

INDIANA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

CODE OF ETHICS

A School Board member should honor the high responsibility that membership demands:

- BY thinking always in terms of *children first*.
- BY understanding that the basic function of the school board member is *policy-making* and not *administrative*, and by accepting the responsibility of learning to distinguish between these two functions.
- BY accepting the responsibility, along with fellow board members, to assure that adequate facilities and resources are provided for the proper functioning of schools.
- BY refusing to *play politics* in either the traditional partisan, or in any petty sense.
- BY representing the entire school community at all times.
- BY accepting the responsibility of becoming well-informed concerning the duties of board members, and the proper function of public schools.
- BY recognizing responsibility as a State official to seek the improvement of education throughout the State.

A School Board member should demonstrate respectful relationships with other members of the Board.

- BY recognizing that authority rests only with the board in official meetings and that the individual member has no legal status to bind the board outside of such meetings.
- BY recognizing the integrity of previous board members and the merit of their work.
- BY refusing to make statements or promises as to how he or she will vote on any matter which should properly come before the board as a whole.
- BY making decisions only after all facts bearing on a question have been presented and discussed.
- BY respecting the opinion of others and by graciously conforming to the principle of *majority rule*.
- BY refusing to participate in irregular meetings which are not official and when all members do not have the opportunity to attend.
- BY working with fellow board members and the administration to fairly determine the present and future educational needs of the community.

A School Board member should maintain desirable relations with the superintendent of schools and other employees.

- BY striving to procure the best professional leader available for the head administrative position.
- BY giving the superintendent full administrative authority for properly discharging the professional duties of the position and the responsibility to achieve acceptable results.
- BY acting only after consideration of the superintendent's recommendations on matters of school governance.
- BY having the superintendent present at all meetings of the Board except when his or her contract and salary considerations are under review.
- BY respecting proper communication channels, referring all complaints to the proper administrative office and considering them only after failure of an administrative solution.
- BY providing adequate safeguards around the superintendent and other employees so that they can perform their responsibilities.
- BY presenting criticisms of an employee directly to the superintendent.

A School Board member should maintain a commitment to the community:

- BY developing and adopting a mission and a vision statement for the school corporation.
- BY conducting all school business transactions openly.
- BY vigorously seeking adequate financial support for the schools.
- BY refusing to use the school board position for personal gain.
- BY refusing to discuss confidential board business anywhere other than when attending a properly advertised board meeting.
- BY earning the community's confidence that all is being done in the best interests of school children.