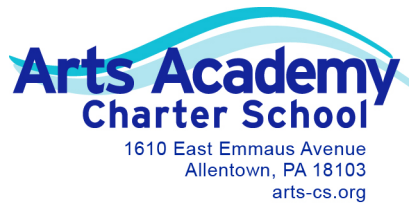


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## Board Policy 7.7

# Political Activities / Gifts / Conflict of Interest

### Purpose

Officers and employees of Arts Academy Charter School have a duty of loyalty to the School and to the public whose interest they represent. The purpose of the following Conflict of Interest Policy statement, which provides guidance and a general standard of conduct with respect to actual or apparent conflicts, is in keeping with the Pennsylvania Public Official and Employee Ethics Law and the State Legislature's declaration that the people have the right to be assured that the financial interests of public officers or employees do not conflict with the public trust, and the principle which prohibits public officers and employees from entering into situations where private interests may conflict with official duties.

The appearance of a conflict of interest undermines the public confidence in the integrity of the School, its officers and employees, and should be scrupulously avoided. Where an employee's outside private activities could appear to an observer to be in conflict with the School employee's job responsibilities or where the employee's position with the School appears to give the employee a competitive advantage in her/his private activities, the employee should apprise the Executive Director of a potential appearance of Conflict of Interest. The Executive Director will investigate the matter and apprise the Board of his/her findings. Failure to report a potential appearance of Conflict of Interest could result in the Executive Director recommending disciplinary action.

No officer or employee shall:

1. Engage in conduct that constitutes a Conflict of Interest, which shall be defined as use by an officer or employee of authority of his office or employment of any confidential information received through one's employment for the private pecuniary benefit of the employee, a member of the employee's immediate family, or a business with which the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family is associated.
2. Engage, or have any interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, in any business, transaction or professional activity, which conflicts with or impairs the proper discharge of official duties
3. Accept an honorarium which represents a payment in recognition of published works, appearances, speeches, and presentations and which is not intended as consideration of

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the value of such services which are non-public, occupational or professional in nature.

4. Recommend, vote or otherwise participate in the decision to make any contract between the School, including Student Activity Funds, and any business or entity in which the officer or employee has a personal or financial interest without notice and full disclosure to the Board of Trustees, the CEO and the officer's or employee's superior. Such notice shall be in writing and shall include, but not be limited to, the nature of the officer's or employee's association with the proposed contractor, both personally and financially. Clarifying financial documentation shall be provided, if requested. Formal approval of the contract by the Board of Trustees is required. The foregoing would apply to any business in which the employee's spouse or child is associated.

The responsibilities of the officer or employee who is excused from administration of the contract by reason of a conflict shall be assigned to an appropriately qualified employee by the disqualified officer's or employee's superior or supervisor. The assigned contract administrator shall report to the disqualified person's superior or supervisor on that contract.

5. Advertise business or professional activities on School property or use School work hours, property or services to perform or promote personal or commercial enterprises or to campaign or raise money for any candidates for political office.
6. Disclose confidential information concerning property, personnel matters, or affairs of the School or its employees, without proper authorization, or use such information to advance the financial or other private interests of the officer, employee or others. Nothing in this provision shall be interpreted as prohibiting the practice of "whistleblowing."
7. Accept anything of significant value including, but not limited to, a gift, loan, political contribution, reward, promise of future employment, favor, gratuity, entertainment, transportation or lodging based on any implied or actual understanding that the judgment of the public employee would be influenced thereby, or under circumstances which might be reasonably interpreted as an attempt to influence the public officer or employee favorably toward the benefactor. The appearance of impropriety should be avoided.
8. Solicit, directly or indirectly, from employees, students or their parents, anything of value for the officer's or the employee's personal benefit.
9. Purchase property of any kind from the School, either directly or indirectly, unless: a.) there is an open and public bid process, including public notice and subsequent public disclosures of all bids considered and contracts awarded, and b.) the officer or employee did not act in an official capacity in connection with the sale, and c.) the officer or employee was not improperly privy to information regarding the property or purchase of property received in the course of employment

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10. Participate in the review and approval of publications or materials for School purchase if the officer or employee is the author/editor of or has any financial interest in the sale of such publications or materials.
11. Refer a parent or student to a service, service provider or product in return for anything of value. Officers or employees making referrals as part of their official duties shall make referrals to more than one provider of the service or product.

#### Statement of Financial Interest

- A. In accordance with Pennsylvania's Public Official and Employee Ethics Law, the School requires each Board Member and employee at the level of Director and above to file a Statement of Financial Interest with the CEO by May 1 of each year for the immediate prior year. All Statements of Financial Interest are reviewed by the CEO.
- B. The CEO may require any employee whose duties require the exercise of discretion or judgment to file a Statement of Financial Interest.

#### Conflict of Interest Resolution

- A. In the event that a question of conflict of interest or the appearance of conflict of interest arises, the matter shall be referred to and investigated by the Executive Director who will report the results of his investigation to the Board of Trustees. The Executive Director shall call all instances involving conflict of interest to the attention of the Board with his/her recommendations as to how the conflict situation might best be resolved.
- B. In the event that a question of conflict of interest or the appearance of conflict of interest arises regarding a Board member, the situation shall be investigated by a committee of at least three (3) Board members appointed by the President of the Board. If the question of conflict of interest involves the President, the investigating committee shall be appointed by the Vice President. The investigating committee shall report its findings to the Board along with any recommendations for Board action. After considering all facts in the matter the Board shall vote to take whatever action it deems appropriate. The Board member in question shall not vote in such matters.
- C. All violations of the foregoing policy are subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including dismissal and any penalties as prescribed by law.