

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER CONDUCT

Public office is a trust created by the confidence which the public places in the integrity of its public officers. To preserve this confidence, it is the desire of the Board to operate under the highest ethical standards.

In carrying out his fiduciary duties, a Board member shall not:

1. Disclose or use confidential information acquired in the course of his official duties to further substantially the member's personal financial interests.
2. Accept a gift of substantial value or substantial economic benefit tantamount to a gift of substantial value which would tend to improperly influence a reasonable person in the position to depart from the faithful and impartial discharge of the Board member's public duties or which the member knows or should know is primarily for the purpose of a reward for official action taken.
3. Engage in a substantial financial transaction for his private business purposes with a person whom he supervises in the course of his official duties.
4. Perform an official act which directly and substantially confers an economic benefit tantamount to a gift of substantial value on a business or other undertaking in which he has a substantial financial interest or is engaged as a counsel, consultant, representative or agent.

It shall not be considered a breach of conduct for a Board member to:

1. Use school facilities and equipment to communicate or correspond with constituents, family members or business associates.
2. Accept or receive a benefit as an indirect consequence of transacting school district business.

Adopted September 21, 1994

Revised: October 16, 2013

LEGAL REFS.: C.R.S. 1-45-108 (*Campaign Reform Act; requires report of campaign contributions and expenditures*)
C.R.S. 22-32-110 (1) (k) (*specific powers of boards*)
C.R.S. 24-6-201 *et seq.* (*Public Official Disclosure Law*)
C.R.S. 24-18-104 (*rules of conduct for all public officers, general assembly local government officials and employees*)
C.R.S. 24-18-109 (*rules of conduct for local government officials and employees*)

NOTE 1: State law defines "economic benefit tantamount to a gift of substantial value" to include: 1. A loan at a rate of interest substantially lower than the prevailing commercial rate; 2. Compensation received for private services rendered at a rate substantially exceeding the fair market value; and 3. Goods or services for the Board member's personal benefit offered by a person who is at the same time providing goods or services to the district under a contract or other means by which the person receives payment or other compensation from the district. C.R.S. 24-18-104 (2). However, state law permits a Board member to receive such goods or services if the "totality of the circumstances" indicates the transaction is legitimate, the terms are fair to both parties, the transaction is supported by full and adequate consideration, and the Board member does not receive any substantial benefit resulting from the Board member's status that is unavailable to members of the public generally. C.R.S. 22-18-104 (2)(b).

NOTE 2: State law lists the type of items that are not considered "gifts of substantial value or substantial economic benefit tantamount to a gift of substantial value" and are therefore permissible for a Board member to receive. See, C.R.S. 24-18-104 (3). Such items include campaign contributions or contributions in kind that are reported in accordance with the Fair Campaign Practices Act; an unsolicited item of trivial value (i.e. currently less than \$53), "such as a pen, calendar, plant, book, notepad or similar item;" and an unsolicited token or award of appreciation in the form of a plaque, trophy, desk item, wall memento or similar item. Id.; see also, Colo. Const. Art. XXIX, Section 3.

NOTE 3: The amount of the gift limit (\$53) is identical to the gift limit under section 3 of article XXIX of the state constitution. This amount shall be adjusted for inflation contemporaneously with any adjustment to the constitutional gift limit. C.R.S. 24-6-203 (8). The state constitution requires an adjustment for inflation every four years. The next adjustment must occur in the first quarter of 2015. Colo. Const. Art. XXIX, Section 3 (6).