

SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICER AND EMPLOYEE CODE OF ETHICS

The Board of Education recognizes that sound, ethical standards of conduct serve to increase the effectiveness of school board members and their staff, as educational leaders in their community. Actions based on an ethical code of conduct promote public confidence and the attainment of district goals. The Board also recognizes its obligation to set forth a code of ethics under the provisions of the General Municipal Law, to adopt a code of ethics setting forth the standards of conduct required of all district officers and employees.

Therefore, every officer and employee of the district, whether paid or unpaid, including members of the Board of Education, shall adhere to the following code of conduct:

1. ***Gifts:*** An officer or employee shall not directly or indirectly solicit any gift or accept or receive any gift having a value of \$75 or more, whether in the form of money, services, loan, travel, entertainment, hospitality, thing or promise, or any other form, under circumstances in which it could reasonably be inferred that the gift was intended to influence him or her in the performance of his or her official duties or was intended as a reward for any official action on his or her part.

However, the Board welcomes and encourages the writing of letters or notes expressing gratitude or appreciation to staff members. Gifts from children that are principally sentimental in nature and of insignificant financial value may be accepted in the spirit in which they are given.

2. ***Confidential information:*** An officer or employee shall not disclose confidential information acquired by him or her in the course of his or her official duties or use such information to further his or her personal interest.
3. ***Representation before the Board:*** An officer or employee shall not receive or enter into any agreement, express or implied, for compensation for services to be rendered in relation to any matter before the school district.
4. ***Representation before the Board for a contingent fee:*** An officer or employee shall not receive or enter into any agreement, express or implied, for compensation for services to be rendered in relation to any matter before the school district, whereby the compensation is to be dependent or contingent upon any action by the school district with respect to such matter, provided that this paragraph shall not prohibit the fixing at any time of fees based upon the reasonable value of the services rendered.
5. ***Disclosure of interest in matters before the Board:*** A member of the Board of Education and any officer or employee, whether paid or unpaid, must publicly disclose the nature and extent of any interest they or their spouse have, or will have or later acquire in any actual or proposed contract, purchase agreement, lease agreement, or other agreement, involving the school district (including oral agreements), to the governing body and his/her immediate supervisor (where applicable) even if it is not a prohibited interest under applicable law. Such disclosure must be in writing and made part of the official record of the school district. Disclosure is not required in the case of an interest that is exempted under Section 803(2) of the General Municipal Law. The term "interest" means a pecuniary or material benefit accruing to an officer or employee.

6. *Investments in conflict with official duties:* An officer or employee shall not invest or hold any investment directly in any financial, business, commercial or other private transaction that creates a conflict with his or her official duties.
7. *Private employment:* An officer or employee shall not engage in, solicit, negotiate for or promise to accept private employment when that employment or service creates a conflict with or impairs the proper discharge of his or her official duties.
8. *Future employment:* An officer or employee shall not, after the termination of service or employment with the Board, appear before the Board or any panel or committee of the Board, in relation to any case, proceeding, or application in which he or she personally participated during the period of his or her service or employment or that was under his or her active consideration.

Nothing herein shall bar or prevent the timely filing by a present or former officer or employee of any claim, account, demand or suit against the district on his or her own behalf or on behalf of any member of his or her family arising out of any personal injury or property damage or for any lawful benefit authorized or permitted by law.

Distribution of Code of Ethics

The Superintendent of Schools shall cause a copy of this Code of Ethics to be distributed to every officer and employee of the school district. Each officer and employee elected or appointed thereafter shall be furnished a copy before entering upon the duties of his or her office or employment. In addition, the Superintendent shall ensure that a copy of Article 18 of the General Municipal Law shall be kept posted in each public building under the district's jurisdiction in a place conspicuous to the district's officers and employees.

Penalties

In addition to any penalty contained in any other provision of law, any person who shall knowingly and intentionally violate any of the provisions of the Board's code of ethics and its accompanying regulation may be fined, suspended or removed from office or employment, as the case may be, in the manner provided by law.

Cross-ref: 1810, Gifts to School Personnel
6700, Purchasing

Ref: General Municipal Law §06-808

Approved: July 1, 2001

Revised and Approved: July 12, 2007

Reviewed by BOE Policy Committee on Jan. 5, 2011

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT EXHIBIT

As a member of my Board of Education, I will strive to improve public education, and to that end I will:

- Attend all Board meetings insofar as possible, and become informed concerning the issues to be considered at those meetings;
- Work with fellow Board members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that may arise during vigorous debate and points at issue;
- Base personal decisions and votes upon all available facts in each situation and upon honest conviction, unswayed by partisan bias of any kind;
- Work with other Board members to establish effective Board policies and to delegate authority for the administration of the schools to the Superintendent of Schools;
- Abide by the final majority decisions of the Board;
- Remember that Board members have no legal authority outside of Board meetings and to conduct any relationship with the school staff, the local citizens and the media on the basis of this fact;
- Encourage the free expression of opinion by all Board members, and seek systematic communications between the Board and students, staff, and all elements of the community;
- Maintain familiarity with educational issues through study and participation in programs providing needed information, such as those sponsored by state and national school boards associations;
- Support the employment of those persons best qualified to serve as school staff, and insist on a regular and impartial evaluation of all staff;
- Avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest, and refrain from using my Board position for personal or partisan gain;
- Refrain from disclosing confidential information acquired in the course of my official duties and from using such information to further my personal interests; and
- Remember always that my first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of the students attending the public schools.

Board Member Signature

Date

Approved: July 1, 2001

Revised and Approved: August 7, 2006

Reviewed by BOE Policy Committee on Oct. 6, 2010