

# REDBANK VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: LOCAL BOARD PROCEDURES

TITLE: CODE OF ETHICS

ADOPTED: June 7, 1999

REVISED:

## 004.1. CODE OF ETHICS

### Section 1. Purpose

The Board recognizes the importance of ethical behavior among its members and, accordingly, endorses the Code of Ethics of The National School Boards Association. It is the policy of the Board to require all of its members to abide by this code of ethics.

### Section 2. Authority

The Board adheres to the belief that its members have authority only when acting as a Board legally in session. The Board shall not be bound in any way by any statement or action on the part of any individual member except when such statement or action is in pursuance of special instructions from the Board.

Any Board member who attempts to speak for the Board without express permission of the Board, or who in other ways violates the code of ethics, will be subject to censure.

### Section 3. Guidelines

The Code of Ethics of the National School Boards Association, which shall guide the action of Board members in this district, is as follows:

- a. Members of the local Board of Education, representing all the citizens of the school district, recognize that:
  1. Fellow citizens have entrusted them with the educational development of the children and youth of the community.
  2. The public expects their first and greatest concern to be in the best interest of each student without distinction as to who they are or what their background may be.

3. The future welfare of the community, of this state, and of the nation depends in the largest measure upon the quality of education provided in the public schools.
  4. They and their fellow Board members must take the initiative in helping all the people of the community to have all the facts all the time about their schools, to the end that they will readily provide the finest possible school program, school staff, and school facilities.
  5. Legally the authority of the Board is derived from the state which ultimately controls the organization and operation of the school district and which determines the degree of discretionary power left with the Board and the people of this community for the exercise of local autonomy.
  6. They must never neglect their personal obligation to the community and their legal obligation to the state, nor surrender these responsibilities to any other person, group, or organization.
- b. In view of the foregoing consideration, it shall be the constant endeavor of Board members to:
1. Devote time, thought, and study to the duties and responsibilities of a School Board member so that they may render effective and creditable service.
  2. Work with fellow Board members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that arise during vigorous debate of points of issue.
  3. Base their personal decisions upon all available facts in each situation; to vote by honest conviction in every case, unswayed by partisan bias of any kind; thereafter, to abide by and uphold the final majority decision of the Board.
  4. Remember at all times that as individuals they have no legal authority outside the meetings of the Board, and that they must conduct their relationships with the school staff, the local citizenry, and all media of communication on the basis of this fact.
  5. Resist every temptation and outside pressure to use their position as School Board members to benefit either themselves or any other individual or agency apart from the total interest of school district.

6. Recognize that it is as important for the Board to understand and evaluate the educational program of the schools as it is to plan for the business of school operation.
7. Bear in mind under all circumstances that the primary function of the Board is to establish the policies by which the schools are to be administered, but that the administration of the educational program and the conduct of school business shall be left to the employed Superintendent of Schools and his/her professional and nonprofessional staff.
8. Welcome and encourage active cooperation by citizens, organizations, and the media in establishing policy on current school operation and proposed future developments.
9. Strive, step by step, toward ideal conditions for most effective School Board service to the community, in a spirit of teamwork and devotion to public education.

Section 4. Sanctions

When in the opinion of a majority of Board members the actions of an individual member violate the Ethics Code, the Board may issue sanctions in the form of private or public censure.