

1035 Board Member Code of Ethics 1035

The Wake County Board of Education recognizes that collectively and individually, all members of the Board must adhere to an accepted code of ethics in order to improve public education and as required by law. The Board ~~accepts~~ ~~adopts~~ the code of ethics established by the North Carolina School Boards Association as follows: ~~In accordance with this code, each member of the Board shall commit to the following:~~

A. BOARD MEMBER ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS

The following standards 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. SPECIFIC BOARD MEMBER COMMITMENTS

In order to implement the above standards, each member of the board commits to do the following:

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. model civility to students, employees and all elements of the community by encouraging the free expression of opinion by all board members and engaging in respectful dialogue with fellow board members on matters being considered by the board;
5. respect the confidentiality of information that is privileged under applicable law and refrain from unauthorized disclosure of matters discussed in closed session;
6. work with other board members to establish effective board policies and to delegate authority for the administration of the schools to the superintendent;
7. communicate to other board members and the superintendent expressions of public reaction to board policies and school programs;
8. 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;
9. comply with North Carolina General Statute 115C-50 by earning annually the required 12 hours of training;
10. comply with G.S. 160A-87 by earning two hours of ethics education within 12 months of joining the board;
11. support the employment of those persons best qualified to serve as school employees and avoid allowing personal relationships and biases to influence decision making;
12. refrain from investigating or attempting to resolve complaints received personally, but instead direct the complainant to the appropriate school official or to follow the board's applicable complaint or grievance process to resolve concerns;
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. take no private action that will compromise the board or administration; and

15. remember always that a board member's first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of the students attending the public schools.

C. PROCEDURE TO REVIEW COMPLAINTS OF ETHICAL VIOLATIONS

To protect the integrity of the Board and to assure that individual members of the Board uphold the highest standards of professionalism, in keeping with the paramount duty to serve as role models for students, staff, and other members of the educational community, the Board shall review any complaints and concerns regarding the ethical conduct of individual Board members and shall take appropriate action based on the results of the review. The Superintendent and members of the Board shall promptly notify the Board Chair of any complaints or concerns relating to the ethical conduct of an individual board member, including any complaints or concerns that if true would amount to a violation of this policy, the laws prohibiting conflicts of interest (Policy 1036), or other applicable policies or laws. The Board Chair shall notify the accused Board member of the complaints or concerns and may notify the full Board. The Board Chair, in consultation with the Superintendent and Board attorney, shall arrange for an appropriate review of any complaint or concern alleging or implicating a violation of ethics, law or policy by a Board member. At a minimum, the review shall afford the accused Board member an opportunity to respond to the concerns or complaints. The Board Chair is free to may enlist the services of outside professionals to assist in the review as appropriate. If the complaint or concern is about the conduct of the Board Chair, the Vice Chair shall serve in the role of the Board Chair for purposes of this review. At the conclusion of the review, the Board Chair will notify the accused Board member of the outcome of the review.

D. CONSEQUENCES OF ETHICAL VIOLATIONS

If the review establishes a violation of ethics, law, or policy by a Board member, the Board Chair shall refer the matter to the full Board for consideration, unless the Chair determines that the violation is technical or minimal in nature and may be properly addressed individually with the accused Board member. The Board may take action including but not limited to: a written or verbal reprimand, censure, request for resignation, and/or referral to the Wake County District Attorney for consideration of criminal charges and possible removal from office. In accordance with law, the full Board shall take any action during open session in a Board meeting. Any such action shall require a two-thirds vote of all members present.

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 Board members.
2. — The need to uphold the integrity and independence of the Board members office.
3. — The need to avoid impropriety in the exercise of the Board' and Board member' official duties.
4. — The need to perform faithfully the duties of the office.
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.
6. — Comply with G.S. 160A-84 by earning two hours of ethics education within 12 months of election or appointment to the Board.

~~B. Additional Board Member Commitments~~

~~Each member of the Board shall commit to the following:~~

1. — Endeavor to make policy decisions only after full discussion at publicly held Board meetings, including committee meetings;
2. — Render all decisions based on the available facts and independent judgment and refuse to surrender that judgment to individuals or special interest groups;
3. — 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;
4. — Work with other Board members to establish effective Board policies and to delegate authority for the administration of the schools to the Superintendent;
5. — Communicate to other board members and the Superintendent expressions of public reaction to Board policies and school programs;
6. — 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;
7. — 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;

8. ~~Take no private action that will compromise the Board or administration and respect the confidentiality of information that is privileged under applicable law; and;~~
9. ~~Remember always that a Board member's first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of the students attending the public schools.~~

~~Upon the effective date of this policy all existing~~ All Board members are expected to sign a code of ethics statement. ~~In subsequent years, upon taking office, all newly elected Board members are expected to sign a code of ethics statement.~~

Legal References: G.S. 160A-86, -87; 115C-36, -47(57), -50; 14-230, 14-234, 14-234.1; 133-32; 143-318.11(a)(6); 1-515.

Adopted: March 17, 2009

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