

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS CODE OF ETHICS

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Rescinds Policy Number: 2120

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The Orange County Board of Education recognizes that collectively and individually, all members of the Board must adhere to an accepted code of ethics in accordance with G.S. 160A-83 and G.S. 115C-47 (57) and, work together as a body in order to improve public education. The Board accepts the code of ethics and, in accordance with this code, each member of the board will commit to the following:

A. BOARD MEMBER ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS

The following considerations will guide each board member in the performance of his or her official duties:

1. the need to obey all applicable state and federal laws regarding official actions taken as a board member;
2. the need to uphold the integrity and independence of the board member's office;
3. the need to avoid impropriety in the exercise of the board's and board member's official duties;
4. the need to perform faithfully the duties of the office; and
5. the need to conduct the affairs of the board in an open and public manner, complying with all applicable laws governing open meetings and public records.

B. ADDITIONAL BOARD MEMBER COMMITMENTS

1. Attend all regularly scheduled Board meetings insofar as possible, and become informed concerning the issues to be considered at those meetings;
2. Endeavor to make policy decisions only after full discussion at publicly held Board meetings;
3. Render all decisions based on the available facts and independent judgment, and refuse to surrender that judgment to individuals or special interest groups;
4. Encourage the free expression of opinion by all Board members, and seek systematic communications between the Board and students, staff, parents and all other elements of the community;
5. Work with other Board members to establish effective Board policies and to delegate authority for the administration of the schools to the Superintendent;
6. Communicate to other Board members and the Superintendent expressions of public reaction to Board policies and school program;
7. Learn about current educational issues by individual study and through participation in programs providing needed information, such as those sponsored by the state and national school boards associations;
8. Comply with North Carolina General Statute 115C-50 by earning annually the required 12 hours of training;
9. Comply with G.S. 160A-84 by earning two hours of ethics education within 12 months of election or appointment to the board;
10. Recognize that it is the duty of the Board to assist in formulating educational policy. Also recognize that it is the duty and responsibility of the Superintendent in his/her capacity as executive officer to see that these policies are carried out.

11. Understand that in the selection of all personnel, nominations will be made pursuant to legal requirements, Board policy, the Superintendent's contract, and based on merit alone; refrain from bringing pressure to the nomination of candidates in whom Board members have special interest; reserve to the Superintendent the privilege and responsibility of nominations of candidates for school personnel; recognize that the education of the child is of paramount importance and that providing employment to personnel is a secondary matter;
12. Support the employment of those persons best qualified to serve as school staff, and insist on a regular and impartial evaluation of all staff;
13. Avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest, and refrain from using the Board member's position on the Board for personal or partisan gain;
14. Refrain from undermining the local policies, decisions and actions of the Board of Education.
15. Behave in a courteous manner both in relations with the citizens served, as well as with superiors, colleagues and subordinate staff;
16. Take no private action that will compromise the Board or administration, and respect the confidentiality of information that is privileged under applicable law; and
17. Remember always that a Board member's first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of the students attending the public schools.

All Board members are expected to sign a Code of Ethics Statement that includes these provisions at the organizational meeting of the Board each July. A breach of this Code of Ethics by any Board member may result in disciplinary action. This action may result in sanction(s) as approved by the majority of the Orange County Board of Education consistent with legal standards. Neglect of official duty by a Board member may result in criminal charges pursuant to GS 14-230, punishment for which could include removal from office.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-36, -50, 160A-83, -84, 14-230

**School Board Member
CODE OF ETHICS**

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

1. Attend all regularly scheduled Board meetings insofar as possible, and become informed concerning the issues to be considered at those meetings;
2. Recognize that I should endeavor to make policy decisions only after full discussion at publicly held Board meetings;
3. Render all decisions based on the available facts and my independent judgment, and refuse to surrender that judgment to individuals or special interest groups;
4. Encourage the free expression of opinion by all Board members, and seek systematic communications between myself and students, staff, parents and all other elements of the community;
5. Work with other Board members to establish effective Board policies and to delegate authority for the administration of the schools to the Superintendent;
6. Communicate to other Board members and the Superintendent expressions of public reaction to Board policies and school programs;
7. Inform myself about current educational issues by individual study and through participation in programs providing needed information, such as those sponsored by my state and national school boards associations;
8. Comply with North Carolina General Statute 115C-50 by earning annually the required 12 hours of training;
9. Comply with G.S. 160A-84 by earning two hours of ethics education within 12 months of election or appointment to the board;
10. Recognize that it is my duty to assist in formulating educational policy. However, I recognize that it is the duty and responsibility of the Superintendent in his/her capacity as executive officer to see that these policies are carried out;
11. Understand that in the selection of all personnel, nominations will be made as by law, the Superintendent's contract, and based on merit alone. I will not bring pressure to the nomination of candidates in whom I have special interest. I will insist that the Board reserve to the Superintendent the privilege and responsibility of nominations of candidates for school personnel. I recognize that the education of the child is of paramount importance and that providing employment to personnel is a secondary matter;
12. Support the employment of those persons best qualified to serve as school staff, and insist on a regular and impartial evaluation of all staff;
13. Avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest, and refrain from using my Board position for personal or partisan gain;
14. Refrain from undermining the local policies, decisions and actions of the Board of Education;
15. Behave in a courteous manner, both in relations with the citizens served, as well as with superiors, colleagues and subordinate staff;
16. Take no private action that will compromise the Board or administration, and respect the confidentiality of information that is privileged under applicable law; and
17. Remember always that my first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of the students attending the public schools.

Board Member Signature

Date