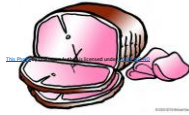


**SHOULD I ACCEPT  
THE HAM?**

**MAKING  
ETHICAL DECISIONS  
GUIDED BY  
BOARD POLICY**



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**AN AWARENESS SESSION  
FOR  
SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS  
AND  
SUPERINTENDENTS OF  
EDUCATION**

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**MISSISSIPPI SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION  
47<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
LEADERSHIP IN ACTION  
FEBRUARY 18, 2019**

**PRESENTATION BY:  
MIKE WALDROP  
DENOTRIS JACKSON  
TOMMYE HENDERSON  
AUSTIN GILBERT**

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DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR EMPLOYEES ARE ACCEPTING GIFTS?

DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?

IF YOU KNOW, THEN WHAT?



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WHAT IS ETHICAL BEHAVIOR ?

**Standards of behavior** that tell us how human beings ought to act in the many situations in which we find ourselves – as friends, parents, children, citizens, educators, board members, and professionals.

“The time is always right to do what is right.”  
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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**BASIS FOR ETHICS:**

- Providing the most good/least harm
- Protecting/respecting moral rights of others
- Treating human beings equally and fairly
- Providing for the common good
- Consistency with certain values/ideals

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**POINTS TO CONSIDER:**

- There will be clashes on varied values, beliefs, life experiences, generational differences, etc.
- Individual needs may clash with group needs
- Personal beliefs could contradict professional experiences
- It may be legal -- but is it ethical?

“A moral leader finds ways to exercise democratic means that fully consider individuals and their groups.”

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**MS CODE OF ETHICS  
STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

“Ethical conduct is any conduct which promotes the health, safety, welfare, discipline, and morals of students and colleagues.”

“Unethical conduct is any conduct that impairs the educator’s ability to function in his/her employment position or a pattern of behavior that is detrimental to the health, safety, welfare, discipline, or morals of students and colleagues.

Mississippi Department of Education

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**Potential ethical dilemma:**

Board members and superintendents are offered “gifts” throughout the school year by vendors, businesses, and contractors who are grateful for the district’s business.



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**STANDARD 8 – Remunerative Conduct**

8.1.b – Insuring that school policies or procedures are not impacted by gifts or gratuities for any person or organization.

8.2.c. – The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage. (This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.)

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**VENDORS MAY INCLUDE:**

- Fund Raising Companies
- Sports Equipment/Uniform Representatives
- Technology/Software/Textbook Companies
- Education Service Providers
- Architectural Firms/Construction Companies
- Bond Counsel
- Outsourced Services (Food Service/Transportation, Cleaning Services, Etc.)
- Banks

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**WHAT SEPARATES  
“THANK YOU” GIFTS  
FROM INFLUENCE GIFTS?**



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**TYPES OF GIFTS:**

- Various types of "HAM" (Food Items)
- Tickets to sporting events
- Technology gadgets (Head phones; Ipads, Etc.)
- Spa treatments
- All expenses paid trips
- Gift cards



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**WHAT DOES YOUR DISTRICT POLICY SAY?**

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**Policy DFK – Gifts and Bequests to School Districts**

**Draft Policy – Acceptance of Gifts From Vendors and Suppliers**

“School Employees shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage.

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Potential ethical dilemma:



- Allowing some school personnel to eat lunch in the school cafeteria for free
- Allowing some school personnel to enter sporting events and other activities without paying the gate fee or the admission fee

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**STANDARD 8 – Remunerative Conduct**

8.1.a - Insuring that institutional privileges are not used for personal gain

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**WHAT DOES YOUR DISTRICT POLICY SAY?**

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**Policy JGHR – Food Service**

**“Teachers are to be served from serving lines only and are not to come for special service.”**

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**Potential ethical dilemma:**

**Using school personnel for personal reasons**

- Employee from the transportation department changing a flat tire on the superintendent's personal car
- School custodian washing the principal's car every Friday afternoon during school hours
- School food service employees cooking for a private party for the superintendent



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**WHAT DOES YOUR DISTRICT POLICY SAY?**

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## Policy CB – Ethics

“The educational administrator shall avoid using positions for personal gain through political, social, religious, economic, or other influence.”

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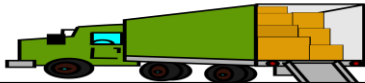
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### Potential ethical dilemma:

#### Using school equipment for personal reasons

- Borrowing tables and chairs from the cafeteria for an off-site baby/wedding shower
- Using district vehicles to move the superintendent's furniture to a new house



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- Using district vehicles to transport the principal's children to sporting events, dance/music lessons, doctor's appointments
- Giving sample items provided by a vendor to the principal's children
- Using school district time, technology, and paper to complete assignments for graduate classes
- Using the school/district copier to print the church bulletin every week
- Using the school computer, email address, paper, and time to apply for a job in another district

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**STANDARD 7: Public Funds and Property**

7.2.a. – Knowingly misappropriating, diverting or using funds, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his/her charge for personal gain

7.2.e. – Using school property without the approval of the local board of education/governing body

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**WHAT DOES YOUR DISTRICT POLICY SAY?**

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**Policy EBH – School Facility Rental**

**Policy EBHA – Use of School Property**

**“School facilities are not available for purposes which may be suitably accommodated through the use of non-school facilities.”**

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**Potential ethical dilemma:**

- Attending a national conference/meeting at the district's expense and not attending the sessions
- Filing for reimbursement for your spouses's and/or children's meals



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**Standard 7: Public Funds and Property**

7.2.c – Submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses or for pay

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**WHAT DOES YOUR  
DISTRICT POLICY SAY?**

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**Policy DJD – Expense Reimbursement**

**“Travel advances may not be used for personal expenses or for any purpose other than the actual expenses of the authorized travel.”**

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**Potential ethical dilemma:**

- Charging students \$1.00 to dress out of school uniform
- Charging students for an activity which is a reward for good behavior or for good grades
- Adding points to a student's grade for contributing to a food drive

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**WHAT DOES YOUR DISTRICT POLICY SAY?**

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**Policy BA – Board Operations Goals and Objectives Mission Statement**

**“Schools can maximize the learning conditions for all students by establishing a school climate which continually affirms the worth and diversity of all students.”**

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**Potential ethical dilemma:**

- A teacher tutoring his/her students after school for pay



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**STANDARD 8 – Remunerative Conduct**

**8.2.b. – Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local school board**

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WHAT DOES YOUR  
DISTRICT POLICY SAY?

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**Policy GBRGB – Professional  
Personnel Tutoring for Pay**

“Teachers shall receive no money  
from parents for tutoring any  
student they have in class or upon  
whose evaluation they will be  
called upon to make.”

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Fundamental Concept

- Are we giving away public assets without benefit?
- Does what we are doing pass the “smell test?”



*Always watch out for the grey areas!*

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QUESTIONS ???

COMMENTS ???

SUGGESTIONS ???

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And, as you leave this session -  
we would like to give  
each one of you  
something  
that is legal and ethical --

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Our sincere appreciation  
for serving our students  
and for making  
the hard decisions  
which move  
our school districts forward



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