Board Policy Manual Style Guide

Use this guide to help ensure consistency throughout your manual and to increase the possibility that TASB-recommended text can be used in your policies, which is less expensive to maintain.

Plain Language: Use plain language for more simplified text.

YES: The College District's employees...
NO: Employees of the College District...

Citations: Using legal citations in local policies is highly discouraged because they are restatements of the current law, as it relates to college districts generally. TASB updates the legal policies to ensure that they reflect the current law. Unique local policy provisions may not be updated when the law changes, and any change in state or federal law could cause a college district’s local policy to be out of date and conflict with governing law.

YES: This requirement does not apply to a dual credit course offered as part of the early college education program established in accordance with law.
NO: This requirement does not apply to a dual credit course offered as part of the early college education program established under Education Code 29.908.

Lists: A list should be formatted vertically with a lead-in sentence to introduce the list. Lists should also be parallel.

YES: Human resources is responsible for:
1. Approving vacation days;
2. Submitting vacation requests;
3. Ensuring vacation time availability; and
4. Filing employee forms.

NO: Human resources is responsible for:
1. Approving vacation days;
2. Submitting vacation requests;
3. The supervisor shall ensure vacation time availability; and
4. Filing employee forms.

NO: Human resources is responsible for: (1) Approving vacation days; (2) Submitting vacation requests; (3) Ensuring vacation time availability; and (4) Filing employee forms.
**Numerals:** Numerals one through ten are spelled out, except when beginning a sentence or referring to credits. Beginning with 11, numbers are not spelled out.

**YES:** The normal course load for the summer session shall be six semester hours for each six-week term or 12 semester hours for a full summer semester.

**NO:** The normal course load for the summer session shall be 6 semester hours for each 6-week term or twelve semester hours for a full summer semester.

**Position Titles:** Most position titles are lowercased, with the exception of Board members and the College President/Chancellor. Random nouns are typically not capitalized.

**YES:** The official minutes of the Board shall be retained on file in the office of the College President and shall be available for examination during regular office hours.

**NO:** The Official Minutes of the Board shall be retained on file in the Office of the College President and shall be available for examination during regular Office Hours.

**YES:** The dean of students or designee shall forward the determination and all evidence collected during the investigation and conference to the College President.

**NO:** The Dean of Students or Designee shall forward the determination and all evidence collected during the investigation and conference to the College President.

**Proper Nouns:** The College District should be referred to as the “College District” and should be capitalized. If there are multiple colleges within the College District, they should be referred to as “colleges” and lowercased.

**YES:** The College District shall ensure that all colleges are equipped with security measures.

**NO:** The college district shall ensure that all Colleges are equipped with security measures.

**NO:** The College shall ensure that all colleges are equipped with security measures.

**NO:** The District shall ensure that all colleges are equipped with security measures.

**Noun-Pronoun Agreement:** Singulants and plurals should be in agreement.

**YES:** The employee shall submit his or her form.

**NO:** The employee shall submit their form.

**Quick Tips**

- The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) is usually referred to as the “Coordinating Board” in policy.
- “Shall” is typically used in policies, and “will” is typically used in exhibits and regulations.
- When submitting policy changes, use the most recent version of the policy you are updating. The most recent version is likely the version that is published on Policy On Line®; however, if the policy is pending adoption at a recent TASB-initiated numbered update (i.e., Update 35), that will be the most recent version. Submit the entire policy even if some pages do not have changes and use Microsoft Word Track Changes to annotate the changes.