

# Bylaws

## Egg Harbor Township Board of Education

### **0169 BOARD MEMBER USE OF INTERNET SOCIAL NETWORKS AND OTHER FORMS ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION**

Board members will periodically review the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world with special emphasis to board members' use of Facebook and other social media.

Use of Facebook and other social media by school board members shall be consistent with the New Jersey Code of Ethics for School Board Members, N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24.1.

1. Board members will refrain from inappropriate conduct in making public statements, including but not limited to posts and comments, on Facebook and social networking sites, and will refrain from any disparagement of fellow board members or others on a personal, social, racial or religious basis. Board members shall not send messages that contain material that may be defined by a reasonable person as profane or obscene; messages that are racist, sexist or promote illicit, illegal or unethical activity.
2. Board members will recognize that authority rests with the board of education and will make no personal promises on social media sites nor take any private action which may compromise the board.

While this Policy respects the right of Board members to use social networks, Board members shall recognize they are held to a higher standard than the general public with regard to standards of conduct and ethics. A Board member's use of social networks shall not damage the reputation of the school district, employees, students, or their families. Board members who use social networks shall ensure their conduct is appropriate for a Board of Education member. Board members should exercise care in setting appropriate boundaries between their personal and public online behavior, understanding what is private in the digital world often has the possibility of becoming public, even without their knowledge or consent.

Board members should carefully review the privacy settings on social networks they use and exercise care and good judgment when posting content and information. When using social networks, Board members are advised to:

1. Clearly provide a disclaimer noting that the Board member's activity on social media is their own personal expression and not that of the Board, this includes placing this disclaimer on the Board Member's personal page and any Campaign Page they may have;
2. Not post anything that would violate any of the district's policies for Board members;

3. Uphold the district's value of respect for any individual(s) and avoid making defamatory statements about the Board of Education, the school district, employees, students, or their families;
4. Not disclose any confidential information about the school district or confidential information obtained as a result of being a Board member, about any individual(s) or organization, including students and/or their families;
5. Not use or refer to their Board of Education title or position when soliciting for a business organization that he or she or any immediate family member has an interest in, as well as posting or referencing any confidential information regarding the Board of Education or the school district obtained through their Board membership, unless authorized by law;
6. Not post, comment, or respond to any postings regarding Board of Education or school district business or respond to any question or inquiry posted to the Board member or posted on any social network regarding Board of Education or school district business and shall refer any such questions or inquiries to the Superintendent of Schools to address, as appropriate; or
7. Not post or comment on any information on a social network determined by the New Jersey School Ethics Commission to be a violation of the New Jersey School Ethics Act.
8. Not expect that their online conversations will remain private.
9. Take precautions to keep communications about official board business separate from private, personal communications.
10. Will refrain from having communications through social networks with other Board members regarding any Board of Education business to avoid any potential violation of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act. Board members may not use online websites to communicate with one another about official board business.

A Board member shall comply with all Board policies regarding acceptable use of computers and computer networks whenever a Board member is using a Board of Education electronic device.

Adopted: 05/18/2021