additional information to assist the Board in the compliance ruling for this policy, which will occur May 27, 2025 as recommended by Director Susan Meek, Douglas County School District Board of Education.

**Pertaining to Governance Policy:** Governance Process 1.7, Board Committee Structure. Complete GP 1.7 policy language is attached to this Board item as well.

**Background:** The Douglas County School Board utilizes a routine and systematic process of self-evaluation where it regularly reviews its Board-Superintendent Linkage and Board Process policies. The review is meant to be positive, constructive, and educational.

**Rationale/Objective:** The objective of monitoring Governance Process 1.7, Board Committee Structure is three-fold:

1. To ensure that Douglas County School District Board of Education is in compliance with this policy;
2. To hold itself accountable to the public for its performance; and,
3. To review policy wording.

**Cost/Benefit Analysis:** NA

**Alternatives:** The Board of Education may take one of the following actions regarding the self-evaluation report:

- **Accept the report as presented** and approve it through the Consent Agenda at the May 27, 2025 meeting, confirming that the Board is in compliance.
- **Remove from Consent Agenda, engage in further discussion regarding Board members' viewpoints** and determine whether updates to the report are necessary. Following discussion, the Board may amend the self-evaluation document and adopt the revised version by Board vote at the May 27, 2025 meeting or at a future meeting.
- **Request revisions to the report** and direct that an updated version be brought back for further discussion at a future meeting.

**Submitted by:** Director Susan Meek, DCSD Board of Education

**Date:** May 6, 2025

### ***GP 1.6 Board Committee Principles***

Board committees, when used, will be assigned so as to reinforce the wholeness of the Board's job and so as never to interfere with delegation from Board to Superintendent.

Accordingly:

- 1.6.1 A committee is a Board committee only if its existence and charge come from the Board.
- 1.6.2 Board committees are to help the Board do its job, not to help or advise the staff. Committees ordinarily will assist the Board by preparing policy alternatives and implications for Board deliberation.
- 1.6.3 Board committees may not speak or act for the Board except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. Expectations and authority will be carefully stated in order not to conflict with authority delegated to the Superintendent.
  - 1.6.3.1 When fulfilling his or her charge from the Board, a Board liaison may reasonably interpret relevant Governance Process policies and relevant, specific Board decisions as evidenced by officially passed motions, making decisions or taking actions necessary to fulfill that charge, as long as those decisions or actions are reasonable interpretations of Governance Process policies and specific Board decisions.
- 1.6.4 Board committees cannot exercise authority over staff. Because the Superintendent works for the full Board, he or she will not be required to obtain approval of a Board committee before an executive action.
- 1.6.5 Board committees are to avoid over-identification with organizational parts rather than the whole. Therefore, a Board committee that has helped the Board create policy on some topic will not usually be used to monitor organizational performance on that same subject.
- 1.6.6 Unless legally required, committees will be used sparingly and ordinarily in an ad hoc capacity.
- 1.6.7 This policy applies to any group, that is formed by Board action, whether or not it is called a committee and regardless of whether the group includes Board members even if a committee consists of one Board member, who may be referred to as a "liaison." It does not apply to committees formed under the authority of the Superintendent.
- 1.6.8 Board committees will have clear and specific goals, objectives, and timelines.

### ***GP 1.7 Board Committee Structure***

The only Board committees are those that are set forth in this policy. Unless otherwise stated or required by law, a committee ceases to exist as soon as its task is complete.

- 1.7.1 Name: District Accountability Committee

1.7.1.1 Charge: This committee is charged with  
producing: **Douglas County School District**

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- 1.7.2.2 Composition. This committee shall be composed of members as described in the committee's by-laws. The Board shall appoint committee members nominated by the committee, if required by the committee's by-laws. The Board may not appoint a nominee and may remove any committee member if, in the Board's discretion, that action would be in the best interest of the District.
- 1.7.2.3 Authority. This committee shall have authority granted by its by-laws and by Board policy. By-laws shall be interpreted by Board legal counsel, or reasonably by the Superintendent, where appropriate. The committee's by-laws shall be acceptable to the Board, its legal counsel and the Superintendent.
- 1.7.2.4 Authorized Funds and Staff Time. This committee may use funds, staff time and other District resources as reasonably determined by the Superintendent.
- 1.7.2.5 Monitoring Timeline. Unless otherwise stated in the charge above, this committee's products shall be provided to the Board as needed, as determined by the Board President.

