



# DYNAMIC BOARD MEMBERS

How to unite a divided board and bring the team together.

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- ▶ Board Member Oath and Ethics
- ▶ Board Member Policies and Legal Guidance
- ▶ Board Member Leadership – Basics
- ▶ Teamwork Time!



# ALL ABOARD!

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- ▶ Oath of Office
  - ▶ *I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I am duly qualified, according to the Constitution of this State, to exercise the duties of the office to which I have been elected (or appointed) and that I will, to the best of my ability, discharge the duties thereof and preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of this State and of the United States, so help me God.*
  - ▶ – (S.C. Constitution, Art. III, Sect. 26)

## BOARD MEMBER OATH

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- ▶ Represent the interests of the entire district and rely on facts;
- ▶ Understand my proper role to set policies and hire chief admin to carryout policies;
- ▶ Encourage open exchange by all board members;
- ▶ Seek regular communication between the board and its constituents;
- ▶ Attend all board meetings and be prepared;
- ▶ Ensure public trust by working with all board members in a courteous manner;
- ▶ Communicate concerns to the superintendent and other board members;
- ▶ Support employment of the best qualified staff;
- ▶ Avoid conflicts of interest;
- ▶ Encourage recognition of students and staff and community involvement;
- ▶ Support legislation and funding aimed to improve education;
- ▶ Do not act individually in a way that would compromise the board or the administration and respect confidentiality;
- ▶ Stay current on educational issues and attend training; and
- ▶ Do my best to make my district's educational setting the best environment for students to learn.

### BOARD MEMBER ETHICAL PRINCIPLES ADOPTED BY THE SCSBA DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

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## BOARD MEMBER POLICIES

- Always look to Board Policy for guidance. Hint – look in the “B Section – School Board Governance and Operations,” which often contains policies directly relevant to board members.
- Common policies that you might find to be helpful include but are not limited to:
  - Board Powers and Duties
  - Board Member Authority and Responsibilities
  - Board Member Conduct
  - Board Member Code of Ethics
  - Board-Superintendent Relationship
  - School Board Meetings and Executive Sessions/Open Meetings
  - Rules of Order



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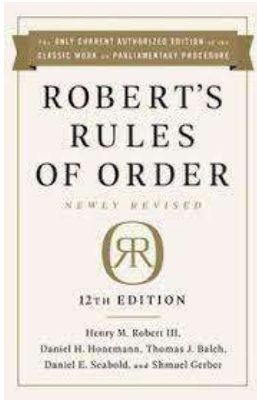
## LEGAL GUIDANCE



- Senate [Bill 201](#) – Effective July 1, 2022
- S.C. Code of Laws § [59-19-60](#) (Removal of trustees; vacancies.)
- [Attorney General's Opinion](#), September 30, 2019
  - See 1973 S.C. Op. Att'y Gen. 270 (1973); see also S.C. Const, art. VI, § 8 ("Any officer of the State or its political subdivisions ... who has been indicted by a grand jury for a crime involving moral turpitude ... may be suspended by the Governor until he shall have been acquitted."); S.C. Code Ann. § 1-3-240 (removal of officers by Governor).



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- ▶ Know and understand the officer roles for your board.
- ▶ The Chair traditionally presides over and conducts the meetings.
- ▶ Parliamentarians can be helpful in resolving procedural/rule disputes that may arise involving motions, order, and public participation.
- ▶ Do NOT use public participation time as an opportunity to create discord and friction.
- ▶ Know your role as an individual member and give others an opportunity to be heard (ethics).

## BOARD MEMBER LEADERSHIP

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## TIME FOR TEAMWORK

When you arrived, you received a number (1, 2, or 3). Please find your number on the wall and join your teammates, where you will receive instructions for a board scenario that you will work together to resolve. Create your own board, designate officers, and get to work!

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## SCENARIO #1

The Sherard County School Board has been on a roll these last few months until the wind was let out of its sails after the most recent election cycle when more than half it is tenured members were unseated and lost to the New Kids on the Block incumbents. As a result of this recent development, the New Kids on the Block seek to change a lot of the "old stuff" and aren't afraid to take to the streets and speak their minds.

