

BOARD ETHICS, BOARD LEADERSHIP, BOARD BOUNDARIES

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July 14, 2023

NEW MEXICO SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

Code of Ethics

BOARD ETHICS

1. Attend all scheduled board meetings;
insofar as possible;

BOARD ETHICS

2. Recognize that I have no legal authority outside the board meetings, and that all decisions of the board will be made at a public meeting where a quorum of the board is present and only after a thorough review of the available information;

BOARD ETHICS

3. Work in harmony with the rest of the board members to always promote and preserve the integrity of the board;

BOARD ETHICS

4. Avoid speaking on behalf of the board except at those times when the board, by official action authorizes me to do so, and respect the confidentiality of information that is privileged under applicable law;

BOARD ETHICS

5. Upgrade my performance as a board member by informing myself about current educational issues by individual study and through participation in programs provided by the local school district and by the state and national school boards associations;

BOARD ETHICS

6. Support the employment of those persons best qualified to serve as school staff and make every effort to ascertain that all employees are properly remunerated for their services, and that they are dealt with fairly in the performance of their duties;

BOARD ETHICS

7. Avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest and refrain from using my board position for personal or partisan gain;

BOARD ETHICS

8. Accept that my primary function is to establish policy by which schools are administered; and that the actual administration of the education program is delegated to the superintendent and his/her staff;

BOARD ETHICS

9. Welcome and encourage active participation by citizens for better understanding of their needs and improvement of relations with the public that I serve;

BOARD ETHICS

10. Strive to promote and
perpetuate our democratic way of
life;

BOARD ETHICS

11. Remember that my first and greatest concern must be the fair and equal educational opportunities for all students attending public school.

BOARD LEADERSHIP

Every board member has a responsibility to make the school board effective, but the chair carries the heaviest responsibility since s/he was selected by peers to be their leader. Certain skills and actions simply are required if the chairman is to get the job done properly.

To a large extent, the board chairman sets the tone and shapes the public's perception of the school board...and...who most often is called on to referee board member disputes and serve as the peace keeper during board meetings.

The following slide is a listing of the duties which the school board should reasonably expect of its chairman in leading the board to achieve its maximum effectiveness.

BOARD LEADERSHIP CONT.

1. Establish of tone of cooperative leadership
2. Remain firmly in charge of school board meetings
3. Remain open to suggestions
4. Listen
5. Prepare for meetings
6. Plan for board development
7. Build the Board/Superintendent relationship
8. Keep a lid on explosive situations
9. Delegate responsibilities
10. Build good relationships

BOARD LEADERSHIP CONT. BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE MEETING

Before the meeting

- Review the meeting agenda with the superintendent.
- Discuss who will handle various agenda items, and how they will be handled.
- Try to anticipate things that might come up during the meeting and how they will be handled.

BOARD LEADERSHIP CONT. BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE MEETING

During the meeting

- ❖ Run it! You are communicating an important public message by being in charge of the meeting.
- ❖ Ensure opportunities for other board members to participate, give their reactions, ask their questions.
- ❖ Ask the superintendent to provide information or technical expertise.
- ❖ Be courteous and responsive to your public. Provide opportunity in the meeting for public comment. Be sure those in the audience can see members of the board and hear the discussion.
- ❖ Keep things moving and on track.

BOARD LEADERSHIP CONT. BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE MEETING

After the meeting

- ✓ Evaluate how well the meeting went. Talk it over with your superintendent or other board members. Focus on specific things that helped or hindered the meeting progress.*

NOTE: Carefully avoid a rolling quorum!

- ✓ Review the Minutes within the statutory time frame, and make sure there is a record of all board actions.

BOARD BOUNDARIES

BOARD MEMBER OATH OF OFFICE

- NMSA 1978, Section 22-5-9.1
 - All elected or appointed members of local school boards shall take the oath of office prescribed by Article XX, Section 1 of the constitution of New Mexico.
- Constitution of the State of New Mexico
 - Article XX, Section 1
 - Every person elected or appointed to any office shall, before entering upon his duties, take and subscribe to an oath or affirmation that s/he will support the constitution of the United States and the constitution and laws of this state, and that s/he will faithfully and impartially discharge the duties of his/her office to the best of his/her ability.

COMMUNICATION & TRANSPARENCY

Open, Honest and Frank Communications:

- Board and Superintendent
- Individual Board members and Superintendent
- Between & among Board members
- With Parents / Community / Employees
- Chain of Command with Employees

BOARD BOUNDARIES

School Board Members Wear Many Hats:

- As elected officials
 - Represent all constituents
 - Obtain public opinion
 - Board meetings
 - Advisory committees
 - Decisions based on
 - Needs of all the people represented
 - Overall educational interests of students

BOARD BOUNDARIES

School Board Members Wear Many Hats:

- *As trustees*
 - See that schools are well managed
 - See that tax dollars are wisely spent
 - See that investment and interests of the public are protected

BOARD BOUNDARIES

School Board Members Wear Many Hats:

- As employers
 - Maintain fair and equitable employment practices for all employees
 - Seek their professional advice and judgment
 - Support and provide for their needs
 - Promote good relationships and morale

BOARD BOUNDARIES

School Board Members Wear Many Hats:

- As policy-makers
 - Provide valuable learning experiences for all students
 - Strive to meet the unique and separate needs of all students
 - Recognize and protect the rights of students

BOARD BOUNDARIES

Effective School Board Members:

- Know they are only one member with one voice and one vote
- Do not speak on behalf of the board unless authorized to do so
- Do not try to run the school
- Are well-acquainted with the policies and comply with them
- Voice their opinions and vote for what is in the best interest of the children of the district
- Know that board business, at times, requires confidentiality

BOARD BOUNDARIES

Effective School Board Members:

- Know they are role models
- Refer complaints and requests to the appropriate administrator
- Maintain harmonious relations with other board members
- Use good and moral judgment

CONTACT INFORMATION

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