

209 CODE OF ETHICS

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to assist the individual governing board member in understanding his or her role as part of a governing board and in recognizing the contribution that each member must make to develop an effective and responsible governing board.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Each governing board member shall follow the code of ethics stated in this policy.

A. AS A MEMBER OF THE GOVERNING BOARD, I WILL:

1. Attend governing board meetings.
2. Come to the meetings prepared for discussion of the agenda items.
3. Listen to the opinions and views of others (including, but not limited to, other governing board members, administration, staff, students, and community members).
4. Vote my conscience after informed discussion, unless I abstain because a conflict of interest exists.
5. Support the decision of the governing board, even if my position concerning the issue was different.
6. Recognize the integrity of my predecessors and associates and appreciate their work.
7. Be primarily motivated by a desire to provide the best possible education for the students of my school district.
8. Inform myself about the proper duties and functions of a governing board member.

B. IN PERFORMING THE PROPER FUNCTIONS OF A GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER, I WILL:

1. Focus on education policy as much as possible.

2. Remember my responsibility is to set policy – not to implement policy.
3. Consider myself a trustee of public education and do my best to protect, conserve, and advance its progress.
4. Recognize that my responsibility, exercised through the actions of the governing board as a whole, is to see that the schools are properly run – not to run them myself.
5. Work through the executive director – not over or around the executive director.
6. Delegate the implementation of governing board decisions to the executive director.

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

1. Respect the rights of others to have and express opinions.
2. Recognize that authority rests with the governing board in legal session – not with the individual members of the governing board except as authorized by law.
3. Make no disparaging remarks, in or out of governing board meetings, about other members of the governing board or their opinions.
4. Keep an open mind about how I will vote on any proposition until the board has met and fully discussed the issue.
5. Make decisions by voting in governing board meetings after all sides of debatable questions have been presented.
6. Insist that committees be appointed to serve only in an advisory capacity to the governing board.

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

1. Attempt to appraise and plan for both the present and future educational needs of the school district and community.
2. Attempt to obtain adequate financial support for the school district's programs.
3. Insist that business transactions of the school district be ethical and open.
4. Strive to uphold my responsibilities and accountability to the taxpayers in

my school district.

E. IN WORKING WITH THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS AND STAFF, I WILL:

1. Hold the executive director responsible for the administration of the school district.
2. Give the executive director authority commensurate with his or her responsibilities.
3. Assure that the school district will be administered by the best professional personnel available.
4. Consider the recommendation of the executive director in hiring all employees.
5. Participate in governing board action after considering the recommendation of the executive director and only after the executive director has furnished adequate information supporting the recommendation.
6. Insist the executive director keep the governing board adequately informed at all times.
7. Offer the executive director counsel and advice.
8. Recognize the status of the executive director as the chief executive officer and a non-voting, ex officio member of the governing board.
9. Refer all complaints to the proper administrative officer or insist that they be presented in writing to the whole governing board for proper referral according to the chain of command.
10. Present any personal criticisms of employees to the executive director.
11. Provide support for the executive director and employees of the school district so they may perform their proper functions on a professional level.

F. IN FULFILLING MY LEGAL OBLIGATIONS AS A GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER, I WILL:

1. Comply with all federal, state, and local laws relating to my work as a governing board member.
2. Comply with all school district policies as adopted by the governing board.
3. Abide by all rules and regulations as promulgated by the Minnesota Department of Education and other state and federal agencies with

jurisdiction over school districts.

4. Recognize that school district business may be legally transacted only in an open meeting of the governing board.
5. Avoid conflicts of interest and refrain from using my governing board position for personal gain.
6. Take no private action that will compromise the governing board or administration.
7. Guard the confidentiality of information that is protected under applicable law.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 123B.02, Subd. 1 (School District Powers)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.09 (Governing board Powers)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.143, Subd. 1 (Executive director)

Cross References: MSBA Service Manual, Chapter 1, Governing board Member Code of Ethics