1.7.3 Name: Fiscal Oversight Committee

- 1.7.3.1 Charge: This committee is charged with producing:
  - 1.7.3.1.1 For the Superintendent/District, recommendations to maintain and/or improve upon the District's current and long-term fiscal strategies in such areas as: (a) budget (operating and capital); (b) accounting, audit, and financial reporting (internal and external); (c) banking (commercial and investment); and (e) other fiscal matters as assigned by the Board. It is expected that the FOC shall factor into its recommendations those events that may negatively affect the District and propose strategies to manage risks that otherwise could disrupt the continuity of a high level of educational services.
  - 1.7.3.1.2 For the Board, to assist the Board of Education in fulfilling its fiscal oversight responsibilities with integrity and reliability and in communicating between the District and all concerned parties on fiscal matters.
- 1.7.3.2 Composition: This committee shall be composed of members as described in the committee's by-laws. Initially, the Board shall appoint committee members who have been nominated through a process reasonably determined by the Superintendent and approved by Board legal counsel. Thereafter, the Board shall appoint committee members nominated by the committee. The Board may not appoint a nominee and may remove any committee member if, in the Board's discretion, that action would be in the best interest of the District.
- 1.7.3.3 Authority: The authority of the committee includes information gathering, fact-finding, and making recommendations as more fully provided in its bylaws. Bylaws shall be interpreted by Board legal counsel. The committee's by-laws shall be acceptable to the Board and its legal counsel.
- 1.7.3.4 Authorized Funds and Staff Time: This committee may use funds, staff time, and other District resources as reasonably determined by the Superintendent.
- 1.7.3.5 Monitoring Timeline: Unless otherwise stated in the charge above, this committee's products shall be provided to the Board annually, as determined by the Board President.

1.7.4 Name: Student Advisory Group

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- 1.7.4.1 Charge: This committee is charged with producing:
- 1.7.4.1.1 For the Superintendent/District, a representative student forum that provides feedback on issues that warrant attention and affect students directly. It also affords students an avenue to express what they think is exceptional regarding their education, along with what could be improved.
  - 1.7.4.1.2 For the Board, to help the Board accomplish a portion of its job in creating and monitoring Board policies that directly impact the education of students; and provide opportunities for the Board to meet and gather students' opinions on issues such as safety, programming, end statements, and graduation.
- 1.7.4.2 Composition: This committee shall be composed of high school students from each Douglas County School District high school. Guided by the District Director of Activities, Athletics and Student Leadership works directly with the Superintendent, District Administrators, and School Board members. The Board may not appoint a nominee and may remove any committee member if, in the Board's discretion, that action would be in the best interest of the District.
- 1.7.4.3 Authority: The authority of the committee includes information gathering, fact-finding, and making recommendations as more fully provided in its bylaws. Bylaws shall be interpreted by Board legal counsel. The committee's by-laws shall be acceptable to the Board and its legal counsel.
- 1.7.4.4 Authorized Funds and Staff Time: This committee may use funds, staff time, and other District resources as reasonably determined by the Superintendent.
- 1.7.4.5 Monitoring Timeline: Unless otherwise stated in the charge above, this committee's products shall be provided to the Board annually, as determined by the Board President.
- 1.7.5 Name: Mill and Bond Oversight Ad hoc Committee (MBOC)
- 1.7.5.1 Charge:  
The charge of the Mill and Bond Oversight Committee (MBOC) shall be to become familiar with recent mill levy overrides (MLO) and bond (Bond) programs and project lists, monitor the progress of the improvements and programs being implemented and ensure MLO/Bond expenditures are in alignment with ballot language approved by voters.
- 1.7.5.1.1 For the Superintendent/District:
- Meet regularly to review progress to date.
  - Ensure that MLO/Bond expenditures are in alignment with ballot language approved by voters.
  - Participate in scheduled site visits during construction, as invited by the Chief Operations Officer.
  - Review Chief Financial Officer's recommendations for maintaining congruence between financial statements and identified spending of MLO/Bond funding.
  - Review the ongoing master schedule of projects.
  - Provide regular updates to the DCSD Communications Team that can be shared with the community.
- 1.7.5.1.2 For the Board:
- Assist the Board in fulfilling its responsibility to provide transparency and assurance that mill levy and general obligation bond funds, approved by Douglas County voters, are spent as intended and as represented to the voters.
  - Regularly report to the Board of Education the status of MLO/Bond expenditures.
  - Assist in maintaining public trust and confidence in the district through active

involvement in MLO/Bond project communications.

