

## **Board Member Ethics**

The following Code of Conduct developed by the Oregon School Boards Association is recommended to all local boards of education.

A Board member should:

- Understand that his/her basic function is “policy making” and not “administrative”;
- Discourage subcommittees of the Board which tend to nullify the Board’s policy-making responsibility;
- Refuse to “play politics” in either the traditional partisan, or in any petty sense;
- Respect the rights of school patrons to be heard at official meetings;
- Recognize that authority rests only with the Board in official meetings;
- Recognize that he/she has no legal status to act for the Board outside of official meetings;
- Refuse to participate in “secret” or “star chamber” meetings, or other irregular meetings which are not official and which all members do not have the opportunity to attend;
- Refuse to make commitments on any matter which should properly come before the Board as a whole;
- Make decisions only after all available facts bearing on a question have been presented and discussed;
- Respect the opinion of others and graciously accept the principle of “majority” in Board decisions;
- Recognize the superintendent should have full administrative authority for properly discharging his/her professional duties within the limits of established Board policies;
- Act only after hearing the recommendations of the superintendent in matters of employment or dismissal of school personnel at an official meeting;
- Recognize that the superintendent is the educational advisor to the Board and should be present at all meetings of the Board except when his/her contract and salary are under consideration;

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- Refer all complaints or problems to the proper administrative office and discuss them only at a regular meeting after failure of administrative solution;
- Present personal criticism of any school operation directly to the superintendent rather than to school personnel;
- Insist that all school business transactions be on an ethical and above-board basis;
- Refuse to use his/her position on a school board in any way, whatsoever, for personal gain or for personal prestige.
- Keep in mind that he/she represents the district rather than a particular area in the district.

END OF POLICY

Legal Reference(s):

[ORS 162.015 - 162.035](#)  
[ORS 162.405 - 162.425](#)  
[ORS 192.630](#)  
[ORS 244.040](#)  
[ORS 244.120](#)  
[ORS 332???.055](#)

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