



Conflict of Interest Policy

Directors shall avoid improper conduct arising from conflicts of interest and shall abide by all legal requirements governing conflicts of interests, including N.C.G.S. Section 55A-8-31.

A person shall not be disqualified from serving as a member of the charter school's board of directors because of the existence of a conflict of interest, so long as the person's actions comply with this conflict of interest policy and applicable law.

Notwithstanding any other provisions in this policy, no voting member of the governing board shall be an employee of a for-profit company that provides substantial services to the charter school for a fee.

Definitions for the purposes of this policy:

1. Interested Person Any director, principal officer, or member of a committee of the Board of Directors who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

2. Financial Interest A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:

- a. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the School has a transaction or arrangement,
- b. A compensation arrangement with the School or with any entity or individual with which the School has a transaction or arrangement, or
- c. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the School is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial. A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. A person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the Board of Directors decides that a conflict of interest exists.

Procedures:

1. Duty to Disclose In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the Board of Directors or members of a committee with governing board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

2. Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, s/he shall leave the Board of Directors or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

3. Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest

- a. An interested person may make a presentation at the Board of Directors or committee meeting, but after the presentation, s/he shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.
- b. The chairperson of the Board of Directors or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
- c. After exercising due diligence, the Board of Directors or committee shall determine whether the School can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.
- d. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the Board of Directors or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the School's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination, it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

4. Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy

- a. If the Board of Directors or committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
- b. If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the Board of Directors or committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

Records of Proceedings:

The minutes of the Board of Directors and all committees with board delegated powers shall contain:

- a. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the governing board's or committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
- b. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

Compensation:

- a. A voting member of the Board of Directors who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the School for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
- b. A voting member of any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the School for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.

c. No voting member of the Board of Directors or any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the School, either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding compensation.

Annual Statements:

Each director, principal officer and member of a committee with Board of Directors delegated powers shall annually sign a statement, which affirms such person:

- a. Has received a copy of the conflicts of interest policy,
- b. Has read and understands the policy,
- c. Has agreed to comply with the policy, and
- d. Understands the School is charitable and in order to maintain its federal tax exemption, it must engage primarily in activities, which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

Periodic Reviews:

To ensure the School operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

- a. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information, and the result of arm's length bargaining,
- b. Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to the School's written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes and do not result in inurement, impermissible private benefit or in an excess benefit transaction.

Use of Outside Experts:

When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for in this policy, the School may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the Board of Directors of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.