

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 719
PRIOR LAKE - SAVAGE AREA SCHOOLS**209 CODE OF ETHICS****I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish a school board Code of Ethics for individual school board members to commit to while serving on the Prior Lake-Savage Area School Board. A code of ethics establishes standards of conduct that members of a school board create and agree to follow. The principles and values embodied in this code of ethics prioritize board members' obligations to students, the district, and the community. As a written set of expectations, a code of ethics guides board members' decision making and behavior.

II. DEFINITION**III. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

Each school board member shall follow the Code of Ethics, without exception:

1. Individually and collectively, we shall:
 - 1.1. Make decisions based upon the best interests of students.
 - 1.2. Represent all school district constituents' interests honestly and equally and fulfill my board responsibilities without preference to special interest or partisan political groups.
 - 1.3. Not use board public office for personal gain or publicity and shall avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of impropriety.
 - 1.4. Have no legal authority as an individual to speak or act in the name of the board and understand that decisions can be made only by a majority vote at a board meeting, unless otherwise authorized by policy.
 - 1.5. Be personally liable for expenses incurred without prior board approval, especially as they relate to consultant, vendor and/or legal expenses.
 - 1.6. Recognize the responsibility of the board to work with the superintendent and fellow board members to see that the schools are well-run through effective policies, clear planning and decision making, and effective performance and resource management.
 - 1.7. Take no private action that might compromise the board or the administration and shall respect the privacy of information that is protected under applicable laws.
 - 1.8. Avoid involvement in staff disputes or negotiations except as authorized by the board chair or superintendent.
 - 1.9. Operate with unity of voice after board action, while retaining the right to seek changes to such action through processes defined in board governance policies and Robert's Rules of Order for small boards as prescribed by Minnesota School Board Association, using the authority normally vested in the board chair as described in Robert's Rules of Order.
 - 1.10. Encourage and respect the free expression of opinion by fellow board members and others who address the board.
 - 1.11. Be involved in, and knowledgeable about, not only local educational concerns, but also state and national issues.

2. In order to build efficient and effective relationships, board members commit to communications that build mutual expectations and trust. Accordingly, the board shall:
 - 2.1. Focus on issues, not personalities.
 - 2.2. Build and practice trust.
 - 2.3. Maintain focus on shared goals.
 - 2.4. Communicate in a timely manner to avoid surprises.
 - 2.5. Withhold judgment on issues until fully informed and discussed.
 - 2.6. Criticize privately, praise publicly.
 - 2.7. Share information and knowledge which constructively contributes to the work of the Board.
 - 2.8. Protect the integrity and promote the positive image of the district and one another.

School Board Adoption: September 11, 2023

Orig: October 2007
Revised: November 2016
October 2020
November 2022
September 2023