

Book	Policy Manual
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Revised Policy - Vol. 43, No. 1 - UGG/EDGAR Revisions

4113 - CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A. The proper performance of school business is dependent upon the maintenance of unquestionably high standards of honesty, integrity, impartiality, and professional conduct by the Board of Education's members, and the District's employees, officers, and agents. Further, such characteristics are essential to the Board's commitment to earn and keep the public's confidence in the School District. For these reasons, the Board adopts the following guidelines to assure that conflicts of interest do not occur. These guidelines apply to all District employees, officers, and agents, including members of the Board. These guidelines are not intended to be all inclusive, nor to substitute for good judgment on the part of all employees, officers, agents, and Board members officers and agents.

1. No employee, officer, agents, or Board member officer or agent shall engage in or have a financial or other interest, directly or indirectly, in any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with his/her duties and responsibilities in the school system.
2. Employees, officers, agents, and Board members officers and agents shall not engage in business, private practice of their profession, the rendering of services, or the sale of goods of any type where advantage is taken of any professional relationship they may have with any student, client, or parents of such students or clients in the course of their employment or professional relationship with the School District.

Included, by way of illustration rather than limitation are the following:

- a. the provision of any private lessons or services for a fee
- b. the use, sale, or improper divulging of any privileged information about a student or client gained in the course of the employee's, officer's, agent's, or Board member's officer's or agent's employment or professional relationship with the District through the employee's, officer's, agent's, or Board member's his/her access to School District records
- c. the referral of any student or client for lessons or services to any private business or professional practitioner if there is any expectation of reciprocal referrals, sharing of fees, or other remuneration for such referrals
- d. the requirement of students or clients to purchase any private goods or services provided by an employee, officer, agent, or Board member officer or agent or any business or professional practitioner with whom any employee, officer, agent, or Board member officer or agent has a financial or other relationship, as a condition of receiving any grades, credits, promotions, approvals, or recommendations
3. Employees, officers, agents, and Board members officers and agents shall not make use of materials, equipment, or facilities of the School District in private practice. Examples would be the use of facilities before, during, or after regular business hours for service to private practice clients, or the checking out of items from an instructional materials center for private practice.

- B. Exceptions to Part A of this policy shall be approved by the Superintendent **before** entering into any private relationship.
- C. No employee, officer, agent, or Board member with a real or apparent conflict of interest may participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by the Federal award. A conflict of interest includes when the employee, officer, agent, or Board member, any member of their immediate family, their partner, or an organization that employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from an entity considered for a contract. ~~Employees, officers and agents can not participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a Federal grant/award if s/he has a real or apparent conflict of interest. Such a conflict of interest would arise when the employee, officer or agent, any member of his/her immediate family, his/her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties described in this section, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract.~~

An employee, officer, agent, and Board member of the District may neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors. ~~Employees, officers and agents can not solicit or accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors or parties to subcontracts.~~

~~x] However, pursuant to Federal rules and in accordance with State law and regulations, the School District has set standards for situations where the financial interest is not substantial or the gift is when an employee, officer or agent may accept a gift of an unsolicited item of nominal value. For purposes of this section, "nominal value" means that the gift has a monetary value of \$25.00 _____ or less. [END OF OPTIONAL LANGUAGE]~~

~~[DRAFTING NOTE: Section 200.318 allows for non-Federal entities (Districts) to set standards for situations in which the financial interest is not substantial or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal value. In such a situation, "nominal value" must be defined. The Ohio Licensure Code of Professional Conduct stipulates that no educator shall accept gifts of \$25 or more. The Ohio Ethics Commission does not list a monetary limit. Rather, it states that no public official shall accept a gift of value that could exert a substantial and improper influence upon a public official. The commission determines whether the value is "substantial" or "improper" on a case-by-case basis. The commission requires disclosure of gifts of \$75 or more each year by public officials.]~~

- D. ~~If to the extent that~~ the District has a parent, affiliate, or subsidiary organization that is not a State, local government, or Indian tribe, the ~~School~~ District may not conduct a procurement action involving the parent, affiliate, or subsidiary organization if the ~~School~~ District is unable, or appears to be unable, to be impartial in conducting a procurement action involving a related organization.
- E. Employees, officers, agents, and Board members ~~officers and agents~~ must promptly disclose any potential conflict of interest which may lead to a violation of this policy to the ~~School~~ District. Upon discovery of any potential conflict of interest, the ~~School~~ District will promptly disclose, in writing, the potential conflict of interest to the appropriate Federal awarding agency or, if applicable, the pass-through entity.

The District will also promptly disclose whenever, in connection with the Federal award (including any activities or subawards thereunder), it has credible evidence of the commission of a violation of Federal criminal law involving fraud, conflict of interest, bribery, or gratuity violations found in Title 18 of the United States Code or a violation of the civil False Claims Act (31 U.S.C. 3729–3733). The disclosure must be made in writing to the Federal agency, the agency's Office of Inspector General, and pass-through entity. The District is also required to report matters related to recipient integrity and performance in accordance with Appendix XII of 2 C.F.R. Part 200. ~~disclose, in a timely manner, all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery or gratuity that affect a Federal award to the appropriate Federal awarding agency or, if applicable, the pass through entity.~~

- F. Employees, officers, agents, and Board members ~~officers and agents~~ found to be in violation of this conflict of interest policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, as permitted by applicable Board policy and may also face criminal charges and/or risk loss of State-issued licenses/permits.

~~[DRAFTING NOTE: The School District has discretion over the appropriate disciplinary actions. For example, the School District may suspend or terminate the individual's employment, transfer the individual, end the District's professional relationship with that individual, or temporarily re-assign the individual. All disciplinary actions must be in accordance with applicable Federal, State, and local law, as well as any collectively bargained agreements.]~~

Legal

R.C. Chapter 102, 2921.42, 2921.43

Ohio Ethics Commission Advisory Opinions No. 92-014 and 2001-03

2 C.F.R. 200.112, 200.113, 200.318