

## **2:80 Board Ethics and Oath**

The Board adopts the Code of Ethics and the Oath of Office for board members of DuPage High School District 88. A copy will be posted in the District 88 Administrative Boardroom.

### **Code of Ethics for School Board Members**

A school board member:

- Understands that the first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of all students attending the public schools.
- Understands that the board sets the standards for the district through board policy. Board members do not manage the district on a day-to-day basis. Board members determine the “what”; administration determines the “how” and “who”.
- Understands that the board makes decisions as a team. Individual board members may not commit the board to any action.
- Respects the right of other board members to have opinions and ideas that differ. Conduct at a Board meeting is very important; care should be taken to avoid words and actions that create a negative impression on an individual, the Board or the district.
- Recognizes that decisions are made by a majority vote and should be supported by all board members.
- Makes decisions only after the facts are presented and discussed.
- Understands the chain of command and refers problems or complaints to the proper administrative office.
- Board members visiting a building during normal operations regarding “board-related business” are requested to schedule a time through the building administrative offices. Contact should be maintained at the administrative offices for assistance and further guidance.
- Recognizes that the board must comply with the Public Meetings Law and has authority to make decisions only at official board meetings.
- Insists that all board and district business is ethical and honest.
- Recognizes that a School Board member has no legal authority as an individual and that decisions can be made only by a majority vote at a School Board meeting.
- Is open, fair and honest—has no hidden agenda.
- Takes no private action that might compromise the Board or administration and will respect the confidentiality of privileged information.
- Recognizes that the superintendent is the board’s adviser and should be present at all meetings, except when the board is considering the superintendent’s salary, evaluation or contract (and some committee meetings).
- Takes action only after hearing the superintendent’s or administrator’s recommendations.
- Refuses to use board membership for personal or family gain, prestige, or publicity. Announces conflicts of interest before the board action is taken.
- Personal or family problems/issues should not be brought to the board.
- Gives the staff the respect and consideration due skilled professional employees.
- Presents personal criticism of district operations to the superintendent, not to district staff or at a board meeting.
- Respects the right of the public to attend, observe and speak at board meetings.
- Respects the rights of the public to be informed about district decisions and school operations as allowed by law.

In addition, School Board members are encouraged to pursue the following goals:

1. The development of educational programs which meet the individual needs of every student, regardless of ability, race, sex, creed, social standing, or disability;
2. The development of procedures for the regular and systematic evaluation of programs, staff performance and School Board operations to ensure progress toward educational and fiscal goals;
3. The development of effective School Board policies which provide direction for the operation of the schools and delegate authority to the Superintendent for their administration;

4. The development of systematic communications which ensure that the School Board, administration, staff, students and community are fully informed and that the staff understands the community's aspirations for its schools; and
5. The development of sound business practices, which ensure that every dollar spent, produces maximum benefits.

### **Board Member Oath and Conduct**

Each School Board member, before taking his or her seat on the Board, shall take the following oath of office:

**I, (name), do solemnly swear** (or affirm) that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office of member of the Board of Education (or Board of School Directors, as the case may be) of (*name of School District*), in accordance with the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Illinois, and the laws of the State of Illinois, to the best of my ability.

**I further swear** (or affirm) that:

**I shall respect** taxpayer interests by serving as a faithful protector of the School District's assets;

**I shall encourage** and respect the free expression of opinion by my fellow Board members and others who seek a hearing before the Board, while respecting the privacy of students and employees;

**I shall recognize** that a Board member has no legal authority as an individual and that decisions can be made only by a majority vote at a public Board meeting; and

**I shall abide** by majority decisions of the Board, while retaining the right to seek changes in such decisions through ethical and constructive channels.

The Board President will administer the oath in an open Board meeting; in the absence, of the President, the Vice President will administer the oath. If neither is available, the Board member with the longest service on the Board will administer the oath.

The Board adopts the Illinois Association of School Boards' "Code of Conduct for Members of School Boards." A copy of the Code shall be displayed in the regular Board meeting room.