



Adopted: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 209

Revised: 2022 (Originated 1995)

209 Code of Ethics

[NOTE: A code of ethics establishes standards of conduct that members of a board create and agree to follow. The principles and values embodied in this code of ethics prioritize board members' obligations to the service cooperative. As a written set of expectations, a code of ethics guides board members' decision making and behavior. This model policy offers a starting point for school boards as they create a code that establishes parameters for board member conduct that best serve the service cooperative. Minnesota law and rules of parliamentary procedure establish sanctions that a school board may choose to pursue.]

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to assist the individual BrightWorks Board member in understanding their role as part of a board and in recognizing the contribution that each member must make to develop an effective and responsible service cooperative board.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

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

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

1. Attend 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 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 BrightWorks 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 programming for member districts.
8. Inform myself about the proper duties and functions of a service cooperative board member.

B. IN PERFORMING THE PROPER FUNCTIONS OF A BRIGHTWORKS 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 service cooperative board as a whole, is to see that the service cooperative is properly run – not to run it myself.
5. Work through the executive director – not over or around the executive director.
6. Delegate the implementation of the BrightWorks Board decisions to the executive director.

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

1. Respect the rights of others to have and express opinions.
2. Recognize that authority rests with the BrightWorks Board in legal session – not with the individual members of the board except as authorized by law.
3. Make no disparaging remarks, in or out of board meetings, about other members of the 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 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 board.

D. IN MEETING MY RESPONSIBILITIES TO MY MEMBER DISTRICTS' COMMUNITIES, I WILL:

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

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

1. Hold the executive director responsible for the administration of the service cooperative.
2. Give the executive director authority commensurate with his or her responsibilities.
3. Assure that the service cooperative will be administered by the best professional personnel available.
4. Consider the recommendation of the executive director in hiring all employees.
5. Participate in BrightWorks 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 BrightWorks 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 BrightWorks Board.



9. Refer all complaints to the executive director or insist that they be presented in writing to the whole BrightWorks 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 service cooperative so they may perform their proper functions on a professional level.

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

1. Comply with all federal, state, and local laws relating to my work as a service cooperative board member.
2. Comply with all service cooperative policies as adopted by the BrightWorks 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 service cooperative.
4. Recognize that service cooperative business may be legally transacted only in an open meeting of the board.
5. Avoid conflicts of interest and refrain from using my board position for personal gain.
6. Take no private action that will compromise the BrightWorks Board or leadership.
7. Guard the confidentiality of information that is protected under applicable law.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. § 123B.02, Subd. 1 (General Powers of Independent School Districts)

Minn. Stat. § 123B.09 (Boards of Independent School Districts)

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

Cross References:

None