
The Cherokee County Board of Education desires to operate in the most ethical and conscientious manner possible and to that end the School Board adopts this Code of Ethics and each member of the School Board agrees that he or she will:

Domain I: Governance Structure

1. Recognize that the authority of the School Board rests only with the School Board as a whole and not with individual School Board members and act accordingly.
2. Support the delegation of authority for the day-to-day administration of the School District to the Superintendent of Schools and act accordingly.
3. Honor the chain of command and refer problems or complaints consistent with the chain of command.
4. Recognize that the Superintendent serves as secretary, ex-officio to the School Board and should be present at all meetings of the School Board except when his or her contract, salary or performance is under consideration.
5. Not undermine the authority of the Superintendent or intrude into responsibilities that properly belong to the local superintendent or school administration, including such functions as hiring, transferring or dismissing employees.
6. Use reasonable efforts to keep the Superintendent informed of concerns or specific recommendations that any School Board Member may bring to the attention of the School Board.

Domain II: Strategic Planning

1. Reflect through actions that his or her first and foremost concern is for the educational welfare of children attending schools within the School District.
2. Participate in all planning activities to develop the vision and goals of the School Board and the School District.
3. Work with the School Board and the Superintendent to ensure prudent and accountable uses of the resources of the School District.
4. Render all decisions based on available facts and his or her independent judgment and refuse to surrender his or her judgment to individuals or special interest groups.
5. Uphold and enforce all applicable laws, all rules and regulations of the State Board of Education and the School Board and all court orders pertaining to the School District.

Domain III: Board and Community Relations

1. Seek regular and systemic communications among the School Board and students, staff and the community.
2. Communicate to the School Board and the Superintendent expressions of public reaction to School Board Policies and school programs.

Domain IV: Policy Development

1. Work with other School Board members to establish effective Policies for the School District.
2. Make decisions on Policy matters only after full discussion at publicly held School Board meetings.
3. Periodically review and evaluate the effectiveness of Policies on School District programs and performance.

Domain V: Board Meetings

1. Attend and participate in regularly scheduled and called School Board meetings.
2. Be informed and prepared to discuss issues to be considered on the School Board agenda.
3. Work with other School Board members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that may arise during the discussion and resolution of issues at School Board meetings.
4. Vote for a closed executive session of the School Board only when applicable law or School Board Policy requires consideration of a matter in executive session.
5. Maintain the confidentiality of all discussions and other matters pertaining to the School Board and the School District during executive session of the School Board.
6. Make decisions in accordance with the interests of the School District as a whole and not any particular segment thereof.
7. Express opinions before votes are cast, but after the School Board vote, abide by and support all majority decisions of the School Board.

Domain VI: Personnel

1. Consider the employment of personnel only after receiving and considering the recommendation of the Superintendent.
2. Support the employment of persons best qualified to serve as employees of the School District and insist on regular and impartial evaluations of School District staff.
3. Comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and all School Board Policies regarding employment of family members.

Domain VII: Financial Governance

Refrain from using the position of School Board member for personal or partisan gain or to benefit any person or entity over the interest of the School District.

Conduct as Board Member

1. Devote sufficient time, thought and study to the performance of the duties and responsibilities of a member of the School Board.
2. Become informed about current educational issues by individual study and through participation in programs providing needed education and training.
3. Communicate in a respectful professional manner with and about fellow School Board members.
4. Take no private action that will compromise the School Board or School District administration.
5. Participate in all required training programs developed for School Board members by the School Board or the State Board of Education.
6. File annually with the local superintendent and with the State Board of Education a written statement certifying that he or she is in compliance with this Code of Ethics.

Conflicts of Interest

1. Announce potential conflicts of interest before School Board action is taken.
2. Comply with the conflicts of interest Policy of the School Board, all applicable laws and Appendix B of the Standards document.

Upon a motion supported by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, the School Board may choose to conduct a hearing concerning a possible violation of this Code of Ethics by a member of the School Board. The School Board member accused of violating this Code of Ethics will have thirty 30 days' notice prior to a hearing on the matter. The accused School Board member may bring witnesses on his or her behalf to the hearing, and the School Board may elect to call witnesses to inquire into the matter. If found by a vote of two-thirds of all the members of the School Board that the accused School Board member has violated this Code of Ethics, the School Board will determine an appropriate sanction, including suspension from participation in meetings of the School Board and school activities for no more than 90 days, public or private censure, a fine not to exceed \$1,000 or other sanctions as determined by the School Board. A School Board member subject to sanction may, within 30 days of such sanction vote, appeal such decision to the State Board of Education in accordance with the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education. A record of the decision of the School Board to sanction a School Board member for a violation of this Code of Ethics will be placed in the permanent minutes of the School Board.

ADOPTED: January 20, 2011

REVISED: July 16, 2020

Cherokee County Board of Education