

Code of Ethics for Board

Code #165.00

The Board of Education is representative of all of the citizens in the Tri-County Area School District and is responsible for serving the best interests of the District, and its students, utilizing all available resources toward that goal.

Each member of the Tri-County Area School District Board of Education shall honor all national, state and local laws and regulations, and Board Policy; encourage the open exchange of ideas and opinions in a conscientious and courteous manner; build relationships through open and direct communication; model integrity in all matters; be accountable for guiding and supporting the processes that impact the District and its students and staff; and to establish and maintain a high level of honesty, credibility and truthfulness in all matters, utilizing the highest ethical standards.. These shall include the following:

1. Recognize that Board of Education members shall act in the best interests of the students, staff and the entire District.
2. It is recognized that the function of the Board of Education is legislative and judicial, and not administrative. The responsibilities for overall management and control of the property and affairs, including the development of policies, belong to the Board of Education while the responsibilities for the day-to-day operation of the school belong to the District Administrator and administrative staff in conformity with such Board policies. Together, the Board of Education and administration must work to continually identify the needs, goals and priorities of the District.
3. Work with others on the Board to encourage the exchange of ideas and opinions as to the educational ideals, values, and goals of the District and to incorporate said ideals, values and goals into policy practice by the District Administrator and staff.
4. Act on matters after seeking and receiving pertinent information and after full discussion by the Board of Education and the District Administrator.
5. Board members should be thoughtful in making public comments and avoid making disparaging remarks in public about school personnel or other Board members.
6. Recognize that authority to act rests with the entire Board of Education and that business shall be transacted only in official meetings; refrain from making commitments to individuals or organizations on behalf of the entire Board of Education.
7. Recognize that the direction of the school system is vested with the administration and no Board member shall interfere with the administration of the District as an individual or undermine the administrative, teaching, secretarial, or custodial staff by using his/her elective office or by reverting to political or coercive means to force ideas on the personnel of the District.
8. Recognize that actions of the Board remain in effect until modified. Even though a Board member may not have individually supported a motion, commit to uphold the action of the majority and subordinate personal differences in order that actions of the Board may be effective.
9. Require meetings of the Board of Education to be conducted on the basis of a planned agenda prepared by the District Administrator consistent with the provisions of the Wisconsin Open Meetings Law. The agenda shall include such items as deemed necessary by the president and any members of the Board in accordance with Board policies. If possible, submit items to be placed on the agenda in ample time so that the District Administrator may assemble information concerning the subject.
10. Keep the District Administrator and fellow members of the Board of Education advised of District reaction to the school programs and policies.
11. Listen courteously to questions and complaints and refer the same to the District Administrator or building principals. After an investigation, the District Administrator or building principal will report the findings to the Board member.

12. Refer personal requests and criticisms by employees directly to the District Administrator in accordance with the policies of the Board.
13. Act on the selection, assignment, transfer, and promotion of school personnel, both certified and support, after submission of a recommendation by the District Administrator.
14. Serve as the final step in the District's Grievance Procedure for terminations, discipline, and workplace safety issues for both certified and support personnel.
15. Participate in CESA, regional, state and national associations of school board inservice programs to become familiar with issues to best represent the District. The Board members should be aware of educational issues.
16. Encourage the exchange of ideas and opinions in a conscientious manner in open or in closed sessions of the Board, as per Wisconsin Statutes. All information discussed in closed sessions shall be kept confidential, except as otherwise required by law.
17. Board members shall not use their office to obtain financial gain or anything of substantial value for their private benefit or for the benefit of their immediate family, or for any organization of which they are associated. This does not prohibit a Board member from using the title or prestige of their position as a Board member to obtain campaign contributions that are permitted and reported as required by state law.
18. Encourage adequate information for the District concerning the school program.

No Board member shall solicit or accept from any person, directly or indirectly, anything of value if it could reasonably be expected to influence the Board member's vote, official actions or judgments, or could reasonably be considered as a reward for any official action or inaction on the part of the Board member.

A Board member shall not take any official action substantially affecting a matter in which the Board member, or a member of their immediate family or an organization in which the Board member is associated has a private pecuniary interest. Nor shall a Board member use his or her position in a way that produces or assists in the production of a private pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, for the Board member, or one or more members of the Board member's immediate family either separately or together, or an organization with which the Board member is associated.

Legal Reference: Sections 946.12, 946.13, 19.85, 19.59, 19.35 Wisconsin Statutes.

Cross Reference: 171.2, Agenda Preparation & Dissemination

Previous Approval: June 28, 2005

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