



209 CODE OF ETHICS

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define the duties, responsibilities, and ethical obligations of individual school board members. The board must govern the schools of the district and is expected to exercise the authority granted by the legislature to promote academic excellence, provide sound guidance, and ensure responsible use of public resources in accordance with the law and in the best interest of all students.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

School board members serve as stewards of public education and representatives of the community. Each member has the duty to uphold the Constitution and laws of the United States and the State of Minnesota, support effective and efficient district operations, and ensure that the district remains focused on improving student outcomes, achieving academic excellence, and maintaining fiscal responsibility to the taxpayers. Each member accepts this responsibility as a public trust and is committed to governing with integrity, transparency, and accountability.

III. AS A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER, I WILL . . .

- A. Place student achievement and academic growth at the center of all board decisions.
- B. Commit to continuous improvement of educational programs and student outcomes.
- C. Support policies that promote safe, effective, and well-managed schools.
- D. Prepare for and actively participate in board meetings, work sessions and committee work.
- E. Respect the role of the superintendent while holding the superintendent accountable for implementing board policies and the strategic plan.
- F. Uphold the authority of the board once decisions are made while respecting the right of members to express differing viewpoints and vote according to their informed judgment.
- G. Communicate clearly, act respectfully, and demonstrate integrity in all interactions.

IV. TO MAINTAIN THE INTEGRITY OF THE SCHOOL BOARD, I WILL . . .

- A. Recognize that authority granted to us rests only with the board acting as a whole, not with individual members.
- B. Strive to build mutual trust and cooperation among board members to ensure effective governance.

- C. Listen respectfully, refrain from personal criticism, encourage others to express their own opinions, and engage civilly in professional discussions.
- D. Keep an open mind until all relevant information has been presented and discussed, and exercise independent judgment when making decisions.
- E. Uphold the unity of the board by focusing on the issues, data, and student outcomes.

V. IN WORKING WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT, I WILL . . .

- A. Support a relationship built on mutual trust, clear communication, and shared commitment to student success.
- B. Respect the superintendent’s role as the district’s chief executive officer, and the board’s sole employee.
- C. Provide clear policy direction and expect regular, data-informed reporting on student outcomes, finances, and operations.
- D. Hold the superintendent accountable for implementing board policies, executing the strategic plan, and achieving district goals.
- E. Respect established administrative channels by referring operational concerns and complaints through the appropriate chain of command.
- F. Encourage professional excellence, innovation, and continuous improvement among all district employees.

VI. IN PERFORMING THE FUNCTIONS OF A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER, I WILL . . .

- A. Exercise sound judgment based on facts, data, and the long-term interests of students and the district.
- B. Establish clear goals and expectations for student performance, financial management, and operational effectiveness.
- C. Monitor progress toward district goals and require regular, data-driven reporting from the superintendent.
- D. Oversee and evaluate the superintendent’s performance in implementing board policies and advancing the district’s strategic plan.
- E. Ensure that district resources are managed prudently, efficiently, and in a manner that provides the greatest value to taxpayers.
- F. Focus on policy, governance, and accountability, while delegating administrative and operational functions to the superintendent.

VII. IN FULFILLING LEGAL AND ETHICAL OBLIGATIONS, I WILL . . .

- A. Adhere to the Minnesota Open Meeting Law and avoid serial communications or other actions that could undermine public trust and transparency.
- B. Maintain confidentiality of data and information protected by law.
- C. Avoid conflicts of interest and comply with all required disclosures and ethical standards.
- D. Avoid private actions or commitments made outside the board's authority that could compromise the governance responsibilities of the board or the administration.
- E. Participate in official actions only at duly called and legally conducted meetings of the school board.
- F. Respect the distinction between the governance role of the board and the administrative responsibilities of the superintendent.

VIII. IN MAINTAINING FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY, I WILL . . .

- A. Safeguard taxpayer resources through responsible budgeting and fiscal oversight.
- B. Support long-range financial planning aligned with district goals and community priorities.
- C. Require accuracy, transparency, and accountability in financial reporting.
- D. Ensure expenditures directly support classroom instruction, student services, and the strategic priorities established by the board.
- E. Evaluate financial decisions for efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability

IX. IN REPRESENTING THE HASTINGS COMMUNITY, I WILL . . .

- A. Represent the entire community and act in the best interests of all students.
- B. Communicate openly and honestly with parents, staff, and residents.
- C. Promote confidence in public education through ethical conduct, transparency, and good governance.
- D. Act in a manner that promotes public confidence in the integrity and effectiveness of the school board.
- E. Encourage community partnerships that enhance learning, support students, and strengthen the district's strategic plan.
- F. Be accessible, accountable, and responsive to the community.
- G. Demonstrate respect for all viewpoints and encourage constructive community engagement.

Legal References: *Minn. Stat. § 123B.02, Subd. 1 (General Powers of Independent School District)*
Minn. Stat. § 123B.09 (Boards of Independent School Districts)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.143, Subd. 1 (Superintendent)

Cross References: *ISD 200 Policy 201 Legal Status of the School Board*

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