

**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST****I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to engage in school district business in a fashion designed to avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of impropriety.

**II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

It is the policy of the Richland School District that school board members, the Superintendent, full-time and/or part-time employees, and consultants engage in all school district business activities in a manner that will avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance thereof. It is important to ensure that all employees of the District, including consultants, refrain from outside activities that conflict with their duties to the District or may expose them to the temptation of acting in a manner other than in the best interest of the District.

**III. GENERAL PROHIBITIONS**

Individual board members, the Superintendent, their spouses and dependent children, employees, and consultants shall not have any personal financial interest, directly or indirectly, in any District financial transactions. Further, Richland School District Policy 5223 prohibits staff members from taking advantage of their professional relationship to further private business interests.

**IV. BOARD MEMBER CONFLICTS PRIOR TO TAKING OFFICE**

A board member with personal financial interest in school district business activities, which was entered into before the school board member took office and presents an actual or potential conflict of interest, shall immediately notify the Superintendent and other school board members of such interest. This would include a personal financial interest in the sale or lease of property or a contract with the school district. It shall thereafter be the responsibility of the school board member to refrain from participating in any action relating to the sale, lease, or contract.

**V. DETERMINATION AS TO WHETHER A CONFLICT OF INTEREST EXISTS**

Board members, the Superintendent, employees, and consultants are cautioned to always be alert for actual or perceived conflict situations, especially in the course of outside employment or other private business ventures. There is a continuing duty to disclose to the District, circumstances that give rise to actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

Employees and consultants must disclose actual or potential conflicts of interest to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall make the determination as to whether a conflict of interest exists. Employees and consultants shall thereafter cooperate with the Superintendent as necessary for them to make their determination on how best to mitigate/eliminate the conflict of interest.

Any board member who has an actual or potential conflict must notify the Superintendent. The Superintendent will then contact Special Counsel. The determination as to whether a conflict of interest exists for a school board member is to be made by Special Counsel, who is not an employee of the District. If it is determined that a conflict exists, the school board member shall work with Special Counsel to mitigate/eliminate the conflict of interest.

If the Superintendent or the District’s General Counsel is involved in an actual or perceived conflict of interest, her/she shall notify the school board of the issue. The Board will determine if there is a conflict of interest. If it is determined that a conflict exists, the Board will determine how best to mitigate/eliminate the conflict of interest.

**VI. ELIMINATING OR MITIGATING A CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Conflicts that are deemed to have the potential or are likely to be perceived as having a potential to have an affect on the District must be eliminated or mitigated. Strategies for eliminating or mitigating conflicts can include public disclosure of financial interests, disqualification from participation in all or a portion of business, or recusal from participation in all or a portion of business.

**VII. EMPLOYMENT OF CLOSE RELATIVES**

No person employed by the District may be directly supervised by a close relative or domestic partner including: father, father-in-law, mother, mother-in-law, son, son-in-law, daughter, daughter-in-law, sister, sister-in-law, brother, brother-in-law, step children, step parents, spouse, or former spouse.

Legal References:	RCW	28A.405.250	Certificated employees, applicants for certificated position, not to be discriminated against
		28A.635.050	Certain corrupt practices of school officials Penalty
		42.23.30	Interest in contracts prohibited – Excepted Cases
		42.23.040	Remote Interests

(Formerly #1712)

RSD No. 400

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