BP 2715  Code of Ethics/ Standards of Practice

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

The Board of Trustees is elected by and accountable to the voters of the Santa Clarita Community College District to determine the direction and policies of the District in pursuit of its mission. To promote a healthy academic environment for the students, faculty and staff which inspires and challenges the College's community to greater service and achievements, to establish a norm for trustee performance, and in the spirit of mutual trust and support, the Board of Trustees adopts this Code of Ethics.

Excellence of Board of Trustee functioning is seen as an integral component of the striving for institutional excellence. This Code of Ethics is supported by the Organizational Values developed by the administrative leadership of the District and is approved by the Board of Trustees. The adoption of the Code of Ethics by the Board is our commitment to a set of values guiding our performance. As the Board strives for excellence and adherence to these values, it serves as a model and leader in encouraging all members of the District community to pursue and achieve excellence.

The Board maintains high standards of ethical conduct for its members. Each member of the Board is responsible to:

- Hold the educational welfare of the students of the District as his/her primary concern in all decisions and act only in the best interests of the entire community. Communicate the Board's interest in and respect for student accomplishments by attending student ceremonies and events Act only in the best.
- Ensure the District maintains equality of opportunity for all students regardless of race, creed, sex, religion, age, physical ability, national origin, or sexual orientation.
- Ensure a model atmosphere in which controversial issues can be presented fairly demonstrating respect and consideration for Board members, citizens, students and College staff.
- Respect others, act with civility, and use appropriate channels of communication.
- Confine Board action to policy determination, planning, evaluation and maintaining the fiscal stability of the District. Delegate authority for the execution of these items on a day-to-day basis to the Chief Executive Officer of the District.
- Conduct all District business in open public meetings, unless, in the judgment of the Board and only for those purposes permitted by law, it is appropriate to discuss District business in closed session. Maintain the confidentiality of privileged information discussed in closed session.
- Devote time, thought, energy, effort and ability to the Board of Trustees in order to render effective service for the betterment of the College. Work to be informed about the district, educational issues, responsibilities of trusteeship, and devote adequate time to board work.
• Be an advocate of the College in the community by encouraging support for and interest in College of the Canyons.

• Avoid situations which have or appear to have potential for personal gain and act honestly and openly at all times, preventing conflicts of interest and the perception of conflicts of interest.

• Remember that Board members have authority only when acting as a Board legally in session, or when acting in pursuance of specific instructions of the Board. Accept the concept that each Board member is only one member and cannot exercise authority only as a board.

• Hold the educational welfare of the students as the primarily concern in all decisions and assure that opportunity for high quality education for all students regardless of sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin or handicap.

• Recognize that the primary duty of the Board is to represent the entire community while maintaining an independent judgment unbiased by special interests or other politically active, narrowly focused groups.

See Administrative Procedure AP 2715
Approved 06/11/08
AP 2715  Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice

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

Procedure for a violation of BP 2715:

Introduction:

If a trustee violates the Board’s Code of Ethics, it may harm the Board and the College in a number of ways. Violating ethics laws may subject the Board and College to legal action, which can involve penalties and significant costs or create circumstances that may jeopardize the District’s Accreditation. Not addressing ethical and legal violations may cause the public and College employees to lose respect for and trust in the Board. The strategy a Board uses to address ethical breaches depends on whether the behavior violates related laws or the Board’s own Code of Ethics.

Procedure:

Anyone claiming or expressing the possibility that a Board member has violated the Board’s Code of Ethics shall make such violation known to the Board of Trustees.

1. In the event that the alleged violation constitutes a violation of the laws of the State of California, such violation shall be referred to the District Attorney or the Attorney General.

2. Other alleged violations shall be put on the Board’s agenda for response by the accused Board member. This will be an opportunity for the trustee to explain his/her perspective and motives.

3. If in fact it is the conclusion of the majority of the trustees that there has been a violation of this policy, the Board of Trustees may act in one of the following manners depending on the severity and intent of the violation:

   a. The Board President talks to the person about the implications of the perceived violation, including the negative impact the behavior will have on the College, the Board, and the individual trustee.

   b. An ad hoc committee may be appointed to look into the allegations and make a recommendation to the Board President or the Board as a whole.

   c. The Board may hold a workshop or retreat on codes of ethics and the importance of upholding them. All trustees discuss interpretations of the code and reinforce expected behavior.

   d. The Board may, in a meeting, make a public statement of expected Board behavior, adopt a Board resolution about what expected behavior is, and/or publicly reaffirm the ethics policy. This course of action alerts the public that individual violations are not condoned by the Board.

   e. The Board may issue a public statement in which it expresses concern with an individual trustee’s behavior. The statement would be made at a Board meeting.

   f. A last resort is a Board vote to censure the trustee’s behavior. Censure distances the Board from the unethical behavior of one of its members and is a clear, public statement that unethical behavior is not condoned or tolerated.
4. If illegal or unethical behavior occurs during a Board meeting (such as remaining at the Board table when the trustee has a conflict of interest, engaging in debate or discussion with audience members on topics not on the agenda, attacking a speaker or not following the Board’s meeting procedures), undermine the chair or the CEO, the chair can state what the expectations and standards are of Board behavior and/or state that the behavior violates Board policy and/or procedures.

Revised 12/04/13