

The proper performance of school business is dependent upon the maintenance of unusually high standards of honesty, integrity, impartiality, and professional conduct by board members, and the district's certified staff, officers, and agents, and is essential to the board's commitment to earn and keep the public's confidence in the district.

For these reasons, the board adopts the following guidelines that are designed to avoid the occurrence or appearance of any conflicts of interest. These guidelines apply to all district certified staff, 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 certified staff, officers, and agents. Certified staff are expected to perform their duties in a manner free from an actual conflict of interest or from situations that create the appearance of a conflict of interest, in a manner consistent with 19.59, Wis. Stats. The board's interest in enforcing this policy is to assure that the decisions and actions of public employees retain the public's trust. Therefore, even a conflict relationship that can be viewed as beneficial to the district or that was intended to be beneficial to the district, may still be a violation of this policy.

- A. No certified staff, 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. This includes not only to those interests that violate state criminal law, which typically requires at least \$15,000 in financial interest, but also lesser valued conflicts that nonetheless create the appearance of using one's public position to secure a private benefit.
- B. Certified staff, 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 employee, student, client, or parents of such students or clients in the course of their employment or professional relationship with the district.

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

1. The provision of any private lessons or services for a fee, unless the provision of services is arranged outside of school and is separate from, and in addition to, regular support provided to students as part of the administrator's regular duties.
2. Soliciting on school premises or under circumstances which are coercive for the private sale of goods or services to students or other employees.
3. The use, sale, or improper divulging of privileged information through his/her access to district records, about a student or client, gained in the course of the administrative employee's, officer's, or agent's employment or professional relationship with

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the district.

4. 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.
 5. The requirement of employees, students, or clients to purchase any private goods or services provided by an administrative employee, officer, or agent or any business or professional practitioner with whom any employee, officer or agent has a financial or other relationship, as a condition of receiving any grades, credits, promotions, approvals, or recommendations.
- C. Should exceptions to this policy be necessary in order to provide mandatory services to students or clients of the district, all such exceptions will be made known to the administrative employee's supervisor and will be disclosed to the district administrator before entering into any private relationship.
- D. Certified staff, officers, and agents shall not make use of materials, equipment, or facilities of the district for their own personal financial gain or business interest. 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.
- E. Certified staff, officers, and agents cannot participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by 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.

Certified staff, officers, and agents may not solicit or accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors or parties to subcontracts.

However, pursuant to federal rules, the district has set standards for 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 \$100 or less.

- F. Certified staff officers, and agents must disclose any potential conflict of interest which may lead to a violation of this policy to the district. Upon discovery of any potential conflict of interest, the district will disclose, in writing, the potential conflict of interest to the appropriate federal awarding agency or, if applicable, the pass-through entity.

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The district will also 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.

- G. Certified staff, officers and agents found to be in violation of this conflict of interest policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

In the event that, within the course of administering a federally funded grant program or service to the district, a certified staff identified a conflict of interest, a potential conflict of interest, or that the appearance of a conflict of interest may arise in the course of administering the federal grant funds, the administrative employee must immediately notify either the federal agency administering the grant in a manner consistent with that particular agency's rules on conflict of interests, or the district employee directly responsible for grant compliance. Such notice shall be provided at the earliest possible time.

It is a violation of this policy to take action or to refrain from taking action, or for an administrative employee to otherwise use his/her public position to obtain a financial gain or anything of substantial value for himself/herself or his/her immediate family, as defined in 19.42(7), Wis. Stats.

LEGAL REF:

Wis. Stats. - 19.59, 19.42 (7), 946.13
Code of Federal Regulations -
2 CFR 200.12, 2 CFR 200.113, 2 CFR 200.318,
7 CFR 3016.36(b)(3), and 7 CFR 3019.42

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