

CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG SCHOOLS

POLICY Constituent Services	CMS/NEPN Code: BHE
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As elected officials and trustees acting on behalf of the public, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education members have an obligation to be accessible to the public and assist citizens with suggestions, questions, or complaints regarding Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. Board members must provide service to constituents but in doing so should not involve themselves in administrative matters or management. It is the intent of the Board that constituent service be provided through well-defined protocols that facilitate the administration's ability to resolve problems effectively and identify opportunities for systems improvement.

Standards for Constituent Service

Each Board member will strive to provide appropriate service to constituents. Board members commit that they will:

- ensure that the CMS administration takes responsibility for helping citizens receive the services that the State of North Carolina and Board intend Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools to provide the public,
- follow processes designed to facilitate the administration's ability to resolve problems effectively, and
- identify opportunities for systems improvement.

Each Board member will avoid involvement in management activities or giving direction to staff, even if the problem is serious and/or the Board member's involvement is minimal. In making this commitment, Board members recognize:

- that their involvement in management and administrative matters creates confusion among district employees, leads to dysfunctional management systems; undermines the authority of the Superintendent and the administration, and weakens the Board by making it impossible to hold the Superintendent responsible for district operations; and
- their obligation not to confer special advantage on employees, parents, students, vendors, or any other person or entity outside regular management decision making processes established by policy or management directive to guarantee fairness and equity. Such behavior by a Board member is a betrayal of the Board, the district, and the public, and subjects the Board member to reprimand or censure.

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System for Constituent Service

Recognizing the need to provide service to constituents, the need of Board members to be answerable to constituents, and the need to improve district systems, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education and Superintendent will work together to put into place a system for constituent service.

The major features of the system will be:

- a protocol for handling constituent requests for information or assistance;
- a primary contact person in the Superintendent's office (the Superintendent's designee) to whom the Board Services staff members will refer constituent service requests they receive;
- a form for documenting requests;
- an information management system for storing, tracking, categorizing, and analyzing requests;
- an expectation that constituents will be updated on the progress of their request within a 72-hour time period (or three business days);
- a feedback process so that Board members know the resolution of requests;
- oversight of the system by the Superintendent's designee, who handles priority requests and keeps the Superintendent informed of matters that require his/her attention;
- periodic reports to the Superintendent and Board on constituent requests, their resolution, and patterns in requests; and
- periodic reports on systems improvements made, in whole or part, as a result of constituent service requests.

Details of the system are set forth in Exhibit BHE-E, which accompanies this policy.

In addition to the System for Constituent Services outlined above (which establishes the protocol for Board members to respond to constituent concerns), the Board directs the Superintendent to establish protocols for constituent services that will be used throughout the school system for employees to respond to constituent concerns.

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