



# Shonto Governing Board of Education, Inc. Policy Statement

SUBJECT: Gov. Board Members Code of Ethics  
POLICY NUMBER: BCA  
DATE OF ORIGINAL POLICY: 1/7/04

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1/9/15  
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: 1/2018  
DATED: 12/22/14

## I. PHILOSOPHY:

Where government is founded upon the consent of the governed, the people are entitled to have total confidence in the moral integrity of their government. The acceptance of a Code of Ethics implies the understanding of the basic organization of school Governing Boards under the laws of the Federal Government, Navajo Nation, and the State of Arizona. The oath of office of a Governing Board member binds him or her to adherence of those laws which apply to school boards. The Navajo Nation Ethics in Government Law (2 N.N.C. §§3744) establishes guidelines for a school board policy. This school district aspires to operating a moral and honest organization. It is critical that all perceive this Governing Board as setting the standard for morality in government. Therefore, the Governing Board establishes the following policy statement.

## II. POLICY STATEMENT:

It is the policy of the Shonto Governing Board of Education, Inc., that as elected officials of the Navajo Nation, Board members recognize they are subject to the Navajo Nation Ethics in Government Law and applicable resolutions of the Health, Education, Human Services Committee of the Navajo Nation Council, and as a consequence, members shall not use the function of their office in a manner which could place, or appear to place, their personal economic or special interests before the interests of the general public.

## III. EXCEPTIONS TO POLICY:

None

## IV. AMPLIFYING INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES:

### A. ETHICS PERTAINING TO RELATIONS WITH HIS/HER COMMUNITY

1. Members should realize that their primary responsibility is to the children.
2. Members should recognize that their basic function is to adhere to policy making and not to the administrative management of the district.
3. Members should remember that they are one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all board decisions once they are made.
4. Members should be well informed concerning the duties of a board member on both a local and state level.
5. Members should remember that they represent the entire community at all times.
6. Members should accept the office as a board member as a means of unselfish



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service with no intent to "play politics," in any sense of the word, or to benefit personally from their Governing Board activities.

## B. ETHICS PERTAINING TO RELATIONS WITH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

1. Members should endeavor to establish sound, clearly defined policies which will direct and support the administration.
2. Members should recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside the administration.
3. Members should act only on the recommendations of the Superintendent in all matters of employment or dismissal of school personnel.
4. Members should give the Superintendent full responsibility for discharging his/her professional duties and hold him/her responsible for acceptable results.
5. Members should refer all complaints to the administrative staff for solution and only discuss them at Governing Board meetings if such solutions fail.
6. Members shall make criticisms of school personnel to the Superintendent or his/her staff.

## C. ETHICS PERTAINING TO RELATIONS WITH FELLOW GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

1. Members should recognize that action at official meetings is binding and that they alone cannot bind the governing board outside of such meetings.
2. Members should realize that they should not make statements or promises on how they will vote on matters that will come before the governing Board.
3. Members shall uphold the intent of executive sessions and respect the privileged communications that exist in executive sessions.
4. Members should not withhold pertinent information on school matters or personnel problems, either from members of their own Governing Board or from members of other governing boards who may be seeking help and information on school problems.
5. Members should make decisions only after all facts on a question have been presented and discussed.
6. Members shall respect the right of other board members to have opinions that differ from their own.
7. Members shall insist that all Governing Board and district business is ethical and honest by bringing about desired changes through legal and ethical procedures, upholding and enforcing all laws, State Department of Education rules, and court orders pertaining to schools.
8. Members shall refuse to bring personal or family problems into Governing Board considerations.

## D. ABSTENTION FROM OFFICIAL ACTION

When a board member is required to take official action on a matter in which he or she has a personal economic interest, he or she shall first consider eliminating that interest. If that is not feasible, the board member shall:



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1. Prepare and sign a written statement describing the matter requiring action and the nature of the personal conflict as soon as the board member becomes aware of that conflict and deliver copies to the Board President; and
2. Abstain from voting, sponsoring, influencing, or in any manner attempting to influence the vote that would advance such person's personal economic interest; and
3. Abstain from voting or otherwise participating in the official decision, unless otherwise directing by the authorized presiding official; and
4. Any such abstention shall not affect the presence of such person for the purposes of establishing a quorum for the meeting.

## E. GENERAL PROHIBITIONS; CONFLICT OF INTEREST

School board members shall avoid any action which could result in, or create the appearance of:

1. Using public office for private gain;
2. Giving preferential treatment to any special interest organization or person;
3. Impeding governmental efficiency or economy;
4. Making a government decision outside official channel; or
5. Adversely affecting the confidence of the people in the integrity of the government of the Navajo Nation.

V. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY: None

VI. REPORTS: None

VII. FORMS: None

VIII. EXPIRATION:

This policy shall expire within three (3) years from its approval date

IX. SIGNATURE BLOCK:


Submitted by: Lemual B. Adson  
Superintendent

Date: 12/22/14

1<sup>st</sup> Review Reading: December 22, 2014

Approved: January 9, 2015

Established:

  
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Martha Tate, President,  
Shonto Governing Board of Education, Inc.