

## **Section 1000 – Board Bylaws**

The objectives of this bylaw are to maintain an impartial administration of the business of the school District and to maintain public confidence in the Board of Education.

No member of the Board of Education shall engage in, or be a party to, any of the following activities:

1. Representing his/her opinion as that of the Board of Education or making commitments on behalf of the school District or the Board unless that person has been specifically designated to do so by official Board action. The Board shall make the staff and citizens aware that only the Board, not individual members, has the right to take official action for the District. Board members may be contacted for discussion of District business or for complaints. The Board member may listen but shall not make a commitment on behalf of the Board. The individual Board member does not and cannot, speak for the Board or the Superintendent.
2. Placing him/herself in situations where prejudice, bias, favoritism or personal gain is a motivating force in his/her conduct.
3. Disclosing or releasing confidential information, not otherwise available to members of the public, in advance of the time prescribed for the release; provided however, that this provision shall not prevent a Board of Education member from divulging or releasing confidential information regarding suspected violations of law.
4. Benefiting financially from confidential information obtained due to the member's position on the Board of Education.
5. Using personnel resources, property, or funds of the school District, except in accordance with prescribed constitutional, statutory, and regulatory procedures, and in accordance with good business procedures and not for personal gain or benefit.
6. Soliciting or accepting a gift or loan of money, goods, services or other things of value, which tends to influence the manner in which the Board of Education member performs his/her official duties.

## Section 1000 – Board Bylaws

7. Becoming employed by the school District or receiving any compensation for services rendered, except compensation for attending meetings as permitted by law.
8. Endorsing any organizations, institutions, instructional books or materials, political candidates, etc., on behalf of the District or the Board without the express approval of the full Board. Board members may individually express their personal views regarding a ballot issue or political candidate. In order to comply with these bylaws, the Board member should emphasize that the viewpoint is his/her personal opinion and does not represent the opinion of the Board of Education, unless the Board has adopted a resolution embracing the same viewpoint. The following represents an acceptable endorsement statement from an individual Board member: “My endorsement represents my personal opinion and does not represent the view of the Board of Education because I am not authorized to speak on behalf of the Board, which can only speak as a whole body through its minutes and resolutions.”

Board Members shall:

1. Attend all scheduled Board meetings insofar as possible and become informed concerning the issues to be discussed at Board meetings,
2. Take no action that will compromise the Board or the District’s staff and respect the confidentiality of information that is privileged under applicable law,
3. Make policy only after full discussion of the issues at publicly held Board meetings,
4. Encourage the free expression of opinion by all Board members and seek systematic communications between the Board, students, staff, and all elements of the community,
5. Work with other Board members to establish effective policy and to delegate authority for the administration of the schools to the Superintendent,

## **Section 1000 – Board Bylaws**

### 1950 Board Member Conflicts of Interest, Ethics, and Responsibilities

1950-3

6. Communicate to other Board members and the Superintendent public reaction to Board policy and District programs,
7. Become informed about current educational issues by individual study and through participation in programs providing needed information, such as those sponsored by the state and national School Boards Associations, and
8. Support the employment of those people best qualified to serve as District staff and insist on a regular, impartial evaluation of all staff.

### Board Member Responsibilities

The Board shall transact all business at legally called and noticed meetings.

If a specific complaint needs attention, the Board member shall explain to the complainant the District's chain of command for handling complaints or refer the complaint to the Superintendent. The Board member also shall inform the complainant about the process for bringing items to the Board through the Board's agenda or through the public participation portion of the Board meeting.

### Board Members' Code of Conduct

The Board of Education commits itself and its members to ethical and professional conduct. This includes proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as Board members. As such, we pledge to uphold the following Code of Conduct:

- a. All Board activity will relate to the fulfillment of its mission, bound by the rules and procedures agreed to by the Board.
- b. All meetings of the Board of Education are important. Each member is expected to:
  - attend all Board meetings or contact the Board Secretary or President in advance;
  - read all advance materials relevant to the meeting content and be prepared to discuss the topics on the agenda;
  - attend an orientation and other Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB) conferences to gain a greater understanding of his/her role as a trustee;

## Section 1000 – Board Bylaws

### 1950 Board Member Conflicts of Interest, Ethics, and Responsibilities

1950-4

- act on legislative matters only after seeking and receiving pertinent information and the Superintendent's recommendations and after full discussion by the Board of Education; and
  - submit items to be placed on the agenda in ample time so that the Superintendent of Schools may assemble information bearing on the subject.
- c. All members of the Board of Education have a legal and ethical responsibility to adhere to standards of confidentiality. Each member is bound by rules of confidentiality, basic principles of reasonable adult behavior, and the Board of Education governance philosophies in their conduct at Board meetings or in any official function.
- d. The Board speaks with one voice or not at all. Members' individual interactions with the Superintendent, staff, public, media, or others have no authority except when explicitly Board authorized.
- Members shall refrain from making commitments on behalf of the Board/District to individuals or organizations as an individual member of the Board of Education and shall subordinate personal differences in order that actions of the Board may be effective.
- e. As trustees, members of the Board appreciate and consider the special interests of the district, but will act in the broadest terms to represent the needs of students and the District as a whole.
- f. Recognize that actions of the Board remain in effect until modified.
- g. The Board will adopt rules for group and individual behavior. There will be consequences for violations (Cf. 1950-R).
- h. The Board will comply with the Open Meetings Act of 1976 (PA 267).

Approved: June 29, 2009

Revised: June 20, 2011

LEGAL REF: OAG, 1985-1986, No 6368, p 296 (June 5, 1986); OAG, 1989-1990, No 6642, p 274 (January 2, 1990); OAG, 1991-1992, No 6728, p 172 (August 26, 1992)