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Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice

The Board maintains high standards of ethical conduct for its members. As members of the State Center Community College District Board of Trustees, working as a collective unit in conjunction with administration, staff, students, and the communities the Board serves, will execute to the best of its abilities the duties and responsibilities vested in it by the California Education Code and entrusted to the Board by its constituency.

Board members recognize that as elected public servants their actions, behaviors, and verbal statements will be under the watchful eye of the citizenry at all times. Therefore, the decisions made as a Board must reflect our dedication to promote higher education along with opportunities for professional, vocational, and technical growth and enhancement. As officials of public education, Board members must be a positive reflection of those for whom we speak.

1. Board members will devote time, thought and study to the duties and responsibilities of a community college Trustee in order to be effective.
2. Board members recognize the facts that the strength and effectiveness of the Board is as a total Board, not as a group of individuals.
3. Board members agree to work with fellow Board members in a spirit of cooperation and compromise despite differences of opinion that may arise during debates on issues.
4. Board members agree to respect the office that we hold. Remembering that as an individual we have no legal authority outside the meetings of the State Center Community College District. Board members should never misuse the power inherent in their office. Board members will abide by state and federal anti-discrimination and harassment laws.
5. Board members pledge to avoid any situation that constitutes a conflict of interest. When a matter arises that could be a question of conflict of interest, Board members will notify the Chancellor and/or Board President before any official action is taken.
6. Board members will resist influencing votes or actions of other Board members or of any employee, through threat, promise of award, deception, exchange of vote, or by any other means than legitimate open discussion.
7. All official business by the Board will be conducted in open public hearings except for those issues which are by law more appropriately dealt with in closed session.
8. Board members recognize that all discussion in closed session should not be released or discussed by individual board members, outside the confines of the closed session. Any information disclosed from closed session will only be released with the approval of the Board by majority vote.
9. The Board's function is to establish the policies of the District. The Board shall hold the Chancellor and his/her staff accountable for the administration of the educational program and the conduct of District business. Any complaints, criticisms, and comments received by individual Board members regarding the District should be directed through appropriate channels as previously agreed upon by the Chancellor and Board.

Violations of this policy may subject the member violating it to censure by the Board.

Censure Policy

1. State of Purpose. Censure is an official expression of disapproval passed by the Board. A Board Member may be subject to a resolution of censure by the Board should it be determined that any form of Trustee misconduct has occurred.

All Board Members are expected to maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethical behavior. In order to maintain public confidence in the Board, and the governance, the Board will be prepared to investigate the factual basis behind any charge or complaint of Trustee misconduct.

2. Censure Procedure. A complaint of Trustee misconduct is submitted by another member, or by a member of the public. The Board will first consider the complaint to determine whether further investigation is warranted. If the Board does determine such further investigation or consideration is warranted, the complaint will be referred by the Board President for investigation and review to an *ad hoc* committee composed of three Trustees not subject to the complaint. In a manner deemed appropriate by the committee, a thorough fact-finding process shall be initiated and completed within a reasonable period of time to determine the validity of the complaint. This process may include an external investigator, as appropriate.

The Trustee subject to the charge of misconduct shall be permitted to present information to the committee.

The committee shall, within a reasonable period of time, make a report of its findings to the Board for action.

3. The committee, if it determines censure may be appropriate, will direct the Chancellor to draft a Resolution of Censure and place the matter on the agenda of the next regular or special Board meeting for consideration by the Board as a whole.

Reference: Accreditation Standard IV.B.1.a,e, & h

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