
**PEACHAM SCHOOL BOARD POLICY
BOARD MEMBER CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Prepared for 1st reading: 7/12/99
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Warned for Hearing: 9/3/99

Adopted: **9/16/99**

Copies to: ___ Principal: ___ School Library: ___ Board Members: ___ CCSU: ___ Town Clerk: ___ Town Library: ___

The Board recognizes the ethical duty of all public officers to avoid conflicts of interest. In the case of board members, this duty is extended by Vermont statutory law to include a requirement that boards adopt policies and procedures to avoid the appearance of conflicts of interest. In order to comply with the obligations thus imposed, the board and its members will adhere to the following standards:

1. Board members will be familiar with the NSBA and VSBA Codes of Ethics, and will observe their provisions.
2. Board members will be familiar with, and adhere to, those provisions of Vermont Education Law which define school board powers and govern board member compensation and public bidding processes.
3. A board member will do nothing intended to give the false impression that he or she has the authority to make decisions or take action on behalf of the board or the school administration.
4. A board member will not represent special interests or partisan politics for personal gain and will not take any action which is intended to give the impression that he or she would represent special interests or partisan politics for personal gain.
5. A board member will not use his or her position on the board in any manner intended to unfairly promote personal financial interests or the financial interests of family members, friends or supporters.
6. A board member will not accept anything of value in return for taking particular positions on matters before the board.
7. A board member will not be influenced by anything other than a fair presentation of all sides of the question and will not intentionally do anything to leave the impression that he or she will be influenced by anything other than a fair presentation of all sides of a question.

When a board member becomes aware of involvement in a conflict of interest as defined in state law or this policy, he or she will declare the nature and extent of the conflict or appearance of conflict for inclusion in the board minutes, and will abstain from voting or participating in the discussion of the issue giving rise to the conflict.

Nothing in this policy is intended to limit an individual board member's participation in board decision making related to the general school population, even though that board member may have a child attending the school or be related to a school employee.

The policy is intended, however, to limit an individual board member's participation in board decision making when he or she would personally gain from board decision making.

When the conflict of interest claim against a board member is brought to the board in writing, and is signed, and the board member against whom the claim is made does not concur that a conflict in fact exists, the following board procedures will be followed.

1. Upon a majority vote of the remaining board members, or upon order of the chair, the board will hold a hearing on the conflict of interest claim, giving both the board member and the person bringing the claim an opportunity to be heard.
2. At the conclusion of the hearing, the remaining board members will determine by majority vote to take one of the following actions:
 - A. Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is not supported by the evidence and is therefore dismissed.
 - B. Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is supported by the evidence and that the member should disqualify him or herself from voting or otherwise participating in the board deliberations or decision related to that issue, as required by Vermont statute.
 - C. Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is supported by the evidence and, in addition to disqualifying him or herself from voting or otherwise participating in the board deliberations or decision, the board member should be formally censured or subjected to such other action as may be allowed by law.