

**SCHOOL POLICIES  
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 16**

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<b>SERIES</b>	200	School Board
<b>SUBJECT</b>	209	Code of Ethics
<b>Adopted</b>		December 12, 2000
<b>Revised</b>		May 11, 2004; June 14, 2011

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to define the role and expectations of School Board members and the contribution that each must make to develop an effective and responsible School Board.

**II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

Each School Board member shall follow the code of ethics stated in this policy.

**A. AS A MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL BOARD I WILL:**

1. Listen.
2. Recognize the integrity of my predecessors and associates.
3. Appreciate the merit of their work.
4. Be motivated, above all, by a desire to serve the educational needs of the pupils of the district.
5. Inform myself on the proper duties and functions of a School Board member.
6. Recognize that it is my responsibility, together with other School Board members, to see that the school district is properly governed, not to run the district or schools directly or indirectly by oneself.
7. Work through the Office of the Superintendent—not over or around it.
8. Recognize that School Board business may be legally transacted only in an open meeting of the School Board.

**B. IN PERFORMING THE PROPER FUNCTIONS OF A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER I WILL:**

1. Perform under the School Board policies unless necessity requires otherwise.
2. Function in meeting the legal responsibility that is mine as part of a governing policy body—not as an administrative officer.

3. Consider myself a trustee of public education and do my best to protect, conserve, and advance its progress.

C. TO MAINTAIN RELATIONS WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD I WILL:

1. Respect the right of others to have and express opinions.
2. Recognize that authority rests with the School Board in legal session—not with the individual members of the School Board except as authorized by law.
3. Make no disparaging remarks, in or out of School Board meetings, about other members of the School Board or their opinions.
4. Recognize that to promise in advance of a meeting how I will vote on any issue is to close my mind and agree not to think through other points of view which may be presented at the meeting.
5. Make decisions in School Board meetings only after all sides of debatable questions have been presented.
6. Recognize that management details of a School Board action are the responsibility of the Superintendent.
7. Insist that special committees be appointed to serve only in an advisory capacity to the whole School Board.

D. IN MEETING MY RESPONSIBILITIES TO MY COMMUNITY I WILL:

1. Attempt to appraise both the present and future educational needs of the school district.
2. Attempt to obtain adequate financial support for the school program.
3. Interpret the needs and attitudes of the whole community and not just one segment, group or interest.
4. Consider it an important responsibility to interpret the educational program of the school as it relates to the needs of the community.
5. Insist that business transactions of the school district be on an ethical, open, and above board basis.

E. IN FULFILLING MY LEGAL OBLIGATIONS AS A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER I WILL

1. Comply with all federal, state and local laws relating to my function as School Board member.
2. Comply with all school district policies as adopted by the School Board.

3. Abide by all reasonable rules and regulations as promulgated by the Minnesota Department of Education and other federal and state agencies with jurisdiction over school districts.
4. Recognize that, as a School Board member, I am obligated to form an opinion and take action based on the best interests of the educational mission of the school district, irrespective of the positions of any political, employment, religious, or other group of which I am a member or adherent. If forming an independent opinion or taking independent action would result in violating the dictates of my conscience, I will recuse myself from voting on the issue in question or participating in the action taken by the School Board.

### **III. RATIONALE**

School Board members must recognize the role of individual School Board members and the contribution that each must make to develop an effective and responsible School Board.

**Legal References:** Minn. Stat. § 123B.02, Subd. 1 (School District Powers)

Minn. Stat. § 123B.09 (School Board Powers)

Minn. Stat. § 123B.143, Subd. 1 (Superintendent)

**Cross References:** MSBA Service Manual, Chapter 1, School Board Member Code of Ethics