

CODE OF ETHICS

A code of ethics is an expression of those personal ideals which should guide an individual's daily activities.

A Board member's first commitment is to the well being of all youth. The Board's responsibility is to each student regardless of race, creed, color, sex, handicap, or national origin. Other major commitments include:

1. **Community:** The Board is responsible to all residents of the county without favoritism to individuals, programs, or any organization.
2. **Individuals:** The Board has direct concern for every individual in the county. An integral part of the Board's duties it is to represent the authority and responsibility of government. This represents the delegated authority of the majority and must be exercised with as much care and concern for the least influential as well as for the most influential member of the county.
3. **Employees:** Actions as a Board member may affect the capability of County Office of Education employees to practice their skills or profession. Board member actions should encourage increasing job competence and professional growth.
4. **Laws, Policies and Procedures:** The Board should be aware of and comply with the constitutions of the State and Nation, the Education Code of the State of California, and other laws pertaining to public education, and the established policies and procedures of the County Office of Education.
5. **Decision Making:** The Board's obligation, under the law, is to participate in decisions pertaining to education in the county. As an elected representative of the people, this responsibility cannot be relinquished nor delegated to any other individual or group. No Board member shall make, participate in making, or use his or her official position to influence, any governmental decision directly relating to any person with whom he/she is negotiating, or has any arrangement concerning, prospective employment.
6. **The Board:** At all times, the Board shall be courteous to and respectful of members of the public, staff members of the County Office of Education and fellow Board members.

Understanding and acting upon the foregoing premises, each Board member shall:

1. Consider his/her position as a Board member for the public and not use it for private advantage of personal gain.

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2. Be constantly aware that he/she has no legal authority except when acting as a member of the Board of Education. He/she shall present his/her concerns and concepts through the process of Board discussion and debate and, if in the minority on any decision, he/she shall abide by and support the majority decision. When in the majority, he/she shall respect divergent opinions.
3. Encourage ideas and opinions from the citizens of the county and endeavor to incorporate their views in the deliberation leading to decisions of the Board.
4. Devote sufficient time, thought and study to proposed actions to be able to base his/her decisions upon all available information and facts and vote his/her convictions unswayed by bias of any kind.
5. Remember the basic function of the Board of Education is to establish policies and make decisions which direct the administration in carrying out the educational programs and services of the County Office of Education.
6. Promote and participate actively in a concerted program of timely exchange of information with citizens, parents, students and employees.
7. Recognize that the deliberations of the Board of Education in closed session are of a confidential nature and are not to be released or discussed in public except with the approval of the total Board.
8. Avail him/herself of opportunities for increasing his/her potential as a Board member through participation in educational conferences, workshops and training sessions made available by local, state, and national agencies.

Legal Reference: Boardmanship Manual Code of Ethics
Government Code Section 87407

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