



BOARD POLICY MANUAL	
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Policy Section School	Identification SCH-1014

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that decisions and practices implemented by the Board, its committees and administrators are free from undue influence created by conflict of interest. The creation and maintenance of an atmosphere of trust and integrity in the school community is essential for good governance.

Definition

An actual or potential conflict of interest exists when a person in an authoritative role participates in a decision-making process that may result in personal, professional or business benefit for that person, his/her relatives, and/or associations considered to cause undue influence. The benefit may or may not be monetary, for instance, it may involve working conditions or other benefits.

Examples

The potential for a significant conflict of interest may arise in matters dealing with hiring or evaluating personnel, negotiating and awarding contracts, calculating wages, reimbursing receipts, purchasing products or services and directing curriculum preferences. The committees most directly affected include Human Resource, Program, Contract Partnership, Fundraising and Finance.

At some point, most Boards confront tension or conflict between the interests of the school and the interests of an individual Board member. For example, the school may be investigating the purchase of a new computer and a Board member owns a computer store. The school may well benefit from discounts and extra service by buying the computer at her store, but safeguards must be followed to maintain the credibility of the purchase (Refer also to the *Purchase of Products or Services Guidelines*).

Some conflicts of interest are difficult to weigh and balance because the relationships between Board members and the community are also part of the contribution that Board members make to the society. Similarly, members of the Board or committees who are also parents of the school can be tremendously helpful in ensuring that a parent perspective is brought into decision-making, but a parent Board member may find himself in a difficult position if the school is considering a decision that directly affects his or her child(ren). In many cases, the perceived conflict of interest may simply "feel wrong" to some Board members, although it might be within legitimate boundaries.

Three Simple Safeguards

The following three simple safeguards will help to identify and respond to actual and perceived conflicts of interest:

1. Every Board and committee member will sign a simple declaration to confirm his or her knowledge and agreement with the conflict of interest policy.
2. In Board and committee meetings, disclosure of possible conflicts of interest will continue to be normal practice. The normal practice will include:
 - declaring what is creating the conflict (either by the member in conflict or by [a] member[s] of the committee and/or Board). If a Board or committee member

is not present at the meeting, his/her conflict of interest will be communicated and declared at the next meeting.

- excusing oneself from discussion and voting,
 - refraining from any attempt to influence the voting of any other Board or committee member, and
 - noting the conflict and solution in the meetings' minutes.
3. Board and committees will continue to establish an atmosphere of personal integrity by their example and attitude in such situations.

(see following page for Conflict of Interest Policy Commitment Form)



CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY COMMITMENT FORM

In an effort to accomplish the mandate of the Burlington Parental Christian School Society Inc., Board and committee members are encouraged to scrupulously avoid conflicts of interest between the interests of Trinity Christian School on one hand, and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding potential and actual conflicts of interest, as well as perceptions of conflicts of interest.

I understand that the purposes of this policy are to protect the integrity of the Burlington Parental Christian School Society Inc's decision-making process, to promote confidence and to protect the integrity and reputations of volunteers, staff and board members.

My signature represents my agreement with the conflict of interest policy. I understand the purposes of this policy and will endeavor to communicate all conflicts of interest that may arise during my service on the Board or society committees. After disclosing a conflict of interest, I understand that I may be asked to leave the room for the discussion and may not be permitted to vote on the motion.

I understand that this policy is meant to supplement good judgment, and I will respect its spirit as well as its wording.

Name: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____