

## Sullivan School Board Training Document<sup>1</sup>

### ME: Procedural Guidance and Etiquette for School Board Members

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- **Preparation**
  - All members should remain informed and be ready to discuss Board items prior to Meetings.
  - Materials should be reviewed in advance of official discussions.
  - Members should be prepared to be caught off guard with questions from constituents or the press and members should have “ready answers” to redirect appropriately.
- **Impartiality**
  - Members must be free from bias and prejudice and follow the state non-discrimination law and the District non-discrimination policy.
  - Members should be aware of their presence and attitude as a member of the School Board.
- **Respect**
  - Board members should remain professional, model good behavior, and conduct themselves in a civil manner. Members should be polite and treat others’ opinions with respect and courtesy.
  - Members should avoid asking inappropriate questions or making inappropriate comments outside of the scope of discussion.
  - Members should avoid discussing personal matters in their capacity as board member.
  - Members should avoid engaging in contentious discussions.
  - Members must support and abide by law and board policy decisions.
- **Meetings and Confidentiality**
  - Members understand that a meeting is the convening of a quorum of a board to discuss or act upon matters over which the board has supervision, control, or jurisdiction.
  - Members recognize that an illegal meeting can occur when a quorum of board members exchange information or opinions on a topic outside of a legal school board meeting.
  - Members have a duty to protect the rights of individuals and must meet board responsibilities regarding protected sensitive information.
- **Board Commentary and Inquiry**
  - Members should practice cultural sensitivity in their communications.
  - Members should refrain from commentary or inquiries about an individual’s race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), age, national origin, citizenship status, disability status or other discriminatory questions prohibited by law.
- **Board Policy**
  - Members must review and adhere to Board policies and procedures.
  - Members should remain focused on the relevant issues presented.
  - Members should understand the chain and command and refer problems or complaints to the proper administrative body per applicable School Board policies.

Reviewed and approved: 1/8/2025

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This document is meant for training purposes for the Sullivan School Board in Board Members capacity through official discussions, interviews, or commentary. Please consult legal counsel regarding any specific board member concerns and questions. Developed in collaboration with Wadleigh Law, December 5, 2024.