



Sonoma County Board of Education—Governance

BB 9005(a)

The primary responsibility of the Sonoma County Board of Education is to act in the best interest of every student in every school or program operated by the Sonoma County Office of Education. The members of the County Board of Education have a duty to represent students, constituents, and the educational community. The County Board also has major commitments to parents/guardian, all members of the community, employees, the State of California, laws pertaining to public education, and established Rules of the County Board of Education. To maximize County Board effectiveness and public confidence in its governance, County Board members are expected to govern responsibly, hold themselves to the highest standards of ethical conduct, and provide stewardship of public resources.

County Board members are expected to work with each other and with the Sonoma County Superintendent of Schools to foster student success through service to students, schools, and the community. Each individual County Board member shall:

1. Focus on learning and achievement for all students.
2. Value, support, and advocate for public education.
3. Recognize and respect differences of perspective and style on the County Board and among staff, students, parents/guardians, and the community.
4. Act with dignity and understand the implications of demeanor and behavior.
5. Respect confidentiality.
6. Participate in professional development and commit the time and energy necessary to be an informed and effective leader.
7. Understand that authority rests with the County Board as a whole and not with individual County Board members.
8. Endeavor to understand the distinctions between County Board and County Superintendent responsibilities and staff roles. Refrain from performing management functions that are the responsibility of the County Superintendent and staff.

The County Board shall endeavor to foster a positive organizational culture that promotes the following goals and common objectives:

1. Focus on student learning and achievement.
2. Support and encourage County Office services to local school districts, the community, and regional educational consortia.
3. Work in partnership with the County Superintendent of Schools.
4. Communicate a common vision.
5. Operate openly, with trust and integrity.
6. Govern in a dignified and professional manner, treating everyone with civility and respect.
7. Govern within County Board adopted Rules and Procedures.
8. Take collective responsibility for the County Board's performance.
9. Periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the County Board of Education.
10. Ensure opportunities for the diverse range of views and encourage community interest and participation in subjects within the Board's jurisdiction.

Ethics

Each individual Sonoma County Board of Education member is expected to adhere to the following principles:

1. Equity in attitude
 - To be fair, just, and impartial in all decisions and actions.
 - To accord others the respect we wish for ourselves.
 - To encourage expressions of different opinions and listen with an open mind to others' ideas.
2. Trustworthiness in stewardship
 - To be accountable to the public by representing Board and Superintendent policies, programs, priorities and progress accurately.
 - To be responsive to the community by seeking its involvement in appropriate Board affairs and by communicating its priorities and concerns.
 - To work to ensure prudent and accountable use of Board and Superintendent resources.
 - To make no personal promise or take private action that may compromise performance of responsibilities.
3. Honor in conduct
 - To tell the truth.
 - To share views while working for consensus.
 - To respect the majority decision as the decision of the Board.
 - To base decisions on law, rules, and fact rather than supposition, opinion, or public favor.
4. Integrity of character
 - To refuse to surrender judgment to any individual or group at the expense of the Board as a whole.
 - To consistently uphold all applicable laws, rules, policies, and governance procedures.
 - To keep confidential information that is privileged by law or that will needlessly harm the Board or Superintendent if disclosed.
5. Commitment to service
 - To focus attention on fulfilling the Board's responsibilities of goal setting, policy making and program evaluation.
 - To diligently prepare for and attend Board meetings.
 - To avoid personal involvement in activities the law or the Board has delegated to the Superintendent.
 - To seek continuing education that will enhance the ability to fulfill duties effectively.
6. Student-centered focus
 - To be continuously guided by what is best for all students of the County.