Introduction

The Limestone District School Board is committed to safeguarding the public interest and trust in public education. Board employees and volunteers are expected to uphold the public trust and demonstrate integrity in all of their dealings. Conflicts of interest, whether actual, possible or perceived, may impact on the integrity and public image of the Board and public education generally. Employees and volunteers are therefore responsible and accountable for identifying and avoiding any situations which may present a potential or actual conflict of interest or be perceived to be a conflict of interest as between their personal interests and their official duties and responsibilities as a Board Trustee, employee or volunteer.

Trustees, employees and volunteers are required to disclose any potential or actual conflicts of interest that could compromise, or be perceived to compromise, their objectivity and judgment to their immediate supervisor immediately upon becoming aware of the actual or potential conflict of interest. As such, Trustees, employees and volunteers may be required to excuse themselves from any duty or transaction where they have, or may appear to have, a conflict of interest that could compromise, or be perceived to compromise, their objectivity and judgement.

1. Purpose

1.1. The purpose of this procedure is to define conflicts of interest and to advise individuals how to avoid and resolve actual, possible or perceived conflict of interest situations.

1.2. This procedure is aimed at enhancing the standards of integrity and professionalism of all Board Trustees, employees and volunteers and at building a positive climate for learning and working together.

2. Objective

2.1. The objective is to ensure that Trustees, employees and volunteers avoid conflicts of interest, and act in the public interest at all times in the course of the discharge of official duties and functions.

3. Definition of Conflict of Interest

3.1. For the purposes of this procedure, a conflict of interest is any situation in which an individual has a personal or financial interest that may:

- Affect the individual's judgement and/or the performance of their duties or responsibilities to the Board; and/or
- Cause the individual to act, or appear to act, in a way that is not in the best interests of the Board; and/or
- Negatively affect the reputation of the Board in the community.

3.2. An individual is in a conflict of interest when the individual gets, or hopes to get, personal gain by using their position, influence, Board time, resources, facilities and/or student or staff information.

3.3. Personal gain does not just mean something that an individual gains for themself. Personal gain from a conflict of interest could include something gained for a friend, family member or a business associate.

3.4. An individual should not have, or be involved in, any direct or indirect personal or financial interest that would, or could, negatively affect the reputation of the Board, and/or interfere with the individual's independent exercise of judgment on behalf of the Board.

3.5. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to, circumstances whereby a Board Trustee, employee or volunteer:

- Is involved in a hiring or staff allocation decision when the individual has a close personal relationship with the applicant or affected staff member.
- Supervises or manages employees with whom the individual has, or has had, a close personal relationship.
- Is responsible for any student to whom the individual is related.
- Is involved in any business or other outside activity or interest that interferes with the individual's regular duties and responsibilities at, and for, the Board.
- Uses the Board's equipment, resources, materials, or facilities in any form whatsoever, in the pursuit of outside employment, including paid private practice.
- Is involved in purchasing or other supply chain–related activities and accepts gifts or favours or provides preferential treatment to any bidders or suppliers and/or publicly endorses suppliers or products.
- Sells student and/or staff work/resources, without consent, for personal gain.
- Is involved in any business or other outside activity or interest that could create an actual, possible or perceived conflict of interest, or could adversely affect the reputation of the Board in the community.

4. Duty to Disclose

4.1. Board Trustees, employees and volunteers must report any actual, possible or perceived conflict of interest that they have, or may have, to their immediate supervisor as soon as they become aware of the conflict.

5. Confidentiality

5.1. Any personal information disclosed under this Procedure, will be treated confidentially. Any personal information collected, relevant to a particular conflict of interest, will be used by the Board for purposes of evaluating the risk of the conflict of interest and for fashioning an appropriate remedy.

5.2. In order to adequately address any disclosed or possible conflicts of interest, it may be necessary for the immediate Supervisor to seek direction and guidance from senior staff. If such consultation or further discussion is necessary, the Supervisor will advise the affected individual accordingly.

6. Consequences of Breach

6.1. Anyone who engages in activities that contravene this procedure, including failing to disclose a conflict of interest, may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, and/or other appropriate sanctions.

7. Accountability

7.1. Employees are charged with a personal responsibility to identify and report conflict of interest situations in accordance with the Procedure.

7.2. Immediate Supervisors are responsible for identifying and/or clarifying conflict of interest situations with the employees who report to them.

7.3. Human Resources is responsible for ensuring that all new employees are aware of the procedure.

7.4. The appropriate Supervisory Officer, in consultation with Human Resources, is responsible for deciding whether a conflict of interest situation exists and the subsequent action(s) that may be required.

8. Scope

8.1. This procedure applies to Trustees, Board employees and volunteers.

8.2. This procedure shall in no way relieve any Trustee, employee or volunteer from complying with any laws, statutes, regulations, rules, or applicable standards of professional conduct or practice.

9. Notification

9.1. Each Trustee, employee and volunteer will be made aware of the Procedure.

10. Review of Procedure

10.1. This procedure shall be reviewed as needed.

Legal References
Education Act
Municipal Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act

Related Procedures
Employment/Supervision of Family Members
Acceptance of Supplemental Employment by Regular Staff Members
Banking
Hospitality
Purchasing Procedures
Advertising Expenditures
Facility Partnerships
Encouraging Facility Partnerships
Recruitment and Selection