



Chattahoochee County Board of Education
326 Broad Street
Cusseta, Georgia 31805
706-989-3775

Board Policy

Descriptor Code: GAG

Staff Conflict of Interest

It is the policy of the Chattahoochee County School Board that none of its employees or officers shall engage in any activities that place them in a conflict of interest between their official activities and any other interest or obligation.

Conflicts of interest require employees and officers to disqualify themselves from participating in a decision when a financial or personal interest is present.

No employee of the Chattahoochee County Board of Education shall engage in or have a financial interest, directly or indirectly, in any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with duties and responsibilities in the Chattahoochee County School System. Staff members shall not engage in any type of private business during school time or on school property. Staff members shall not utilize school materials, inventory, or any other item owned by the School System in the conduct of a private business. Staff members shall not purchase items for private use in conjunction with orders for materials or services purchased by the School System. Any discounts received on purchases made on behalf of the School System shall accrue to the benefit of the School System and to staff members. No staff member shall use his/her position with the School System to influence any business transaction in which the system is not a party. Employees shall not engage in work of any type where the information concerning customer, client, or employer originates from any information available to the employee through school sources.

The Board recognizes that conflicts of interest and concerns regarding relationship in which a power differential exists may arise under other circumstances as well. It is in the interest of the District that the Board provide clear direction regarding the professional risks associated with either familial relationships or romantic/sexual relationships where a definite power differential exists between the parties.

Conflicts of interest may arise in connection with familial relationships or romantic/sexual relationships between supervisors and subordinates. General ethical principles preclude individuals from evaluating the work of others with whom they have familial, romantic or sexual relationship relationships, or from making hiring, salary, or similar financial decisions concerning such persons. At a minimum, that appropriate arrangements be made for objective decision-making.

In a romantic and/or sexual relationship involving power differential, the potential for serious consequences also exists. Individuals entering into such relationships must recognize that:

1. Reasons for entering such a relationship may be a function of the power differential;
2. Even in a seemingly consensual relationship where power differentials exist, circumstances may change, and conduct that was previously welcome may become unwelcome. Even when both parties have consented at the outset to a romantic involvement, this past consent does not remove grounds for a charge based upon subsequent unwelcome conduct.
3. Such a relationship may affect the educational or employment environment for others by creating an appearance of improper, unprofessional, or discriminatory conduct and may provide grounds for complaint by third parties when the relationship gives undue

access or advantage, restricts opportunities, or creates a perception of these problems.

Because of the potential for conflict of interest, exploitation, favoritism, and bias, where familial relationships or romantic and/or sexual relationships exist between supervisors and subordinates, the persons involved in those relationships shall adhere to the following rules:

1. If a supervisor and an employee who is in the direct line of authority of the supervisor become related or become involved in a romantic/sexual relationship, both employees shall have the obligation to notify the Superintendent, or the Board Chair if it is the Superintendent who is involved in such relationship, within 10 working days after the supervisor and employee become related or involved in a romantic/sexual relationship.
2. A person serving in a supervisory position may not participate in decisions regarding hiring, placement, evaluation, salary, promotion, or other personal interest for a relative employed by the District or a person with whom the supervisor is involved in a romantic/sexual relationship, even when the supervisor is not in the direct line of authority. In the event such a relationship exists, the Superintendent (or the School Board if the Superintendent is the supervisor involved in the relationship) shall assign an alternate supervisor.
3. Where such a relationship exists, the person in the position of greater power will bear the primary burden of accountability, and must ensure that he or she does not exercise any supervisory or evaluative function over the other person in the relationship.

If a violation is found, the Board may take whatever action appears appropriate according to the circumstances, up to and including termination. Failure to disclose facts may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to prohibit any employee from teaching, grading, disciplining or otherwise performing his or her duties with respect to his or her own child who attends the school in which the employee works; however, assigning a student to his/her parent's class is strongly discouraged.