

Code of Ethics for School Board Members

As a member of my local Board of Trustees, I recognize the following:

1. That my fellow citizens have entrusted me with the educational development of the children and youth of this community.
2. That the public expects my first and greatest concern to be in the best interest of each and every one of those young people without distinction as to who they are or what their background may be.
3. That the future of this community, of this state, and of the nation depends in large measure upon the quality of education we provide in the public schools to fit the needs of every learner.
4. That my fellow board members and I must take the initiative in helping all people of this community to have all the facts all the time about their schools, to the end that they will readily provide the finest possible school program, school staff and school facilities.
5. That legally the authority of the Board is derived from the state which ultimately controls the organization and operation of this school district and which determines the degree of discretionary power left with the Board and the people of this community for the exercise of local autonomy.
6. That I must never neglect my personal obligation to the community and my legal obligation to the state, nor surrender the responsibilities to any other person, group, or organization; but beyond these, I have a moral and civic obligation to the nation which can remain strong and free only so long as public schools in the United States of America are kept free and strong.

In view of the foregoing considerations, it shall be my constant endeavor:

1. To devote time, thought and study to the duties and responsibilities of a school board member so that I may render effective and creditable service.
2. Keep abreast of important developments in educational trends, research and practices by individual study and through participation in programs providing such information.
3. Attend all regularly scheduled board meetings insofar as possible, having read my packet ensuring that I am informed about the issues to be considered at the meetings.
4. Understand that I will receive information that is confidential and cannot be shared.

5. Be open, fair and honest – no hidden agendas, and respect the right of other board members to have opinions and ideas which differ from mine. To work with my fellow Board members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of the differences of opinion that arise during vigorous debate of points at issue.
6. To base my personal decisions upon all available facts in each situation; to vote my honest conviction in every case, unswayed by partisan bias of any kind, and thereafter, to abide by and uphold the final majority decision of the Board.
7. To remember at all times that as an individual I have no legal authority outside the meetings of the Board, and to conduct my relationship with the school staff, the local citizenry and all media of communication on the basis of fact.
8. To resist every temptation and outside pressure to use my position as a School Board member to benefit either myself or any other individual or agency apart from the total interest of the school district. I will announce any conflicts of interest before board action is taken.
9. To recognize that it is important for the Board to understand and evaluate the educational program of the schools as it is to plan for the business of school operation.
10. To bear in mind under all circumstances that the primary function of the Board is to establish the policies by which the schools are to be administered, but that the administration of the educational program and the conduct of school business shall be left to the employed Superintendent of schools and his professional and non-professional staff.
11. Recognize that the superintendent is the board's advisor and should be present at all meetings, except when the board is considering the superintendent's evaluation, contract or salary.
12. Understand the chain of command and refer problems or complaints to the proper administrative office while refraining from communications that may create conditions of bias should a district concern ever rise to the attention of the board as a hearings panel.
13. Present personal criticism of district operations to the superintendent, not to district staff or at a board meeting.
14. Give staff the respect and consideration due skilled, professional employees and support the employment of those best qualified to serve as district staff, while insisting on regular and impartial evaluation of all staff.
15. To welcome and encourage active cooperation by citizens, organizations, and the media of communication in the district and respect to establishing policy on current school operations and proposed future developments.

16. To support my State and National School Boards Associations.

17. Finally to strive step by step toward ideal conditions for the most effective school board service to my community, in the spirit of teamwork and devotion to public education as the greatest instrument for the preservation and perpetuation of our representative democracy.

Trustee Signature: _____ Date: _____

Policy History:

Adopted on: 7/15/09

Revised on: