



## GISSV Board – Code of Conduct

Distinct responsibilities come with serving as a board member at the German International School of Silicon Valley. As part of accepting the election to the board, board members are obliged to *act in the best interests of the GISSV as a whole*. All board members are expected to adhere carefully to the policies, goals and principles of the organization and to set an example of civic volunteerism. Board members will find many of the GISSV policies and goals in the society's bylaws and mission statement.

During service to the society and the GISSV community, the Board expects that all board members will keep the following principles in mind:

**Advance Organizational goals before personal goals.** Put the best interests of the entire school ahead of individual desires. Board Members serve all the children and students. The Board needs to focus on the community and not the individual and share ideas and responsibility.

**Identify a problem and proactively solve it in collaboration with the Administration and fellow board members.** Minimize complaints and look for ways to improve the organization through collaboratively finding solutions.

**Speak up, express your disagreement, engage in dialogue, and support the final decision of the organization.** Once an issue has been discussed and decided, support and defend the decision. Keep deliberations and sensitive material on which they are based confidential. The Board may make mistakes, but the Board makes decisions in good faith and with the best interests of all children and the GISSV community in mind.

**Accept responsibility.** Take on your share of the work. Do your best, ask for help and look for ways to improve prior practices. Accept criticism graciously and give credit to your colleagues. Work together. Work with and communicate with other board members, the administration, faculty, and volunteers.

**Think broadly.** Look at problems from an organization-wide perspective. Focus on the best interests of all the children, students, and educational programs. Look for ways to collaborate with local organizations and draw on the expertise of our parents.

**Treat fellow board members and the Administration respectfully.** Give fellow board members and the administration the benefit of the doubt. The Board and the Administration are doing their best to help build a quality school for our students. Conflicts should focus on issues, not personalities or individuals. Courtesy goes a long way toward building harmony and cooperation.

**Know what's going on.** Keep your finger on the pulse of our organization. Be a good ambassador. Talk to parents and teachers of all educational programs. Look for opportunities to introduce yourself to parents new to our school. Ask for their comments and input and invite them to help. Address rumors and misunderstandings through reasonable research and raise concerns through the appropriate channel, taking only board matters to the board. Ask parents who raise issues to proactively work on solutions. By being open and communicating, we can head off misunderstandings.

**Be altruistic.** Volunteer to help a group even if your child is not affected. We all need to be willing to help each other for the best overall good of our children and education.

**Review periodically the organization and its programs.** Take a fresh look at how things are done. Don't be afraid to enlist new talent. Teach them how things have been done in the past, but don't handcuff innovation and improvement.