ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT
Code of Ethics for School Board Members

Please sign this acknowledgement of receipt to confirm that you have received a copy of the Code of Ethics for School Board Members contained within this recent amendment to the School Ethics Act, C.178, P.L. 2001.

Each school board member and charter school trustee is responsible to read and become familiar with the Code of Ethics for School Board Members. Questions about the policy should be directed to your Business Administrator/ Board Secretary. If unable to answer the question, the BA/BS may direct you to the School Ethics Commission from whom you may request an advisory opinion.

The Code of Ethics became a part of the School Ethics Act on July 26, 2001 so it is effective immediately. Failure to sign this acknowledgement will not relieve a board member of the responsibility to understand and adhere to the Code of Ethics.

_____

BOARD MEMBER'S NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

_____

BOARD MEMBER'S SIGNATURE DATE

Please sign and return this sheet to the Business Administrator/Board Secretary

18A:12-24.1 Code of Ethics for School Board Members

A school board member shall abide by the following Code of Ethics for School Board Members:

a. I will uphold and enforce all laws, rules and regulations of the State Board of Education, and court orders pertaining to schools. Desired changes shall be brought about only through legal and ethical procedures.

b. I will make decisions in terms of the educational welfare of children and will seek to develop and maintain public schools that meet the individual needs of all children regardless of their ability, race, creed, sex, or social standing.

c. I will confine my board action to policy making, planning, and appraisal, and I will help to frame policies and plans only after the board has consulted those who will be affected by them.

d. I will carry out my responsibility, not to administer the schools, but, together with my fellow board members, to see that they are well run.

e. I will recognize that authority rests with the board of education and will make no personal promises nor take any private action that may compromise the board.

f. I will refuse to surrender my independent judgment to special interest or partisan political groups or to use the schools for personal gain or for the gain of friends.

g. I will hold confidential all matters pertaining to the schools which, if disclosed, would needlessly injure individuals or the schools. In all other matters, I will provide accurate information and, in concert with my fellow board members, interpret to the staff the aspirations of the community for its school.

h. I will vote to appoint the best qualified personnel available after consideration of the recommendation of the chief administrative officer.

i. I will support and protect school personnel in proper performance of their duties.

j. I will refer all complaints to the chief administrative officer and will act on the complaints at public meetings only after failure of an administrative solution.

L.2001,c.178,s.5.

0142 BOARD MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS, PROHIBITED ACTS AND CODE OF ETHICS (M)

Each member of the Board of Education shall possess the qualifications required by law and shall be bound by the provisions of the School Ethics Act.

Qualification of Office

A Board member must be a citizen of the United States.

A Board member must be a resident of the district the member represents and must have been such for at least three years immediately preceding the member's election or appointment.

A Board member must be able to read and write.

A Board member must be registered to vote in the district and not disqualified from voting pursuant to N.J.S.A. 19:4-1.

A Board member may not have been convicted of a crime or offense as listed in N.J.S.A. 18A:12-1.

A Board member cannot concurrently hold office as mayor or a member of the governing body of Readington Township.

Each member of the Board of Education, within thirty days of election or appointment to the Board shall undergo a criminal history background investigation for the purpose of ensuring the member is not disqualified from membership due to a criminal conviction of a crime or offense listed in N.J.S.A. 18A:12-1 et seq. The Board of Education will reimburse the Board member for the costs of the criminal history record check (registration and fingerprinting fees*). The Commissioner of Education shall notify the Board of Education if a member has been disqualified from membership on the Board as the result of the criminal history record check. The Commissioner of Education will also notify the Board if a Board member has charges enumerated in N.J.S.A. 18A:12-1 pending against him/her and the Board shall take appropriate action. If the pending charges result in conviction, the member shall be disqualified from continued membership on the Board.

Prohibited Acts

"Business" means any corporation, partnership, firm, enterprise, franchise, association, trust, sole proprietorship, union, political organization, or other legal entity but does not include a school district or other public entity.

"Interest" means the ownership of or control of more than ten percent of the profits, assets, or stocks of a business but does not include the control of assets in a labor union.

"Immediate family" means the person to whom the Board member is legally married and any dependent child of the Board member residing in the same household.

No Board member or member of his/her immediate family shall have an interest in a business organization or engage in any business, transaction, or professional activity that is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his/her duties in the public interest.

No Board member shall use or attempt to use his/her official position to secure unwarranted privileges, advantages, or employment for him/herself, members of his/her immediate family, or others.

No Board member shall act in his/her official capacity in any matter where he/she, a member of his/her immediate family, or a business organization in which he/she has an interest, has a direct or indirect financial or personal involvement that might reasonably be expected to impair his/her independence of judgment in the exercise of official duties. No Board member shall act in his/her official capacity in any matter where he/she or a member of his/her immediate family has a personal involvement that is or creates some benefit to the Board member or a member of his/her immediate family.

No Board member shall undertake any employment or service, whether compensated or not, which might reasonably be expected to prejudice his/her independence of judgment in the exercise of official duties.

