

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER CODE OF ETHICS

Having accepted the challenge of service on this School Committee, I accept the principles set forth in the following code of ethics to guide me in helping to provide free public education to all the children of my school unit within the State of Maine.

- A. I will view service on the School Committee as an opportunity to serve my community, state, and nation because I believe public education is the best means to promote the welfare of our people and to preserve our democratic way of life.
- B. I will at all times think of children first and base my decisions on how they will affect children, their education, and their training.
- C. I will make no disparaging remarks, in or out of the School Committee meetings, about other members of the School Committee or their opinions.
- D. I will remember at all times that as an individual I have no legal authority outside the meetings of the School Committee, and that I will conduct my relationship with the school staff, the local citizenry, and all media of communications on the basis of this fact.
- E. I will recognize that my responsibility is not to operate the schools but to see that they are well operated.
- F. I will seek to provide education for all children in the community commensurate with their needs and abilities.
- G. I will listen to all citizens but will refer all complaints to the proper authorities, and will discuss such complaints only at a regular meeting after failure of administrative solution.
- H. I will support a decision graciously once it has been made by the majority of the School Committee.
- I. I will not criticize employees publicly, but will make such criticism to the Superintendent for investigation and action, if necessary.
- J. I will make decisions openly after all facts bearing on a question have been presented and discussed.
- K. I will refuse to make promises as to how I will vote on a matter that should properly come before the School Committee as a whole.

- L. I will not discuss the confidential business of the School Committee in my home, on the street, or in my office, the place for such discussion being the School Committee meeting.
- M. I will confine my School Committee action to the duties of School Committees as found in Title 20A § 1001 of the Maine Revised Statutes, leaving the administration of the schools to the Superintendent.
- N. I will welcome and encourage cooperation and participation by teachers, administrators, and other personnel in developing policies that affect their welfare and that of the children they serve.
- O. I will endeavor at all times to see that schools have adequate financial support within the capabilities of the community and state, in order that every child may receive the best possible education.
- P. I will resist every temptation and outside pressure to use my position as a School Committee member to benefit myself or any individual or agency apart from the total interest of the school unit.
- Q. I will endeavor to attend every regular and special School Committee meeting recognizing that my presence means representation for my town or city. If I find that this is not possible for an extended length of time, I will give consideration to resigning from my position on the School Committee.
- R. I will recognize at all times that the School Committee of which I am a member is an agent of the state, and as such, I will abide by the laws of the state and the regulations formulated by the Maine Department of Education and by the State Board of Education.

The Lisbon School Committee believes it is important to act in an ethical manner and to follow this Code of Ethics. If the School Committee chair determines that a School Committee member has violated the Code of Ethics, the following progressive actions will be taken:

1. First violation – The School Committee Chair will meet with the School Committee member to inform the member of the ethics violation and the real or potential impact of that violation, provide the Committee member with the opportunity to respond, and discuss strategies to ensure an ethics violation does not occur in the future. The Chair may invite the Vice-Chair and/or the Superintendent to also attend the meeting.

2. Second violation – The School Committee and Superintendent will meet in Executive Session to inform the member of the ethics violation and the real or potential impact of that violation, provide the Committee member with the opportunity to respond, and discuss strategies to ensure an ethics violation does not occur in the future. The School Committee Chair will write a follow-up letter informing the member of the violations and strategies the member is directed to take to ensure no further ethics violations occur.

3. Third violation – The School Committee and Superintendent will meet in Executive Session to inform the member of the ethics violation and the real or potential impact of that violation, provide the Committee member with the opportunity to respond, and determine a method, if possible, of presenting information in a School Committee meeting public session to consider a vote on condemnation of inappropriate behavior and/or actions that compromises the School Committee’s ability to fulfill its responsibilities.

Adopted: February 23, 1998

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