1.7.5.2 Composition:

This committee shall be composed of members as described in the committee's by-laws. Initially, the Board shall appoint committee members who have been nominated through a process reasonably determined by the Superintendent and approved by Board legal counsel. Thereafter, the Board shall appoint committee members nominated by the committee. The Board may not appoint a nominee and may remove any committee member if, in the Board's discretion, that action would be in the best interest of the District.

Vendors, architects, engineers and contractors who are eligible to submit quotes or bid on services to be paid for via the MLO and/or Bond are not eligible to sit on this committee.

1.7.5.3 Authority:

This committee shall have authority granted by law, by its by-laws and by Board policy. Law and by-laws shall be interpreted by Board legal counsel. Board policy shall be interpreted reasonably by the Board's liaison (s), or if unavailable, by the Board President. The committee's by-laws shall be acceptable to the Board, its legal counsel and the Superintendent.

1.7.5.4 Authorized Funds and Staff Time:

This committee may use funds, staff time and other District resources as reasonably determined by the Superintendent.

1.7.5.5 Monitoring Timeline:

Unless otherwise stated in the charge above, this committee's products shall be provided to the Board at least annually, as determined by the Board President.

1.7.6 Name: Mill Bond Exploratory Ad Hoc Committee (MBEC)

1.7.6.1 Charge:

The charge of the Mill Bond Exploratory Committee (MBEC) shall be to explore the needs of the district, both ongoing operational and capital needs, and to assess the feasibility of successful Mill Levy Override (MLO) and/or Bond issues on future ballots. The MBEC will sunset at a time approved by the Board.

This committee is charged with:

1.7.6.1.1 For the Superintendent/District:

- Work with the Superintendent and any consulting firm engaged by the District to study the needs of the School District and the current budgetary constraints of the District to meet those needs.
- Assist in maintaining public trust and confidence in the district through active involvement in MLO/Bond communications.

1.7.6.1.2 For the Board:

- Provide a comprehensive presentation at a board meeting prior to the end of each school year, on findings of the needs and feasibility of MLO/Bond measures for November of that year, to include information gathered from the Master Capital Plan and recommendations from all Board Committees.

1.7.6.2 Composition:

This committee shall be composed of members as described in the committee's bylaws, to include at least 6 community members, to include at least 1 charter representative, and the chair (or representative designated by the chair) of each existing Board Committee (i.e., District Accountability Committee, Fiscal Oversight Committee, Long Range Planning Committee, Student Advisory committee, and Mill Bond Oversight Committee). Initially,

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the Board shall appoint a Chair of the MBEC. Thereafter, the Chair shall select the community members, via an application process open to the entire community. The Board shall approve the final committee composition at the Board meeting following the appointment of a Chair. The Board may not appoint a nominee and may remove any committee member if, in the Board's discretion, that action would be in the best interest of the District.

Vendors, architects, engineers, and contractors who are eligible to submit quotes or bid on services to be paid for via a future MLO and/or Bond are not eligible to sit on this committee.

1.7.6.3 Authority:

This committee shall have authority granted by law, by its bylaws and by Board policy. Law and bylaws shall be interpreted by Board legal counsel. Board policy shall be interpreted reasonable by the Board's liaison(s), or if unavailable, by the Board President. The committee's bylaws shall be acceptable to the Board, its legal counsel, and the Superintendent.

1.7.6.4 Open Meetings Notice:

Notice of meetings of the committees will be posted on the District's website 24 hours in advance. Meetings may be held in person or electronically in a manner that may be observed by the public.

1.7.6.5 Authorized Funds and Staff Time:

This committee may use funds, staff time and other District resources as reasonable determined by the Superintendent.

1.7.6.6 Monitoring Timeline:

Unless otherwise stated in the charge above, this committee's progress shall be provided to the Board at least monthly, through either an email or a report at a Board meeting, as determined by the Board President.

