

CODE OF CONDUCT

A Board member shall devote sufficient time, thought, and study to his or her duties as a member of the Board of Education (Board) of the District.

A Board member shall learn how the District functions – its uniqueness, strengths, and needs – and its place in education in the Santa Clarita Valley, and in California.

A Board member shall carefully prepare for, regularly attend, and actively participate in the Board meetings and deliberations, and accept committee and individual assignments.

A Board member shall accept and abide by the legal and fiscal responsibilities of the Board as specified in federal, state, and local law, and the regulations, rules of procedure, bylaws and resolutions of the Board of Education.

A Board member shall base his or her vote upon all information available in each situation and shall exercise his or her best judgment in making decisions which affect the future of the District.

A Board member shall vote according to his or her individual conviction, and may challenge the judgment of others when necessary; yet he or she must be willing to support the majority decision of the Board and work with fellow Board members in a spirit of cooperation.

A Board member shall strictly maintain the confidential nature of Board deliberations in closed session. This includes maintaining the confidentiality of written and oral communication concerning the closed session, the contents of documents or oral reports received by the Board in closed session, and information received by the Board member with the understanding that it shall remain confidential.

A Board member shall not act as spokesperson for the Board unless specifically authorized to do so by the Board. This does not include ceremonial functions in which a Board member has been authorized by the Board to attend the function on behalf of the Board. However, comments at these functions should be ceremonial in nature and not espouse a particular viewpoint of the Board unless the Board member has been previously authorized to espouse such a viewpoint.

A Board member shall understand the role of the Board as a policy-making body and not participate in administration of that policy unless specifically authorized to do so by the Board. This provision is not intended to affect the right of Board members to ask questions of administrative personnel regarding matters within the scope of the purview of the Board.

A Board member shall become familiar with and consistently use designated District channels when conducting Board business (e.g., responding to teacher and student complaints and grievances, responding to inquiries concerning District personnel and fiscal decisions).

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A Board member shall comply with conflict of interest policies and requirements prescribed in state law. A Board member shall refrain from accepting duties, incurring obligations, accepting gifts or favors, and engaging in private business for professional activities when there is, or would appear to be, a conflict or incompatibility between the Board member's private interests and the interests of the District.

A Board member shall refrain from actions and involvements that may prove embarrassing to the District.

A Board member shall act and make judgments always on the basis on what is best for the District as a whole and for the advancement of education in California in general.

PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO BREACHES OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT:

The President of the Board of Education shall serve as Chair of the Board's Code of Conduct subcommittee. Upon majority vote of the Board authorizing the formation of a subcommittee, the President shall, in open session of a duly agendized Board meeting and on an ad hoc basis, appoint one additional Board member, not to include the Clerk of the Board, to serve on the subcommittee. Such subcommittee shall be advisory only, and meetings of the subcommittee consisting of less than a quorum of the Board.

Should evidence or allegations of violation of the Code of Conduct by a Board member of the District come to the attention of any Board member, that evidence or those allegations shall immediately be forwarded to the President of the Board of Education. Should evidence or allegations pertain to the President of the Board of Education, it shall then be forwarded to the Clerk of the Board who will then serve as the Chair of the Board's Code of Conduct subcommittee. Should the evidence or allegations involve a member of the subcommittee, the chair shall appoint a "non-involved" Board member to replace the "involved" subcommittee member.

No allegation may be considered by the subcommittee unless that allegation has been reduced to writing.

Upon receiving evidence or allegations, and following formation of an ad hoc advisory subcommittee, the chair of the subcommittee shall convene a meeting of the subcommittee to review the evidence or allegations. After review of the evidence or allegations, if, in the

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subcommittee's opinion, the allegations could constitute a violation of the Code of Conduct, the subcommittee shall immediately present the aggrieved Board member with the written allegations and/or evidence. If, in the unanimous opinion of the subcommittee, the evidence and/or allegations could not lead to a violation of the Code of Conduct, the matter will be dismissed and receive no further review.

After the aggrieved Board member has received a copy of the evidence or allegations, the Chair of the subcommittee may meet with the aggrieved Board member to attempt an informal resolution of the issues involved. Following any attempt at informal resolution, the Chair shall report the results to the other member of the subcommittee. Should the subcommittee believe that the alleged misconduct could constitute a violation of the Code of Conduct, the subcommittee shall bring the matter to the Board as a whole for resolution or to receive authorization to conduct an investigation. In instances where the subcommittee resolves the issue informally with the aggrieved Board member, the resolution shall remain confidential except that should a similar allegation be brought against the same Board member within (two years) of the first allegations, the subcommittee shall refer the matter to the Board as a whole for resolution.

Should the subcommittee refer the matter to the Board as a whole, the matter shall be placed on the agenda for appropriate action. The Board shall discuss the matter in open session allowing the Board member whose conduct is at issue an opportunity to respond to evidence and/or ~~the~~ allegations. The Board may then, by majority vote, censure the Board member. In determining whether censure is appropriate, the Board may consider only the evidence/allegations presented by the subcommittee, including any evidence discovered by the subcommittee through additional investigation authorized by the Board pursuant to this policy, and any public comments received before or during consideration of the item.

Should the Board censure the Board member, formal notification of the censure shall be recorded in the Board Agenda Minutes, along with a factual account of the circumstances underlying the vote of censure.