

NEPOTISM, CONFLICT OF INTEREST, GIFTS, AND USE OF CORPORATION RESOURCES

The maintenance of unusually high standards of honesty, integrity, impartiality, and professional conduct by Bluffton-Harrison Metropolitan School District (“BHMSD” or “Corporation”) employees, officers, and agents is essential to ensure the proper performance of school business as well as to earn and keep public confidence in the Corporation.

Nepotism

The Board of School Trustees of BHMSD believes that careful contemplation should be given to the implications of employing individuals who are related to the Corporation’s policy making and administrative personnel. Nepotism can complicate an employee/employer relationship in several, undesirable aspects. Although hiring relatives is permissible under law, the Board expresses a concern that favoritism should have no influence in the hiring process.

While the Corporation does not prohibit the employment of relatives of current Corporation employees or Board members, it does require that serious and extensive consideration be given to concerns, problems, and consequences relating to such decisions. However, the Corporation shall not employ an individual in a position which results in one (1) relative being in the direct line of supervision of the other relative.

For purposes of this policy, a “relative” is defined as:

- (1) The employee’s spouse
- (2) A parent of the employee or a parent of the employee’s spouse
- (3) A child of the employee or a child of the employee’s spouse
- (4) A sibling of the employee or a sibling of the employee’s spouse
- (5) A stepparent of the employee or the employee’s spouse
- (6) A stepsibling of the employee or the employee’s spouse

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest occurs when a Board member or employee knowingly or intentionally may benefit financially from a contract with the Corporation or a purchase made by the Corporation.

Employees shall not engage in, or have a financial interest in (directly or indirectly), any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with his or her responsibilities to the Corporation.

Any employee who has reason to believe that he or she may have a conflict of interest is required to disclose the potential conflict.

The Board shall not knowingly approve a contract or purchase in which a Board member, Corporation employee, or agent of the Board or their spouse or dependent profits or has a pecuniary interest unless the member, employee, or agent with the profit or pecuniary interest makes the

required written disclosure, and the disclosure is approved by vote of the Board before the Board votes on the contract or purchase. For the purpose of this policy the terms “pecuniary interest” and “profit” have the meaning given to those terms under Indiana law.

A Board member may participate in the discussion on the acceptance of their disclosure; however, a Board member will abstain during the vote on disclosure and the contract or purchase addressed by their disclosure.

A Corporation employee or agent of the Board may be called upon to contribute to or participate in the Board’s discussion on the acceptance of a disclosure and the contract or purchase addressed by their disclosure.

Staff Gifts and Use of Corporation Resources

Employees, officers, and agents of the Board shall not make use of materials, equipment, facilities, or any other resources of BHMSD for any unauthorized purpose. In order to assure that Corporation assets are appropriately safeguarded, the Corporation will employ appropriate methods such as vehicle/equipment use logs. The Superintendent may permit school equipment to be loaned to staff members when such use is directly or peripherally related to their employment and to students when the equipment is to be used in connection with their studies or extracurricular activities. Proper controls shall be established to assure the borrower’s responsibility for, and return of, all such equipment.

Employees, officers, and agents of the Board shall not solicit gifts, travel packages, or other incentives from prospective contractors.

Employees, officers, and agents of the Board should *not* expect or accept gifts for carrying out the duties of his/her position.

Employees, officers, and agents of the Board shall not accept any form of compensation from vendors that might influence their recommendations on or raise a conflict of interest with respect to the purchase of equipment, supplies, or services. In addition, staff members who recommend purchases shall not enter into a contractual arrangement with a vendor seeking to do business with the Corporation or a vendor with whom the Corporation is doing business, whereby an individual professional staff member receives compensation in any form for services rendered.

Such compensation includes, but is not limited to cash, checks, stocks, or any other form of securities, and gifts such as electronic equipment, appliances, discount certificates, travel vouchers, tickets, passes, and other such things of more than nominal value. In the event that a staff member receives such compensation, albeit unsolicited, from a vendor, the professional staff member shall notify the Superintendent, in writing, that s/he received such compensation and the compensation has been returned to the vendor.

If a staff member has provided an unusual amount of extra help for a student and the family would like to express appreciation, small non-monetary gifts may be accepted.

The Board acknowledges that gift-giving to staff members as part of holiday celebrations is in keeping with the spirit of such celebrations and gift-giving at the close of an academic year is traditional. In these circumstances, gifts other than money may be accepted; however, teachers should not open gift(s) in class or comment on item(s) in front of students.

The Board authorizes the following people to receive complimentary or reduced rate tickets to interscholastic athletic events or other school related programs and activities:

- Members of the Board
- Administrators
- Regular employees who are issued employee badges
- Community dignitaries or others, as designated by the building principal or Superintendent.

Provision of complimentary tickets is contingent on their availability.

The Superintendent shall develop such procedures as are necessary to provide appropriate safeguards in accordance with this policy, including the development of forms and procedures necessary to make any disclosures required under Indiana law.

I.C. 31-9-2-107

I.C. 2-2.2-1-17

I.C. 20-26-3-4

I.C. 20-26-5-4

I.C. 35-44.1-1-1, 35-44.1-1-2, 35-44.1-1-4, 35-44.1-1-5

I.C. 36-1-20.2

I.C. 36-1-21

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

7 C.F.R. 3016.36(b)(3) and 3019.42

SBOA Uniform Compliance Guidelines Manual for Schools, Chapter 1

Bluffton-Harrison Metropolitan School District

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