No Board member or member of his/her immediate family or business organization in which he/she has an interest shall solicit or accept any gift, favor, loan, political contribution, service, promise of future employment, or other thing of value based upon an understanding that the gift, favor, loan, contribution, service, promise, or other thing of value was given or offered for the purpose of influencing him/her, directly or indirectly, in the discharge of his/her official duties, except that the member may have solicited or accepted contributions to his/her campaign for election to public office if he/she had no knowledge or reason to believe that the campaign contribution, if accepted, was given with the intent to influence him/her in the discharge of official duties. Board

members may not accept offers of meals, entertainment or hospitality which are limited to clients/customers of the individual providing such hospitality. Board members may attend hospitality suites or receptions at conferences only when they are open to all persons attending the conference.

No Board member shall use, or allow to be used, his public office or any information not generally available to the members of the public which he/she receives or acquires in the course of and by reason of his/her office, for the purpose of securing financial gain for him/herself, any member of his/her immediate family, or any business organization with which he/she is associated.

No Board member or business organization in which he/she has an interest shall represent any person or party other than the Board of Education or this school district in connection with any cause, proceeding, application, or other matter pending before this school district or in any proceeding involving this school district, except that this provision shall not be deemed to prohibit representation within the context of official labor union or similar representational responsibilities.

It is not a conflict of interest if, merely by reason of his/her participation in any matter voted upon by the Board, a Board member accrues material or monetary gain that is no greater than the gain that could reasonably be expected to accrue to any other member of the member's business, profession, occupation, or group.

No elected Board member shall be prohibited from making an inquiry for information on behalf of a constituent, if no fee, reward, or other thing of value is promised to or given to or accepted by the member or a member of his/her immediate family, whether directly or indirectly, in return for the information so requested.

Nothing shall prohibit a Board member or members of his/her immediate family from representing him/herself or themselves in negotiations or proceedings concerning his/her or their own interests, except that Board members shall disqualify themselves from participating in negotiations and voting on collective bargaining agreements where their spouse or dependent children are members of the bargaining unit.

Each Board member shall annually, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:12-25 and 18A:12-26, file a disclosure statement regarding potential conflicts of interest.

Ineligibility for District Employment

A Board member cannot be appointed to a paid office or position required to be filled by the Board, except where law permits or requires that the office or position be

filled by a Board member, and is ineligible for appointment to a paid office or position in the district for at least six months after the member's retirement, resignation, or removal from Board membership.

Code of Ethics

In accordance with N.J.S.A 18A:12-24.1 every Board member will abide by the following Code of Ethics. The Board member will:

1. Uphold and enforce all laws, rules and regulations of the State Board of Education and court orders pertaining to schools. Desired changes shall be brought about only through legal and ethical procedures.

2. Make decisions in terms of the educational welfare of children and seek to develop and maintain public schools that meet the individual needs of all children regardless of their ability, race, creed, sex, or social standing.

3. Confine his/her Board action to policymaking, planning and appraisal, and help to frame policies and plans only after the Board has consulted those who will be affected by them.

4. Carry out his/her responsibility not to administer the schools, but together with fellow Board members, insure they are well run.

5. Recognize that authority rests with the Board of Education and make no personal promises nor take any private action that may compromise the Board.

6. Refuse to surrender his/her independent judgment to special interest or partisan political groups or to use the schools for personal gain or for the gain of friends.

7. Hold confidential all matters pertaining to the schools, which, if disclosed, would needlessly injure individuals, or the schools. In all other matters, he/she will provide accurate information and, in concert with fellow Board members, interpret to the staff the aspirations of the community for its school.

8. Vote to appoint the best-qualified personnel available after consideration of the recommendation of the chief administrative officer.

9. Support and protect school personnel in proper performance of their duties.

10. Refer all complaints to the chief administrative officer and act on the complaints at public meetings only after failure of an administrative solution.

Each Board member is required to sign an acknowledgment that he/she received a copy, read and will become familiar with the Code of Ethics for School Board Members contained within N.J.S.A. 18A:12-21 et seq. The School Business Administrator/Board Secretary will provide each Board member with a copy of the Code of Ethics and the required acknowledgement on an annual basis and will maintain the original signed acknowledgment(s) in the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary's office.

The Board will receive a copy of and discuss the School Ethics Act and the Code of Ethics for School Board Members, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 12-21 et seq., at a regular scheduled public meeting each year. The discussion may include presentations by school administrative staff, the Board attorney, Board members and/or other professionals familiar with the School Ethics Act and the Code of Ethics. In addition, the Board Attorney will keep the Board informed of decisions by the School Ethics Commission, Commissioner of Education, State Board of Education and courts.

Oath of Office

Each Board member shall, before entering upon the duties of the office, swear or affirm under oath that he/she qualifies for membership and will faithfully discharge the duties of the office of Board member.

N.J.S.A. 18A:12-1; 18A:12-1.1; 18A:12-2;
18A:12-2.1; 18A:12-21 through 18A:12-34
N.J.S.A. 41:1-3
School Ethics Commission Policy Guideline 1.

*indicates Readington language only.

Adopted: March 22, 2005

Revised: October 18, 2011