



# Prince William County

**PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

*Providing A World-Class Education*

®

## **Prince William County School Board Code of Ethics**

1. I recognize that decisions are made by majority vote and, once made, should be supported by all Board members. I will respect the right of other Board members to have opinions and ideas that differ.
2. I will hold confidential all matters pertaining to the Prince William County Public Schools which, if disclosed, would needlessly injure individuals or the school division, and all information that is private and/or privileged under applicable law and School Board policies and regulations, including but not limited to, all materials and information pertaining to closed session and all matters protected by the attorney/client privilege.
3. 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.
4. I will attend all regularly scheduled Board meetings insofar as possible and become informed in advance concerning the issues to be considered at those meetings. I will be prepared for meetings and contact Division staff for information or background, rather than prolong school board meetings with the presentation of such information.
5. I understand that the Board makes decisions as a team and acknowledge that individual Board members may not commit the Board to any action. I will not make public statements which may be perceived as an official statement of the School Board, unless directed to do so by majority vote of the School Board.
6. I will always remember that my first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare and academic performance of all students attending the public schools and will make decisions in terms of the educational welfare of all children in the School Division, regardless of magisterial district, ability, race, religion, national origin, sex, or social standing.
7. I will uphold and enforce all federal, state and local laws, and all rules, policies and regulations of the Prince William County Public Schools and the Virginia Board of Education. Desired changes to existing policies, regulations and practices shall be brought about only through legal and ethical procedures.

8. I recognize that the Division Superintendent is the chief administrative officer of the School Division and will take action only after considering all facts presented, the opinions of my fellow Board members and the Superintendent's recommendations. I will vote to approve the best qualified personnel available after consideration of the recommendation of the Division Superintendent, and will refrain from endorsing, favoring or promoting a particular candidate before receiving the recommendation of the Superintendent. I will ask good questions about the consequences of any action under consideration and give the Superintendent time to respond.
9. I acknowledge that individual Board members have no authority to direct Division staff. I will give staff the respect and consideration due skilled professional employees and will support and protect school personnel in proper performance of their duties. I will follow the chain of command and refer problems or complaints to the Division Superintendent for referral to the proper administrative office.
10. I agree that I must never neglect my personal obligation to the community and my legal obligation to the state, nor surrender these responsibilities to any other person, group or organization; but that, beyond these, I have a moral and civic obligation to the nation which can remain strong and free only so long as public schools in the United States of America are kept free and strong.
11. I acknowledge the vital role a healthy school system plays in a community and the duty of the School Board members to remain responsive to the community, and I recognize that the future welfare of this community, of this state, and of the nation depends in the largest measure upon the quality of education we provide in the public schools to fit the needs of every learner.
12. I will refuse to surrender my independent judgment to special interest or partisan political groups or to use my position for personal gain or prestige or for the gain of friends or political allies.
13. I recognize that authority rests with the School Board as a whole, and will make no personal promises nor take any private action that may compromise the Board.
14. I will encourage the free expression of opinion by all Board members and seek systematic communications between the Board and students, staff, and all elements of the community.