

BOARD MEMBER CODE OF ETHICS

Having accepted the challenge of service on the RSU 26 Board, I accept the principles set forth in the following code of ethics to guide me in helping to provide free public education to all the children of my school unit within the State of Maine.

A. I will view service on the Board as an opportunity to serve my community, state, and nation because I believe public education is the best means to promote the welfare of our people and to preserve our democratic way of life.

B. I will at all times think of children first and base my decisions on how they will affect children, their education, and their training.

C. I will make no disparaging remarks, in or out of the Board meetings, about other members of the Board or their opinions.

D. I will remember at all times that as an individual I have no legal authority outside the meetings of the Board, and that I will conduct my relationship with the school staff, the local citizenry, and all media of communications on the basis of this fact.

E. I will recognize that my responsibility is not to operate the schools but to see that they are well operated.

F. I will seek to provide education for all children in the community commensurate with their needs and abilities.

G. I will listen to all citizens but will refer all complaints to the proper authorities, and will discuss such complaints only at a regular meeting after failure of administrative solution.

H. I will support a decision made by the majority of the Board graciously.

I. I will not criticize employees publicly, but will make such criticism to the Superintendent for investigation and action, if necessary.

J. I will make decisions openly after all facts bearing on a question have been presented and discussed.

K. I will refuse to make promises as to how I will vote on a matter that should properly come before the Board as a whole.

L. I will not discuss the confidential business of the Board in my home, on the street, or in my office, the place for such discussion being the School Board meeting.

M. I will confine my Board action to policy-making, planning, and appraisal, leaving the administration of the schools to the Superintendent.

N. I will welcome and encourage cooperation and participation by teachers, administrators, and other personnel in developing policies that affect their welfare and that of the children they serve.

O. I will endeavor at all times to see that schools have adequate financial support within the capabilities of the community and state, in order that every child may receive the best possible education.

P. I will resist every temptation and outside pressure to use my position as a School Board member to benefit myself or any individual or agency apart from the total interest of the school unit.

Q. I will endeavor to attend every regular and special Board meeting recognizing that my presence means representation for my town or city. If I find that this is not possible for an extended length of time, I will give consideration to resigning from my position on the Board.

R. I will recognize at all times that the Board of which I am a member is an agent of the state, and as such, I will abide by the laws of the state and the regulations formulated by the Maine Department of Education and by the State Board of Education.

Public campaigning

The school board recognizes and fully supports the rights of individuals to freely vote their conscience in all elections and to express their opinions on election issues in individual conversations. However, the school board also recognizes it could be difficult for board members to work together after campaigning against each other. Therefore, the school board strongly suggests that serving school board members avoid publicly campaigning for candidates for school board seats. Public campaigns would include activities that are a matter of public record or widely disseminated and would include letters to editors of newspapers, comments at board meetings or town council meetings, or emails sent to dozens of people or to a full school board or town council. This does not preclude a serving school board member from campaigning for their own re-election. The board also strongly suggests that the superintendent and school administrators avoid this practice to avoid challenges in their work with newly elected boards.

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