

BOARD POLICY

1400110

SOUTH ORANGE COUNTY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

BOARD OF TRUSTEES COMMUNITY
RELATIONS

CODE OF ETHICS - STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

PREFACE

~~As a board member, I am a member of a select group of people, chosen by the citizens of the South Orange County Community College District to perform a vital service. I, as a member of the board, have been granted a position of "trusteeship" over the colleges and the District. I have an obligation to fulfill this trust to the best of my ability. To become a capable and successful board member, I must be willing to devote many hours to serving as trustee, attend board meetings, college functions, conferences and workshops, and study issues and problems demanding thoughtful consideration and decision-making.~~

To This End, I Pledge My Best Efforts To:

- ~~1. Exhibit good citizenship in community, state, and national affairs;~~
- ~~2. Accept the legal and ethical commitments and responsibilities of the colleges to residents of the district, to the staff, to the taxpayers and, most importantly, to the students I serve;~~
- ~~3. Dedicate myself to the highest ideals of honor, honesty, and integrity in all public and personal relationships;~~
- ~~4. Recognize that board members work with fellow board members and that decisions can be made only by a majority vote of the board at a duly convened meeting;~~
- ~~5. Render all decisions regarding the issues at hand based on the available facts and my independent judgments and to refuse to surrender that judgment to individuals or special interest groups;~~
- ~~6. Make responsive decisions to meet the needs of citizens considering their geographic distribution and the cultural and economic makeup of the community;~~
- ~~7. Encourage the free expression of opinion by all board members and to seek systematic communications between the board and students, staff and all elements of the community;~~
- ~~8. Abide by majority decisions of the board, while retaining the right to seek changes in decisions through ethical and constructive channels;~~

- ~~9. Keep confidential all information and discussions whenever conducted during closed sessions of the board;~~
- ~~10. Bring direct and indirect credit to the colleges through personal effort in business, social, professional and personal relationships;~~
- ~~11. Avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of impropriety that could result because of my position, and avoid intentionally using my board membership for personal gain or personal prestige;~~
- ~~12. Bring to the attention of the Chancellor and fellow board members any existing conflict of interest or impediment to service;~~
- ~~13. Fulfill the responsibilities of my office without regard to prejudice, provinciality, partisanship or animosity;~~
- ~~14. Recognize that I share responsibilities as a major employer and my actions will affect the capacity of many people to practice the profession or trade in which they have so much personal investment;~~
- ~~15. Work with other board members to establish and implement effective board policies and to delegate authority for the administration of the District to the Chancellor;~~
- ~~16. Demonstrate respect for the Chancellor, Board President, and all fellow board members at board meetings and at District as well as community events;~~
- ~~17. Dedicate myself and my efforts to the principle that my country can advance only by maintaining the constitutional rights that provide for the education of its people and the preservation of their ability to solve the problems of society.~~

The Board maintains high standards of ethical conduct for its members. Members of the Board are responsible to establish and uphold, implement and enforce all laws and codes applying to the District. Given this basic charge, the activities and deliberations of the Board of Trustees will be governed by the following Code of Ethics:

Each member of the Board will:

1. Avoid any situation that may constitute a conflict of interest and disqualify him/herself from participating in decisions in which he or she has a financial interest. Conflicts of interest may relate not only to the individual trustee but also to his or her family and business associates, or transactions between the District and trustees, including hiring relative, friends, and business associates as college employees.
2. Recognize that the Board acts as a whole and that the authority rests only with the Board in a legally constituted meeting, not with individual members.

3. Maintain confidentiality of all Board discussions held in closed session and recognize that deliberations of the Board in closed session are not to be released or discussed in public without the prior approval of the Board by majority vote, in compliance with BP 122.
4. As an agent of the public entrusted with public funds protect, advance and promote the interest of all citizens maintaining independent judgment unbiased by private interests or special interest groups.
5. Ensure that the District, in compliance with all applicable Federal and State laws, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, age, religion, disability, sex, or sexual orientation in any of its policies, procedures or practices.
6. In all decisions hold the educational welfare and equality of opportunity of the students of the District as his or her primary concern; Board members should demonstrate interest in the respect for student accomplishments by attending student ceremonies and events.
7. Attend and participate in all meetings insofar as possible, having prepared for discussion and decision by studying all agenda materials.
8. Conduct all District business in open public meetings unless in the judgment of the Board, and only for those purposes permitted by law, it is appropriate to hold a closed session.
9. Enhance his or her ability to function effectively as a trustee through devotion of time to study contemporary educational issues, as well as attendance at professional workshops and conference on the duties and responsibility of trustees.
10. Promote and maintain good relations with fellow Board members by:
 - A. Respectfully working with other Board members in the spirit of harmony and cooperation and giving each member courteous consideration of his or her opinion.
 - B. Respecting the opinion of others and abiding by the principle of majority rule.
 - C. Work with Board members in a spirit of respect and civility in spite of differences of opinion that may arise during vigorous debates of points of view.
11. Promote an effective working relationship with the Chancellor and district staff by:
 - A. Providing the responsibility, necessary authority, and support to effectively perform their duties.
 - B. Referring complaints and/or criticisms through the appropriate channels as previously agreed upon by the Chancellor and the Board.

- C. Be an advocate of the District in the community by encouraging support for and interest in the South Orange County Community College District.
- D. Remember at all times that as an individual I have no legal authority outside the meetings of the Board and conduct my relationships with District staff, students, the local citizenry, and the media on that basis.

ENFORCEMENT

All Board members are expected to maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethical behavior and to adhere to the Board’s Code of Ethics. The Board reserves the right to censure any Board member who does not adhere to this policy or engages in other unethical conduct.

A. Censure is an official expression of disapproval passed by the Board of Trustees. A Board member may be subject to a resolution of censure by the Board of Trustees should it be determined the Trustee misconduct has occurred.

B. A complaint of Trustee misconduct will be referred to the Board President.

With the assistance of legal counsel, the Board President will appoint an ad hoc committee of three Trustees not associated with the complaint to conduct an investigation and review of the matter. In the event the complaint involves the Board President, another officer of the Board shall form the ad hoc committee. A thorough fact finding process, formulated in a manner deemed appropriate by the committee, shall be initiated. The committee shall be guided in its inquiry by the standards set forth in this policy and shall complete their inquiries within a reasonable period of time.

C. The Trustee subject to the charge of misconduct shall not be precluded from presenting information to the committee.

D. The committee shall, within a reasonable period of time, make a report of its findings to the Board of Trustees for action.

E. Board members who are found by a majority of the Board to have acted unethically or to have violated this policy may be subject to reprimand, possible exclusion from closed sessions, public censure, referral to the District Attorney for criminal prosecution, or other action as determined by the Board.

Reference:

Accreditation Standard IV B.1. a, e, & h