

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER ETHICS

Board members' actions, verbal and nonverbal, reflect the attitude and the beliefs of the school district. Therefore, board members must conduct themselves professionally and in a manner fitting to their position.

Each board member shall follow the code of ethics stated in this policy.

AS A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

1. I will listen.
2. I will respect the opinion of others.
3. I will recognize the integrity of my predecessors and associates and the merit of their work.
4. I will be motivated only by an earnest desire to serve my District, students and community in the best possible way.
5. I will not use the school district or any part of its programs for my own personal advantage or for the advantage of my friends or supporters.
6. I will vote for a closed session of the board if the situation requires it, but I will consider "star chamber" or "secret" sessions of board members unethical.
7. I will recognize that to promise in advance of a meeting how I will vote on any proposition which is to be considered is to close my mind and agree not to think through other facts and points of view which may be presented in the meeting.
8. I will expect, in board meetings, to spend more time on educational programs and procedures than on business details.
9. I will recognize that authority rests with the board in legal session and not with individual members of the board, except as authorized by law.
10. I will make no disparaging remarks, in or out of the board meeting, about other members of the board or their opinions.
11. I will express my honest and most thoughtful opinions frankly in board meetings, in an effort to have all decisions made for the best interests of the students, educational programs and school district.
12. I will insist that all members of the board participate fully in board action and recommend that when special committees are appointed, they serve only in an advisory capacity.
13. I will abide by majority decisions of the board.

14. I will carefully consider petitions, resolutions, and complaints and will act upon them in the best interests of the school district.
15. I will not discuss the confidential business of the board in my home, on the street, or in my office; the place for such discussion being the school board meeting.
16. I will endeavor to keep informed on all local, state, and national educational developments of significance so that I may become a better school board member.

IN MEETING MY RESPONSIBILITY TO MY COMMUNITY

1. I will consider myself a trustee of public education and will do my best to protect it, conserve it, and advance it, giving to the children of my community the educational opportunities that are as complete and adequate as it is possible to provide.
2. I will consider it an important responsibility of the board to interpret the aims, methods and attitudes of the school district to the community.
3. I will earnestly try to interpret the needs and attitudes of the community and do my best to translate them into the educational program of the school district.
4. I will attempt to procure adequate financial support for the district's programs.
5. I will represent the entire district rather than individual electors, patrons, or groups.
6. I will not regard the school district facilities as my own private property, but as the property of the people.

IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT AND STAFF

1. I will function, in meeting the legal responsibility that is mine, as a part of a legislative, policy-forming body, not as an administrative officer.
2. I will recognize that it is my responsibility, together with that of my fellow board members, to see that the school district is properly run -- not to run it myself.
3. I will expect the school district to be administered by the best-trained technical and professional people it is possible to procure.
4. I will recognize the Superintendent as executive officer of the board.
5. I will work through the administrative employees of the board, not over or around them.
6. I will expect the superintendent to keep the school board adequately informed through oral and written reports.
7. I will vote to employ personnel only after the recommendation of the superintendent has been received.

8. I will insist that contracts be equally binding on the employee and the school board.
9. I will give the superintendent power commensurate with the position's responsibility and will not in any way interfere with or seek to undermine that authority.
10. I will give the superintendent friendly counsel and advice.
11. I will present any personal criticism of employees to the superintendent.
12. I will refer complaints to the proper administrative officer.

TO COOPERATE WITH OTHER SCHOOL BOARDS

1. I will not help to employ a Superintendent, building administrator, or teacher who is already under contract with another school district without first securing assurance from the proper authority that the person can be released from contract.
2. I will consider it unethical to pursue any procedure calculated to embarrass a neighboring board or its representatives.
3. I will not recommend an employee for a position in another school district unless I would employ the individual under similar circumstances.
4. I will answer all inquiries about the standing and ability of an employee to the best of my knowledge and judgment, with complete frankness.
5. I will associate myself with school board members of other districts, both personally and in conferences, for the purpose of discussing school district issues and cooperating in the improvement of the educational program.

Legal Ref.: Iowa Code §§ 21.6(3)(d); 68B; 69; 277.28; 279.7A, 279.8, 301.28.

Cross Ref.: 203.0 Board Member Conflicts of Interest

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