

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOUTH ORANGE AND MAPLEWOOD, NEW JERSEY

BYLAWS  
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Board Member Authority

0146 BOARD MEMBER AUTHORITY

Role of the Member

It is understood that the members of the Board have authority only when acting as a Board legally in session. ~~A Board member does not possess individually the authority and powers that reside in the Board of Education~~ The Board shall not be bound in any way by any action or statement on the part of any individual Board member except when such statement or actin is in pursuance of specific instructions from the Board.

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~~A Board member does not possess individually the authority and powers that reside in the Board of Education.~~ No Board member by virtue of the Board member's office shall exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the operation of the school district or as an individual command the services of any school district employee.

Release of Information

Board member access to public, personnel, and student records shall be governed by law and by the provisions of Policy Nos. 8310, 8320, and 8330.

Confidential information to which a Board member becomes privy as a result of the member's office shall be used only for the purpose of helping the member discharge the member's responsibilities as Board member. No Board member shall reveal information contained in a confidential record or received during a duly convened private session of the Board except when that information has been released to the public by the Board.

Public Expressions

Only the Board President shall authorize or make statements ~~of official Board positions~~ on behalf of the Board. Further, the Board President is not required to have the specific authorization of the Board in order to speak on the Board's behalf. However, the Board President shall, circumstances permitting, seek input from the entire Board.

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~~The Board members recognize that circumstances may arise where there is no time to secure specific authorization of the entire Board. The Board members also recognize that the Board President may speak on behalf of the Board when a majority of the whole Board approves the position. The Board members recognize that the Board President also may speak on behalf of the Board when, after attempting to obtain input from the Board, a majority of those providing input approves the position. Further, Moreover, as recognized by Policy No. 9120, the Board President may release information regarding Board actions of lesser importance than matters warranting press releases as they have been recorded in the minutes of the Board meetings and upon the request of media representatives. No other member of the Board of Education individually will speak for, or in the name of, the total Board unless by explicit direction by the Board.~~

Board members are entitled to express themselves publicly on any matter, including issues involving the Board and the school district. Individual Board members cannot, however, express the position of the Board except as expressly authorized, in accordance with Board Policy No. 9120 or by explicit direction of the Board. Board members should emphasize that they can only speak as individual Board members unless empowered by the Board to speak for it. A Board member shall not represent the member's personal opinion as the position of the Board and shall include in all formal expressions in which the member's Board affiliation is likely to be recognized, such as letters to government officials or newspapers, speeches to organizations, and the like, a statement that the opinions expressed do not necessarily represent those of the Board. While the Board respects the rights of its individual members to use social network sites, members should recognize that they are held to a higher standard than the general public with regard to ethics. It is important that Board member's use of social network sites, or use of any other method of communication, does not damage the reputation of the Board, the school district, its employees, students or their families.

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Board members visiting a school shall comply with district policy and procedures for school visitors.

Members of the Board shall adhere to the Code of Ethics for Board members in Bylaw 0142.

N.J.S.A. 18A:11-1

Cross References: 0120, 0142.1

~~Initial~~ Previous Adoptions: April 2, 2001, May 13, 2019

First Reading: ~~April 29, 2019~~ October 28, 2019  
Second Reading: ~~May 13, 2019~~ November 18, 2019  
Latest Adoption: ~~May 13, 2019~~