

# STAFF AND HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY

## 2.0

**Policy Title:** Code of Conduct

**Last Approved:** October 2023

### BACKGROUND

The purpose of this policy is to set out the fundamental standards to be followed by employees in their everyday actions on behalf of the Saskatchewan School Boards Association ('Association') and seeks to promote honest and ethical conduct. The Code of Conduct is intended as a guide for employees in their conduct as it pertains to their employment with the Association. It is not intended to be exhaustive or to provide specific guidance in every circumstance. Good judgement and common sense shall prevail in application of this policy.

### APPLICATION

This policy applies to all Association employees.

### POLICY STATEMENT

This Code clarifies the Association's expectations of its employees, and re-affirms its mission "*to provide leadership, co-ordination and services to member boards of education to support student achievement.*" It provides guidance for consistent behavior in delivering services and is a formal statement of the expectation that every Association employee demonstrate the highest standards of ethical behavior.

## 2.1 PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT

### a) Employee Behaviour (Respect and Professionalism)

- i) The Association's employees are its ambassadors and are expected to reflect a professional image at all times. Each employee must be conscious of the Association's public duty and their part in the discharge of that duty. They are expected to conduct themselves with the highest degree of ethical behaviour and integrity and are expected to be professional, courteous and objective in all of these interactions.
- ii) Employees must also be professional and courteous with their co-workers. They should be aware that improper behaviour in the workplace has a negative effect on others. Employees are responsible for ensuring a respectful workplace where everyone feels welcome, is valued, and where every employee is accountable for his or her own behaviour and attitude. Employees are expected to be reasonable and fair in their expectations of each other and resolve any conflict in a mature and professional manner. (Refer to the CARES principles document)
- iii) Dress is business casual.

### b) Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest occurs when, in the course of an employee's duties, the employee is called upon to deal with a matter in which the employee has a direct or indirect personal and/or financial interest. A

direct interest can occur when an employee may derive, or be seen to derive, some financial or personal benefit or avoid financial or personal loss. This includes employees having an ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the Association has a transaction or arrangement. An indirect interest may arise when another person or organization having a personal relationship with the employee would experience the potential benefit or loss.

### **Employees shall be in conflict of interest if they:**

- i) Use information gained through their positions as employees to gain monetary benefit either directly or indirectly;
- ii) Use their position to give anyone special treatment that would advance their own interests or that of any member of the employee's family, their friends or business associates;
- iii) Utilize a private organization in which they have shares with the intention of avoiding conflict of interest policy requirements; or
- iv) Their family members, friends or business associates have a personal or financial interest that might present a conflict or bias in connection with their duties as an Association employee.

### **c) Disclosure**

Employees must disclose the existence of any potential conflict of interest to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will review and make a determination as to if a conflict of interest exists and disclosure requirements.

If a financial conflict of interest is deemed to exist, the Executive Director will ensure that a competitive process is followed for all transactions that would involve the conflicted party. This includes issuing an RFP for all contracts greater than \$25,000 and obtaining a minimum of three quotes for all expenditures up to \$25,000. Details of transactions involving a potential conflict of interest will be disclosed to the Executive on an annual basis.

### **d) Outside Employment and/or Outside Business Activity**

#### **Definition**

Outside Employment – other employment including self-employment, personally owned businesses, or employment with another organization within the education sector.

Outside Business Activity – includes providing services for other organizations (including education sector organizations), board and committee work for other organizations, including volunteer work.

Association employees must ensure that engaging in outside employment and/or outside business activity does not negatively impact on their effectiveness at the Association, nor contravene any of its related policies and procedures, and not negatively impact the reputation of the Association. Employees considering or already engaged in outside employment and/or outside business activity should consider the following:

- i) Outside employment and/or outside business activity must not conflict with their Association hours of work.

- ii) Outside employment and/or outside business activities must not interfere with the efficient performance of Association duties.
- iii) Outside employment and/or outside business activities must not compete with Association services.
- iv) Employees shall not use the Association's time or resources, such as photocopiers, stationery, computers, e-mail, internet, printers, cellular phones for the benefit of their outside employment and/or outside business activity.
- v) Employees shall not engage in any outside employment and/or outside business activity or have a financial or other personal interest that is incompatible with the employee's Association duties.
- vi) Employees are responsible for declaring any potential conflict of interest. If an employee is unclear whether a potential conflict exists, the employee shall consult with their Director or Executive Director.
- vii) Employees shall not use Association's property for anything other than officially approved activities.

### **e) Fraud/Theft**

In general, fraud is an act committed which, through deceit, falsehood or other such behaviour, which either deprives the Association of its assets, property or other resources (this includes theft), or causes the Association to act to its own detriment or prejudice.

Fraud may include acts committed with the intent to deceive, involving either misappropriation of Association assets, property or other resources or misrepresentations of financial or other information to conceal such misappropriation, by such means as:

- Manipulation, falsification or alteration of records or documents;
- Suppression of information, transactions or documents;
- Recording of transactions without substance; or
- Misapplication of accounting principles.

All employees shall work in accordance with both the Association controls established to prevent fraudulent misconduct and all applicable laws, regulations and Association policies. All employees shall exercise honesty, integrity, and shall not knowingly be a party to any fraudulent activity, including theft.

### **f) Acceptance of Gifts**

Employees of the Association shall not accept gifts, payment, favours or services from persons or organizations, since to do so implies an imbalance in the impartiality that Association employees must demonstrate in their dealings with others. Employees of the Association shall not accept gifts, payment, favours or services from persons or organizations in the course of performance of their assigned duties unless that gift, payment, favour, or service is:

- i) The normal exchange of courtesies between friends or business associates;
- ii) The normal presentation of gifts to persons participating as speakers, resource persons or volunteers for various functions or activities; or
- iii) Courtesies extended to staff, as a group (i.e. such as in the case of a supplier providing office staff with a box of candy at Christmas).

### **g) Fundraising**

The Association supports fundraising efforts by its employees. Employees engaged in fundraising efforts should ensure the fundraising:

- Does not interfere with the efficient performance of Association duties;
- Does not compete with Association services;
- Is not for political activities; and
- Does not incur additional costs to the Association, such as utilizing photocopiers, stationary, printers, for the benefit of their fundraising efforts.

## **2.2 CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**

a) All employees of the Association shall keep confidential any and all information they acquire during the course of their employment that would reasonably be considered to be personal or confidential. This includes, but is not limited to:

- personal information concerning students, other employees, and executive members;
- personal information concerning all employees of a board of education and the Association;
- confidential information obtained from third parties;
- confidential information about matters under consideration by school administration or the boards of education and the Association;
- confidential information concerning the business or operations of the board of education;
- content of tenders and other contractual negotiations; and
- details of business operations, financial matters and other confidential records of businesses which deal with the boards of education and the Association.

b) Information covered by this policy shall include information that is written or unwritten or stored electronically.

c) Subject to legislation and regulations, any personal or confidential information shall be released only as required in the necessary course of employment and only by those persons authorized to release such information. An employee shall make his or her best efforts to ascertain whether or not release of information is authorized, and if uncertain shall direct the inquiry to his or her Director.

d) Any person who knowingly, recklessly or negligently releases personal or confidential information without appropriate authority may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of the employment contract.

e) All employees will sign the Acknowledgement of Confidentiality Requirements (see 2.0-A Acknowledgement of Confidentiality Requirements Form).

### 2.3 CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATION

#### a) Cooperation During Investigation

All employees must co-operate fully during an investigation of suspected wrongdoing in relation to any activities outlined in this Policy. Retaliation against someone who is a witness or is involved in such investigations is prohibited, and shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

#### b) Violation of Policy

Violation of this policy will be dealt with as such by the Association depending on the severity of the wrongdoing. Any employee, who has contravened these requirements, shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

### REFERENCES