

CODE OF ETHICS

The Grinnell-Newburg School District board members have a responsibility to represent the school district in a professional manner. Each board member's demeanor and actions reflect the mission and values of the school district. Therefore, it is essential that board members follow the code of ethics stated in this policy.

Board Member Responsibilities

Board members will:

1. Listen and respect the opinions of others.
2. Recognize the integrity of predecessors and associates and the merit of their work.
3. Be motivated only by an earnest desire to serve the students and community of the Grinnell-Newburg School District.
4. Not use the school district or any part of its programs for personal gain or for the advantage of friends and/or supporters.
5. Vote for closed sessions of the board if situations require it, but consider "star chamber" or "secret sessions" of the board unethical.
6. Acknowledge that to promise in advance of a meeting how the board will act or vote on any proposition demonstrates an unwillingness to keep an open mind and objective point of view when considering additional facts and information presented in the meeting.
7. Understand that authority rests with the board in legal session and not with individual members of the board, except as authorized by law.
8. Refrain from making disparaging remarks, in or out of board meetings, about fellow board members, Grinnell-Newburg faculty/staff, and their opinions.
9. Express their honest opinions in board meetings to elicit thought-provoking discussions to make decisions that are in the best interests of the students and the education programs.
10. Actively participate in board action and recommend that when special committees are appointed, they serve only in an investigative and advisory capacity.
11. Abide by majority decisions of the board.
12. Carefully consider petitions, resolutions, and complaints, and act in the best interests of the school district.
13. Refrain from discussing confidential business of the board in public or private, and reserve such discussions for board meetings.
14. Endeavor to stay informed about local, state, and national educational developments of significance to become more effective board members.

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Board Member Responsibility to School District Community

Board members will:

1. Serve as trustees of public education and do their best to protect, conserve, and advance it by providing the students the best possible educational facilities.
2. Accept the responsibility to interpret community aims, goals, and actions and to translate them into the education program of the school district for the community.
3. Attempt to procure financial support for the district and regard the school district facilities as the property of the people.
4. Represent all members of the Grinnell-Newburg School District.

Relationship with Superintendent and Employees

Board members will:

1. Acknowledge and respect the superintendent as the executive officer of the board and give her/him power commensurate with her/his position responsibilities; and not interfere with or undermine the superintendent's authority.
2. Function and meet the legal responsibility as part of a legislative, evaluative, policy forming body, and not as an administrative officer.
3. Accept the responsibility, along with fellow board members, to ensure that the school district is efficiently run.
4. Expect the school district to be administered by the best-trained technical and professional people it is possible to procure with the financial resources of the school district.
5. Provide the superintendent with professional counsel and advice.
6. Present promptly any personal criticism of employees to the superintendent.
7. Refer complaints promptly to the appropriate administrative officer.
8. Expect the superintendent to keep the board well informed through oral and written reports.
9. Insist that contracts be equally binding on teachers, administration, staff, and the board.
10. Demonstrate sound judgment and vote on human resource matters only after the recommendation of the superintendent has been received.

Relationship with Other School Boards

Board members will:

1. Consider it unethical to pursue any procedure calculated to embarrass a neighboring board or its representatives.
2. Refrain from employing a superintendent, principal, or teacher who is already under contract with another school district without assurance from the appropriate authority that the person can be released from contract.

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3. Associate with board members of other school districts for the purpose of discussing school district matters and cooperating in the improvement of the education program.
4. Recommend employees for positions in another school district only if the board of education is willing to hire the employees under similar circumstances.
5. Respond to all inquiries from appropriate persons about the standing and abilities of employees to best of their knowledge and judgment when deemed necessary.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 21.6(3)(d); 68B; 69; 277.28; 279.7A, 279.8, 301.28 (2013).

Cross Reference: 202 Board of Directors Members
203 Board of Directors' Conflict of Interest

