



ETHICS CODE: Conflict of Interest

Board members, employees, and volunteers shall not participate on behalf of the school system in any matter which would, to their knowledge, have a direct financial impact, as distinguished from the public generally, on them, their spouse, dependent child, ward, parent, or other who shares the Board member's, employee's, or volunteer's legal residence or a business entity with which they are affiliated.

1. Outside Employment

- (a) Board members, employees, and volunteers may not participate in outside employment if the work:
- is incompatible with the proper performance of official duties
 - impairs the impartiality or independence of judgment or action of the employee
 - affects the performance of the employee.
- (b) A person engaged in outside employment may not:
- benefit from business with the school system or from relationships with students
 - represent any party before the school system
 - use confidential information acquired in his or her official school system position for personal benefit or that of another.
- (c) Any employee with instructional responsibility shall not tutor, for compensation, any student whom he or she is currently teaching.

2. Stock Ownership

- (a) A Board member or employee may own stock in an entity that does business with the Board of Education as long as the individual is not in a position of influence with a publicly-traded company and if the individual is not in a school system position which can benefit the company.
- (b) A Board member or employee may not hold a position of influence in a non-stock company that does business with the Board of Education (including, but not limited to, a partnership or a limited liability corporation).

3. Exception

The prohibitions listed in sections 1(a-b) and 2(a-b) of this policy do not apply to individuals appointed to the Board who hold an employment or financial interest when appointed if the employment or financial interest is publicly disclosed to the appointing authority and the Ethics Review Panel.

4. Political Activity

(a) Affirmation of Political Rights

The Baltimore County Public Schools recognize the rights of Board members, employees, and volunteers to participate in political and governmental affairs in the manner afforded all other citizens: the right to vote, the right to be an active member of a political party, the right to campaign for election to public office, and the right to seek, campaign for, and serve in public office.

(b) Restrictions

- The political activities of any employee or volunteer seeking or holding public office or campaigning for a political candidate must be conducted outside the workplace and outside working hours.
- An employee or volunteer must refrain from exploiting the privilege of his or her position.
- An employee or volunteer must not involve students in political activities for him or herself or for any party, candidate, or political issues which the person is promoting.

(c) Prohibited Activities

The following activities are specifically prohibited on property under the jurisdiction of the Board, except by guidelines established by the Board and bargaining units:

- posting of political circulars or petitions
- the use of any school or office stenographic help, telephones, supplies, or equipment.

5. Royalties/Personal Gain

- (a) No royalties will be paid to employees or volunteers for textbooks, instructional materials, or programs written or produced during working hours.

- (b) No Board member, employee, or volunteer, will be permitted to use--for commercial purposes--any photographs or information--including test scores and other confidential data--gained through his or her position unless prior approval is provided in writing from the Superintendent of Schools.
- (c) No Board member, employee, or volunteer will be permitted to compile lists of students' and/or parents' names, addresses, phone numbers, or related information available through his or her position for any other person or commercial enterprise unless the compilation of such data has been approved in writing by the individual's supervisor and serves a valid educational purpose and only as permitted by the provisions of the Annotated Code of Maryland, State Government Article, §10-611 et seq.

6. Prohibitions

- (a) No Board member or employee shall:
 - represent any party, for a contingent fee, before or involving the Board of Education
 - act as a compensated representative of another party in connection with a case, contract, or any specific matter in which he or she participated substantially as a Board member or employee, within one (1) year following termination of service to the school system
 - use the prestige of office for personal benefit or that of another
 - use confidential information acquired in an official school system position for personal benefit or that of another.
- (b) An employee may not be in a position that directly supervises, evaluates, or disciplines an immediate family member. An employee may not use his or her position to benefit an immediate family member.

Also see Master Agreement between Board of Education of Baltimore County and the Teachers' Association of Baltimore County

Legal Reference: Annotated Code of Maryland, State Government Article,
§10-611 et seq.

Policy
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Board of Education of Baltimore County