

**CODE OF CONDUCT FOR
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS**

A Board of Education member should honor the high responsibility which his/her membership demands:

1. By understanding that the basic function of the Board member is policy-making and not administration, and by accepting the responsibility of learning to discriminate intelligently between these two functions.
2. By balancing the needs of the students, staff, and the community with the basic objective being the effective education of students.
3. By accepting the responsibility along with fellow Board members to see that all necessary facilities and resources are provided for the proper functioning of the schools.
4. By representing, at all times, the entire school community.
5. By accepting the responsibility to become well-informed concerning the duties of Board members and the proper functions of public schools.
6. By recognizing a responsibility as an agent of the state to seek the improvement of education locally, as well as throughout the state.
7. By taking seriously the responsibility of the Board to act in a quasi-judicial capacity on some issues, and by doing what is required to maintain objectivity in those issues.
8. By refusing to use a position on the Board in any way whatsoever for personal gain for themselves, or their friends, or acquaintances.

A Board of Education member should respect the way a Board accomplishes its task:

1. By recognizing the authority rests only with the Board acting in official meetings, and that the individual member has no legal power to bind the Board outside such meetings.
2. By recognizing the integrity of predecessors and associates and the merit of their work.
3. By recognizing that the Board is a deliberative body where a decision is made through mutual discussion and deliberation. Therefore, position statements made by individual members are always subject to modification and change when they are tested by that Board debate.
4. By making firm decisions only after all facts bearing on a question have been presented and discussed.
5. By respecting the opinions of others and by graciously conforming to the principle of majority rule.
6. By supporting decisions made by the Board, even if one personally disagrees, until such time as sufficient new information can be obtained to change the mind of the Board through Board discussion and debate.
7. By participating only in meetings as defined by the Freedom of Information Laws.

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A Board of Education member should seek to maintain desirable relations with the Superintendent of Schools and his staff:

1. By striving to employ, when a vacancy exists in the position, the best qualified person available for the chief administrative post.
2. By giving the Superintendent full administrative authority for properly discharging his professional duties, and also holding him responsible for acceptable results.
3. By acting only upon the recommendation of the Superintendent in matters of employment or dismissal of school personnel.
4. By referring members of the public with complaints to the proper administrative channels and by striving to maintain an objective distance in a case where failure of administrative effort forces the complaint to come before the Board for adjudication.
5. By working through the Superintendent to resolve concerns regarding performance of school district employees.
6. By not interfering with or attempting to influence employees in the performance of their duties.
7. By presenting personal criticisms of procedure or employee behavior directly to the Superintendent exclusively.
8. By striving to provide adequate safeguards around the Superintendent and other staff members to the end that they can live happily and comfortably in the community and discharge their educational functions on a thoroughly professional basis.

A Board of Education member should meet his responsibilities to the community:

1. By attempting to appraise fairly both the present and future educational needs of the community.
2. By regarding it as a major responsibility of the Board to present objectives of the schools to the community.
3. By insisting that all school business transactions be on an open, ethical and aboveboard basis.
4. By refraining from discussion of confidential matters outside of Board meetings with persons other than the Board of Education

Nothing herein shall be construed to prevent a Board Member from exercising any right of action, petition or appeal provided for in the Constitution, laws or regulations of the United States or the State of New York

April 6, 1983

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