Case in point, Jordan Knight – the most infamous member of the NKOTB, recently took to his social media account – VOTE JORDAN FOR MAJOR CHANGE – to post the following message one night after the Board had a heated discussion over whether to enforce mask wearing on Tuesdays and Thursdays:

"Those four knuckleheads (YOU KNOW WHO I'M TALKING ABOUT OLD MEMBERS) are out of their minds and crazy for trying to tell our kids and staff they can't wear masks on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Who do they think they are? Nazis? Based on my research at [www.notthefacts.com](http://www.notthefacts.com), masks should only be worn on those dates – not other days! Seriously, get a load of these jerks."

The post received 567 "likes", 78 "shares", 461 comments, and was featured on the front page of "Music School Times" newspaper.

Surprisingly, the Superintendent's phone rang off the hook the next day; the Board Chair is openly sobbing in public now; and Board Members are threatening one another with karaoke comebacks. Justin Timberlake, another Board Member, just filed a grievance against Jordan, and he's encouraged staff members to do the same.

How can this Board right the ship? Does Jordan have any First Amendment protection? How does the Board handle the grievance issue? What if staff file grievances against Jordan?



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## SCENARIO #2

Danny Devito is a successful food connoisseur and chef extraordinaire. He owns and manages Penguin Projects, LLC, which is a catering company that he started from scratch back in 1989 with his best friend, Jack Nicholson who D.B.A. Jack Napier. Danny and Jack's business has grown very successful over the years, to include bidding on and cooking up delicious food for local school districts in the Gotham area of the state. They specialize in fish delicacies that have a crazy vibe.

After many years of running Penguin Projects, Danny steps down as C.E.O. but still maintains a major interest in the business as an owner, although Jack jokes that it is really he that takes the business so "seriously" everyday. Most recently, Jack placed a bid in response to Wayne County School Board's RFP for a major catering bid for a large celebration. At nearly the same time, Danny – who was quacking up with the food industry – decided to give back to his community and run for election as a Wayne County Board Member in the school board elections; in an ice slide win, Danny was elected.

At his first meeting, Danny voted on the award for the catering project, which was given to Penguin Project – the only responsive bidder. Following the bid and on the eve of the event, Danny visited the District Office often to obtain information from the various sous chefs to report back to the public using his catering insight. Now, one of his fellow Board members filed an ethics complaint against him and is actively encouraging community members to boycott Penguin Projects and the event.

What icebergs lay awaiting for Danny? Any ethical egg-mines? What about his fellow board member?



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## SCENARIO #3

Tiffany Tufted is a newly-elected member of the Titmouse School District Board of Trustees. She has three grandchildren who attend school in the District, and she has always been very involved in their lives, including having lunch with one of them every week at school.

She decided to run for the Board because she believes she has the necessary experience as an involved grandparent to be a great Board Member. Prior to making her decision to run for the Board, Tiffany studied all of the Board's policies and also researched State law regarding her rights and responsibilities as a Trustee.

Because she is retired, Tiffany has a lot of time on her hands. She made it a goal to visit every school in the District at least once a week, so she can see what is going on and report back to the Superintendent and her fellow Board Members about what the Board needs to change.

When Tiffany wants to visit a school, she does not contact the principal or the Superintendent. She believes in "surprise" visits so that she can determine what actually is occurring in that school. When she arrives at the school, she sometimes checks in at the office, but she often just goes straight to a classroom where she barges in, unannounced, and tells the teacher to "keep doing your job, so I can see what you're teaching our kids."

Not surprisingly, the Superintendent received a number of staff and administrative complaints. The Board is also receiving calls from teachers complaining about Tiffany. When the Chair first discussed this with her, Tiffany said, "it's the law – it's my duty to visit. Chew on that." What should the Board do?



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## THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK AND DEDICATION TO OUR CHILDREN!

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