

Series 200 – School/Board of Directors

Policy Title: **Code of Ethics**

Policy Code No. 204

The Board of the Newton Community School District subscribes to the Code of Ethics of the Iowa Association of School Boards to guide its members in providing public education to all the children of all the people.

Board members' actions, verbal and nonverbal, reflect the attitude and the beliefs of the school district. Therefore, board members must conduct themselves professionally and in a manner fitting to their position.

Each board member shall follow the code of ethics stated in this policy.

As a School Board Member

1. I will listen.
2. I will respect the opinion of others.
3. I will recognize the integrity of my predecessors and associates and the merit of their work.
4. I will be motivated only by an earnest desire to serve my district and the children of my community in the best possible way.
5. I will not use the schools or any part of the school program for my own personal advantage or for the advantage of my friends or supporters.
6. I will vote for a closed session of the Board if the situation requires it, but I will consider “star chamber” or “secret” sessions of Board members unethical.
7. I will recognize that to promise in advance of a meeting how I will vote on any proposition which is to be considered is to close my mind and agree not to think through other facts and points of view which may be presented in the meeting.
8. I will expect, in Board meetings, to spend more time on educational programs and procedures than on day to day operations.
9. I will recognize that authority rests with the Board in legal session, and not with individual members of the Board, except as authorized by law.
10. I will make no disparaging remarks, in or out of the Board meeting, about other members of the Board or their opinions.
11. I will express my honest and most thoughtful opinion frankly, in Board meetings, in an effort to have all decisions made for the best interests of the students and the schools.
12. I will insist that all members of the Board participate fully in Board action, and recommend that when special committees are appointed, they serve only in an advisory capacity.
13. I will abide by majority decisions of the Board.
14. I will carefully consider petitions, resolutions, and complaints, and will act upon them in the best interests of the schools.

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15. 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 is the board meeting .
16. I will endeavor to keep informed on all significant local, state, and national educational developments so that I may become a better school Board member.

In Meeting My Responsibility To My School District Community

1. I will consider myself a trustee of public education and will do my best to protect it, conserve it, and advance it, giving to the children of my school district community the educational facilities that are as complete and adequate as it is possible to provide.
2. I will consider it an important responsibility of the Board to interpret the aims, methods and attitudes of the schools district to the community.
3. I will earnestly try to interpret the needs and attitudes of the school district community and do my best to translate them into supporting the educational program of the schools district.
4. I will attempt to procure adequate financial support for the schools district.
5. I will represent the entire school district rather than individual electors, patrons, or groups.
6. I will not regard the schools district as my own private property, but as the property of the people.

In My Relationship With Superintendent And Staff

1. I will function, in meeting the legal responsibility that is mine, as a part of a legislative, policy-forming body, not as an administrative officer.
2. I will recognize that it is my responsibility, together with that of my fellow Board members, to see that the schools district are is properly run - not to run them myself.
3. I will expect the schools district to be administered by the best-trained technical and professional people it is possible to procure within the financial resources of the school district.
4. I will recognize the superintendent as the executive officer of the Board.
5. I will work through the administrative employees of the Board, not over or around them.
6. I will expect the superintendent to keep the Board adequately informed through oral and written reports.
7. I will vote to employ personnel only after the recommendation of the superintendent has been received.
8. I will insist that contracts be equally binding on the teacher and the school board.
9. I will give the superintendent power commensurate with his/her responsibility and

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- will not in any way interfere with, or seek to undermine, his/her authority.
10. I will give the superintendent friendly counsel and advice.
 11. I will present any personal criticism of employees to the superintendent.
 12. I will refer complaints to the proper administrative officer.

To Cooperate With Other School Boards

1. I will not help to employ an individual who is already under contract with another school district without first securing assurance from the proper authority that the person can be released from contract.
2. I will consider it unethical to bid for the services of an employee or pursue any procedure calculated to embarrass another Board or superintendent.
3. I will associate myself with school Board members of other districts, for the purpose of discussing school problems and cooperating in the improvement of public school conditions.
4. I will not recommend an employee for a position in another school district unless I would employ the employee under similar circumstances.
5. I will answer all inquiries about standing and ability of an employee to the best of my knowledge and judgment, with complete frankness.

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

Cross Ref.: 202 Board of Directors Members
 203 Board of Directors' Conflict of Interest