

GP-4.1: BOARD MEMBERS' CONDUCT AND ETHICS

Adopted: 06/21/12

Revised: 11/14/13; 09/22/16; 05/25/17

Board of School Trustees

CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Board commits itself and its members to ethical, professional, and lawful conduct, including speaking with one voice, proper use of authority, and appropriate decorum when acting as Board members. In such conduct, Board members shall fulfill the responsibilities as set forth in the Oath of Office.

1. Board members shall honor the high responsibility the governance position demands, and practice Board beliefs and actions that support increased stability on the Board, improved satisfaction from families and the community, and a climate for improved student learning. This includes Board members following the 10 Balanced Governance™: Individual Board Member Characteristics by:
 - A. Understanding and accepting that the basic function of a member is initiation and/or approval of policy, not administration. This includes:
 1. Balanced Governance™: Individual Board Member Characteristic #1. Role Boundaries: Board members practice balanced governance through the role of **informed oversight**. They avoid operating through either micromanagement (over-reach into operations) or disengagement (rubberstamping of administration proposals).
 - B. Ensuring that they are properly prepared to participate in deliberation. This includes:
 1. Balanced Governance™: Individual Board Member Characteristic #2a. Role Orientation: Board members engage in **open dialogue** focused on general interests and welcomes various viewpoints, but makes decisions based on the best course of action for the entire school family/community, not just the District from which the member was elected. Board members avoid **open debate** focused on activism or special interests and value collective consensus over individual viewpoints in their decision-making and governance protocols. Speaking with one voice, which means supporting decisions of the Board regardless of a member's individual opinion. This includes:

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2. **Balanced Governance™**: Individual Board Member Characteristic #2b.
Role Orientation: While open dialogue is encouraged, Board members are expected to support the final decision made by the whole Board. Board members may confirm to the public that they voted against a Board decision, but shall not engage in undermining the decision or publicly criticizing the Board or individual Board members regarding the decision.
- C. Refusing to let politics guide policy decisions. This includes:
1. **Balanced Governance™**: Individual Board Member Characteristic #3.
Advocacy Focus: Board members focus on common **interests** by seeking to understand the multiple and varied positions of all District constituencies but supporting shared, mutually beneficial solutions that can be applied to many students and achieved through various means. Board members avoid taking political or ideological **positions** that often polarize constituent views.
- D. Thinking and acting always in terms of improving student learning first.
This includes:
1. **Balanced Governance™**: Individual Board Member Characteristic #4.
Student Concern Focus: Board members shall support a **broad focus** regarding student concerns. Board members ensure that *all* students are afforded opportunities to succeed. Board members avoid a targeted focus on providing opportunity for single groups of students.

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- E. Becoming well-informed concerning the responsibilities of Board members and proper functions of public schools and the divisions that support schools. This includes:
 - 1. Balanced Governance™: Individual Board Member Characteristic #5. Solution Focused: Board members will ensure that their deliberations, requests, and reports are focused on solutions to improve student learning. Board members make decisions based on an understanding that the local school district and each school have unique and shifting needs; often requiring **locally developed, innovative solutions**. Board members avoid promotion of standardized, one-size-fits-all programs and focus on designed solutions and programs that fit the unique need of each school as supported by diverse evidences of student learning.

- F. Exercising oversight on behalf of all students and constituents regarding District policies, goals, and programs. This includes:
 - 1. Balanced Governance™: Individual Board Member Characteristic #6. Exercise of Influence: Board members understand and commit to practices supporting the NRS Statutory Imperative that **no individual authority** is granted. Power and authority rests in the school board as a group only.

- G. Engaging in effective board practice in public board meetings including support of **bonding principles** among fellow Board members that reduce conflict and models a Board culture that supports improved family/community satisfaction, stable District faculty, and improved student learning. This includes:
 - 1. Balanced Governance™: Individual Board Member Characteristic #7. Use of Voice: Board members use their voice to seek to **hear and to understand** each other's interests and support mutually beneficial resolution and reconciliation. Board members avoid actions to tell and sell their position.

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2. Balanced Governance™: Individual Board Member Characteristic #8. Use of Power: Board members use **power with** practices to ensure that all voices are heard, collaborative processes are followed, and mutually-beneficial solutions are employed. Board members avoid using power over practices designed to promote only their own solutions or further their own special interests.
 3. Balanced Governance™: Individual Board Member Characteristic #9. Decision-making Style: Board members seek to collaboratively evaluate data and, through consensus, confirm issues and needs and adopt proposed policy and solutions that fit the stated needs and district goals.
- H. Board members shall have loyalty to the people of Clark County which is paramount to any loyalties to staff, other organizations, ethnicities, cultures, or personal interests. This includes:
1. Balanced Governance™: Individual Board Member Characteristic #10. Board members serve and act on the Board in a manner reflecting **altruistic service** to serve the families/community at large and meet the needs of all students. Board members avoid fulfilling personal agendas regarding policy, program, or personnel.
- I. Refusing to discuss personnel matters or any other confidential business of the Board anywhere but in the proper Board setting.
- J. Members shall report criminal arrests, charges, and convictions which occur at any time during the member's tenure and fall within the following categories which are in accordance with District Regulation R-4207 Employee Disclosure of Criminal Arrests, Charges, and Convictions (Post Hire).
1. Arrests – any arrest for any offense related to drugs, violence, or sexual conduct, or any arrest(s) involving a victim eighteen (18) years of age or younger or where the same event also leads to the arrest of a person eighteen (18) years of age or younger.

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2. Convictions – any felony or any offense related to drugs, violence, or sexual conduct, or involving a victim eighteen (18) years of age or younger.
2. Board members shall avoid conflicts of interest with respect to their Board responsibilities according to Nevada Ethics in Government Law, NRS Chapter 281A.
- A. Abstentions shall only be used in clear cases of a conflict of interest.
 - B. Without first disclosing sufficient information to inform the public of the potential effect, a member shall not approve, disapprove, vote, abstain from voting or otherwise act upon a matter:
 1. Regarding which the member has accepted a gift or other personal or financial benefit as specified in NRS 281A.620(1)(e).
 2. In which the member has a financial interest.
 3. In which the member would be reasonably affected by his/her commitment in a private capacity to the interest of others.
 - C. If a member determines that the matter disclosed puts him/her in a situation which would materially affect the independence of judgment of a reasonable person, the member shall abstain from approving, disapproving, voting or otherwise acting on that matter.
 - D. Members shall not use their Board positions to obtain employment in the District or other advantages for themselves, family members, or close associates. Should a member apply for employment in the District, s/he must first resign from the Board.
 - E. Service on the Clark County Board of School Trustees concurrently with employment with the District presents a conflict of interest under Nevada Ethics in Government Law and a violation of the separation of powers doctrine. Accordingly, any employee of the District who is elected or appointed to a position on the Board of School Trustees must terminate his/her employment with the District before executing the Oath of Office as a Trustee.