

## STAFF ETHICS/CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Code **GBEA** Issued **12/01**

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Purpose: To establish the basic structure for ethical conduct and the avoidance of conflicts of interest on the part of the center staff.

Staff members will not engage in any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with their responsibilities in the center.

- No employee of the board will engage in or have a financial interest, directly or indirectly, in any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with his/her duties and responsibilities in the center system.
- An employee will not engage in work of any type where information concerning a customer, client or employer originates from any information available to him/her through center sources.
- A professional employee will not sell instructional supplies, equipment or reference books in the attendance area served by the center nor will the employee furnish the names of students or parents/legal guardians to anyone selling these materials.

### **Nepotism**

South Carolina law Section 59-25-10 provides that no board member's immediate family member may be employed without the written consent of the board of trustees.

### **State ethics law**

A public school employee is under the jurisdiction of the "Ethical Conduct of Public Officials and Employees," Section 8-13-700, et seq. S.C. Code of Laws, and is subject to the rules of conduct of the statute. Such rules include the following.

A public employee:

- may not use his/her position or office for personal financial gain (Section 8-13-700)
- must report the receipt of anything of value worth \$25 or more under certain circumstances (Section 8-13-710)
- may not receive compensation to influence action (Section 8-13-705)
- may not receive additional money as payment for advice or assistance given in the course of their employment (Section 8-13-720)
- may not receive anything of value for speaking before a public or private group if the employee is acting in an official capacity (Section 8-13-715)
- may not use government personnel, equipment or materials in an election campaign (Section 8-13-765)
- may not use or disclose confidential information gained in the course of employment (Section 8-13-725)

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- may not serve as a member or employee of a governmental regulatory commission that regulates any business with which the employee is associated (Section 8-13-730)
- may not represent another person before a governmental entity (Section 8-13-740)
- may not have an economic interest in a contract if the employee is authorized to perform an official function relating to the contract (Section 8-13-775)
- may not use or disclose confidential information in any way that would affect his/her economic interest (Section 8-13-725)

In cases where an employee is required to take action or make a decision which affects himself/herself or other individuals, the employee will take such steps as the Ethics Commission will prescribe to remove him/herself from the potential conflict of interest (Section 8-13-700).

The director must file an annual statement of economic interest with the State Ethics Commission (Section 8-13-1110).

Adopted 3/18/85; Revised 12/18/01

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Legal references:

A. S. C. Code, 1976, as amended:

1. Section 8-13-20, et seq. - State ethics law.
2. Section 59-15-10 - No employee may serve on the county board of education.
3. Section 59-19-300 - A board member may not receive pay as a teacher in same district where he/she serves on the board of trustees.
4. Section 59-31-590 - A teacher may not have pecuniary interest in textbook selection.