

**SUBJECT: PRINCIPLES FOR BOARD MEMBERS**

The success of every school system depends on an effective working relationship between the Board and the Chief Executive Officer. This code emphasizes the most important goals and obligations of that relationship. Furthermore, this policy establishes specific guidance for Board members on matters relating to interaction and visitation with BOCES programs, facilities, and students.

Among other things, Board Members should:

- a. Assure the opportunity for high quality education for every student and make the well-being of students the fundamental principle in all decisions and actions.
- b. Obey all national, state, and local laws and regulations pertaining to education and public agencies.
- c. Represent the entire community without fear or favor, while not using their positions for personal gain and accepting all responsibilities as a means of unselfish service.
- d. Adhere to the principle that the Board shall confine its role to policy-making, planning, and appraisal while the District Superintendent (Chief Executive Officer) shall implement the Board's policies.
- e. Act as part of an educational team with mutual respect and regard for each other's respective responsibilities and duties, recognizing that the strength of a Board is in acting as a Board, not as individuals; and that the strength of the District Superintendent is in being the educational leader.
- f. Maintain high standards and the effectiveness of education through research and/or continuing professional development.
- g. Preserve the obligation of having all issues considered fairly and without bias.
- h. Instill respect for individuals, community, state, and nation.
- i. Strictly adhere to the following expectations and guidelines:
  1. Board Members are encouraged to visit BOCES owned-and-operated facilities and programs and to interact with students and staff in an appropriate and professional manner.
  2. With the exception of public events, open to any family member or member of the public, or otherwise invited by the District Superintendent or designee, Board Members must contact the District Superintendent (or specified designee) in advance of a requested visit. At that time, the Board Member must make a specific request, along with the requested, date/time and itinerary.

- i. The District Superintendent or designee shall have the obligation to review the nature of the request for appropriateness (such as, but not limited to, time needed, availability of staff, conflicts, safety considerations, or testing schedules).
  - ii. Upon approval, the District Superintendent will schedule the visit on a mutually agreeable date and time which will meet the goals of the visit, while also, causing a minimal disruption.
  - iii. Board Members will be escorted at all times by a building administrator or designee during all parts of the visit.
3. Should a Board Member need to interact with BOCES personnel or programs in his or her capacity as a parent or family member of a student, then he/she shall follow the same rules as apply to all others in the same capacity.
4. Unless otherwise directed by the Board as a whole, Board Members will refrain from any type of non-familial interaction with students or staff which could be considered contrary to the established role and reputation of the Board, including, but not limited to:
  - i. Establishing a non-professional relationship or communications with students or engaging with students through digital communications.
  - ii. Transporting students, unless specifically authorized by parents/ guardians in writing and approved by the appropriate BOCES administrator. Board members who are parents of BOCES students, or who may have a legitimate familial or personal reason to do so, may transport these students, but shall follow the same rules as all other individuals in that same capacity.
  - iii. Directing staff members in their work assignments, or otherwise supplanting the role of the District Superintendent in engaging with staff about employment or collective bargaining issues.

**Adopted: January 9, 2002**

**Revised: April 12, 2017**