

School Board Member Ethics

Each duly elected member of the Wallingford Board of Education will:

1. Be a staunch advocate of high quality free public education for all Connecticut children and, in fulfilling his/her responsibilities, think first in terms of what is best for children.
2. As an agent of the state, uphold and enforce all laws, rules, regulations, and court orders pertaining to public schools and strive to bring any needed change only through legal and ethical procedures.
3. Strive to help create public schools that meet the individual educational needs of all children regardless of their ability, race, creed, sex, physical condition, or social standing.
4. Work unremittingly to help the community understand the importance of proper support for public education, whether it be in providing adequate finance, optimum facilities, staffing and resources, or better educational programs for children.
5. Join with the Board, staff, community, and students in becoming fully informed about the nature, value, and direction of contemporary education in our society and support needed change in our schools.
6. Strive to ensure that the community is fully and accurately informed about our schools, and try to interpret community aspirations to the school staff.
7. Recognize that his/her responsibility is not to “run the schools” through administration, but together with fellow board members, to see that they are well-run through effective policies.
8. Attempt to confine his/her Board action to policy-making, planning, and appraisal, and help to frame policies and plans only after my board has consulted those who will be affected by its actions.
9. Arrive at conclusions only after discussing all aspects of the issues at hand with other Board members in meetings, respect the opinions of others, and abide by the principle of majority rule.
10. Recognize that authority rests only with the whole Board assembled in meeting, and make no personal promises nor take any private action that may compromise the Board.
11. Acknowledge that the Board represents the entire school community, refuse to surrender independent judgement to special interests or partisan political groups, and never use his/her position on the Board for gain for self, family, or friends.
12. Hold confidential all matters pertaining to schools which, if disclosed, might needlessly injure individuals or the schools.

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13. Insist that all school business transactions be open and ethical.
14. Strive to appoint the best professional leader available when a vacancy exists in the chief administrative position.
15. Strive to appoint the best trained technical and professional personnel available, upon recommendation by the appropriate administrative officer.
16. Support and protect school personnel in the proper performance of their duties and strive to ensure that all personnel have not only the requisite responsibilities, but also the necessary authority to perform effectively.
17. Refer all complaints through the proper “chain of command” within the system, and will act on such complaints at public meetings only when administrative solutions fail.

Each Board member will also comply with the “Ethics and Conflicts of Interest” section of the *Charter of the Town of Wallingford, Connecticut*.

References: *Standards of Leadership for Members of Boards of Education* printed in Responsibilities of Board of Education Members (Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, 1977)
Charter of the Town of Wallingford, Connecticut
Chapter XVII. Ethics and Conflicts of Interests

Policy Adopted: 12/12/83

Policy Reviewed: 4/16/90

Policy Revised: 3/20/00