## **Memorandum**

**TO:** Board of Education  
**FROM:** Director Susan Meek, DCSD Board of Education  
**DATE:** May 6, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** Monitoring Report for Governance Process 1.7, Board Committee Structure

Policy GP 1.7, Board Committee Structure, addresses all the Board's Committees: District Accountability Committee (DAC); Fiscal Oversight Committee (FOC); Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC); Mill and Bond Oversight Committee (MBOC); and the Student Advisory Group (SAG). In order to complete the self-evaluation process, three surveys were created:

- Board Committee Member Feedback Survey (41 responses)
- Board Liaison Self-Evaluation Survey (10 responses – responses are per committee assignment)
- Staff Liaison Feedback Survey (1 response) — *since only one response was received, the data is not incorporated into the analysis below.*

The survey responses are attached as evidence of compliance with the policy language.

Based on survey responses and open comments, the following findings directly relate to the language and intent of GP 1.7:

### **1. Committees Operating Within Defined Charges (GP 1.7 Compliance)**

- 90% of responses from Board liaisons confirmed their committees fully operated within the defined charge under GP 1.7.
- 95% of committee members agreed or strongly agreed they understood their committee's purpose and charge.
- This feedback confirms committees are operating within their defined scope and policy boundaries.

### **2. Board Liaison and Committee Communication (GP 1.7.3 & 1.7.4)**

- 63.4% of committee members rated committee communication with Board liaisons highly, with 61% highly rating consistent communication with district staff.
- Open responses revealed areas for improvement in communication loops—some committees cited a need for clearer feedback about how their input was used in Board decisions.

### **3. Committee Deliverables and Timeliness (GP 1.7 Implementation)**

- Staff liaison confirmed that committee recommendations align with district timelines and strategic needs.
- Open comments from Board liaisons noted improvements in committee scheduling to meet critical deadlines, such as budget review timelines, and highlighted the adoption of quarterly reporting for the Mill and Bond Oversight Committee to ensure regular oversight deliverables. Committee members and staff affirmed that meetings are well-organized to review and approve necessary materials, supporting timely and effective committee outputs.

### **4. Governance-Operations Boundary (GP 1.7 Integrity)**

- Open responses flagged occasional drift toward operational discussions, especially regarding SAG. However, a review of Policy 1.7.4.1.1 indicates a dual charge that includes operational input. This feedback supports the need for discussion around SAG's dual charge to provide both operational feedback and governance input.

### **5. Policy Language Review Recommendations**

- Several Board liaisons and committee members suggested the Board revisit Committee feedback mechanisms to better align with governance expectations and ensure Committee members see how their input is used.
- Committee member feedback supported the recommendation to remove GP 1.7.6 (Mill Bond Exploratory Ad Hoc Committee), as no active work or references to this committee were reported.

Another objective related to the Board Self-Evaluation process is to review policy wording and identify whether edits or changes are recommended. Based on this annual review, I suggest the following edits for consideration:

- Remove the language in the policy that is covered under 1.7.6, Mill Bond Exploratory Ad Hoc Committee (MBEC).
- Simplify and clarify SAG's dual charge language.
  - *Proposed edit:*
  - GP 1.7.4.1.1 The Student Advisory Group shall serve as a representative student forum, providing feedback to the Superintendent and District leadership on issues that directly impact students.
  - GP 1.7.4.1.2 The Student Advisory Group shall assist the Board in developing and monitoring policies that directly impact students' education and shall provide input on issues such as safety, programming, End Statements, and graduation requirements.
- Clarify reporting expectations in each committee description.

- Suggest we include it for discussion at the July retreat with our Board Committees.

## **Conclusion**

The Douglas County School District Board of Education is in compliance with Governance Process 1.7, Board Committee Structure. Survey data and related documentation confirm the policy is being implemented as intended, with committees operating within their defined charges, delivering on timelines, and maintaining the governance-operational boundary.

Opportunities for further improvement include enhancing feedback loops between Committees and the Board, clarifying SAG's policy charge, and removing outdated policy language (GP 1.7.6).

**Evidence:** Document evidence as noted below is available through the Board Secretary or the Superintendent's Liaison to the Board of Education.

### **Evidence used in monitoring this policy is as follows:**

- Board Committee Member Feedback Survey (41 responses)
- Board Liaison Self-Evaluation Survey (10 responses – responses are per committee assignment)
- Staff Liaison Feedback Survey (1 response)
- Board agenda on October 8, 2024 ([approved Board Committee bylaws](#))
- Board agenda on August 27, 2024 ([2024-25 Board Committee Priorities Resolution](#))
- Board agenda on July 20, 2024 (Board Committee bylaws and Committee priorities)
- Board meeting minutes support these items

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, this information is accurate as of May 2, 2025.