

POLICY TYPE: GOVERNANCE PROCESS
POLICY TITLE: BOARD MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

GP-L2d The Board commits itself and its members to ethical, businesslike, and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate behavior when acting as Board members.

GP-L3d Accordingly:

1. members should be dedicated to the residents of the District, unconflicted by loyalties to staff, other organizations, and any personal interest as a consumer.
2. members must avoid conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility.
 - A. There will be no self-dealing or business by a member or any conduct of private business or personal services between any Board member and the organization, except as procedurally controlled, to assure openness, competitive opportunity, and equal access to inside information.
 - B. If a Board member is married to a teacher or administrator in the District, said Board member may not participate in discussions, negotiations or votes concerning a contract in which his or her spouse has a private pecuniary interest, direct or indirect. Said Board member should not participate in discussions, negotiations or votes concerning the labor agreement governing the employment of his or her spouse. Because health insurance is something of substantial value and benefit to the insured, the public official should refrain from participating in discussions, negotiations or votes concerning any labor agreement that provides for such health benefits if the spouse is covered by the district's health insurance. Also, the public official should not participate in selecting the benefit provider or benefit plan design.

RATIONALE: As this issue has come up several times over the past couple of years, it is appropriate for this Board to address this issue in our policy governance in clear, concise terms. This is not the first time this has been an issue for Board members and it will not be the last.

Monitoring Method: Internal Report
Monitoring Frequency: Annual – December

Adopted: February 10, 2003
Amended: August 10, 2009

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- C. When the Board is to decide upon an issue, about which a member has an unavoidable conflict of interest, that member shall absent herself and himself without comment from not only the vote, but also from the deliberation. However, if a Board member has complied with statutory disclosure requirements by notifying the secretary of the state of his/her interest in the matter, he/she may vote if his/her participation is necessary to obtain a quorum or otherwise enable the Board to act. If a member votes under these circumstances, he/she shall state for the record the fact and summary nature of the potential conflict of interest.
 - D. Board members will not use their Board position to obtain employment in the organization for themselves, family members, or close associates. Should a Board member apply for employment, he or she must first resign from the Board.
 - E. Members will annually disclose their involvements with other organizations, with vendors, or any other associations that might produce a conflict. The written disclosure to the secretary of state shall list as applicable the amount of the member's financial interest, the purpose and duration of any services rendered, compensation received for services or such other information necessary to describe the interest.
 - F. Board members will not accept a gift of substantial value or substantial economic benefit tantamount to a gift of substantial value which would tend to improperly influence a reasonable person in the position or which that person knows or should know is primarily for the purpose of a reward for official action taken.
3. It is permissible for a Board member to receive:
- a. Campaign contributions and contributions in kinds which are reported in accordance with state law.
 - b. An occasional non-pecuniary gift which is insignificant in value.
 - c. A non-pecuniary award publicly presented by a nonprofit organization in recognition of public service.
 - d. Payment or reimbursement for actual and necessary expenditures for travel and subsistence for attendance at a convention or other meeting at which the Board member is scheduled to participate.
 - e. Reimbursement for or acceptance of an opportunity to participate in a social function or meeting which is not extraordinary when viewed in light of the position.

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- f. Items of perishable or nonpermanent value including but not limited to meals, lodging, travel expenses or tickets to sporting, recreational, educational or cultural events, tickets to these events may have to be reported in accordance with the public official disclosure law.
4. It shall not be considered a breach of conduct for a Board member to:
 - a. Use school facilities and equipment to communicate or correspond with constituents, family members or business associates.
 - b. Accept or receive a benefit as an indirect consequence of transacting school district business.
 5. Board members may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the District.
 - a. Members' interaction with the Superintendent or with staff must recognize the lack of authority vested in individuals except when explicitly Board authorized.
 - b. Members' interaction with public, press or other entities must recognize the same limitations and the inability of any Board member to speak for the Board except to repeat explicitly stated Board decisions.
 - c. Except for participation in Board deliberation about whether reasonable interpretation of Board policy has been achieved by the Superintendent, members will not express individual judgments of performance of employees of the District.
 - d. Members will follow proper protocol regarding to individual judgments of Superintendent or staff performance.
 6. In order to build efficient and effective relationships, Board members will be expected to:
 - a. exercise honesty in all communications
 - b. demonstrate respect for each others' opinions
 - c. focus on issues, not personalities

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- d. assume and practice trust
- e. maintain focus on shared goals
- f. communicate in a timely manner to avoid surprises
- g. openly support majority decisions of the Board
- h. withhold judgment of issues until fully informed
- i. seek first to understand rather than be understood
- j. express concerns privately, praise publicly
- k. use executive sessions appropriately and judiciously
- l. maintain confidentiality
- m. follow the chain of command
- n. openly share personal concerns, issues and agendas
- o. assume a non-defensive posture, taking the initiative to communicate and ask questions for clarification
- p. share information and knowledge
- q. give directions as the whole, not as individuals
- r. make every reasonable effort to protect the integrity and promote the positive image of the District and one another
- s. be properly prepared for Board deliberations
- t. attend board meeting regularly

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