

# **COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS**

## **ETHICS GUIDELINES**

### **I. Introduction**

The governance policies of the Columbus Board of Education require employees of the Columbus City Schools (“CCS”) to carry out the mission of the school district in accordance with the strictest ethical guidelines and to conduct them in a manner that fosters public confidence in the integrity of CCS, its processes and its accomplishments.

### **II. General Standards of Ethical Conduct**

CCS employees must, at all times, abide by protections to the public embodied in Ohio’s ethics laws, as found in Chapter 2921 and, where applicable, Chapter 102 of the Ohio Revised Code as interpreted by the Ohio Ethics Commission and Ohio courts. A copy of these laws will be provided to each employee by CCS and receipt must be acknowledged. Employees must conduct themselves, at all times, in a manner that avoids conflict of interest, favoritism, bias, and the appearance of impropriety.

Consistent with these laws, no employee shall:

- Solicit or accept anything of value from anyone doing business with CCS. “Anything of value” includes anything of monetary value, including, but not limited to, money, gifts, food or beverages, social event tickets and expenses, travel expenses, golf outings, consulting fees, compensation or employment. “Value” means worth greater than minimal or nominal.
- Solicit or accept employment from anyone doing business with CCS, unless the employee completely withdraws from CCS activity regarding the party offering employment and CCS approves the withdrawal. “Anyone doing business with CCS” includes, but is not limited to, any person, corporation, or other party that is doing or seeking to do business with, is regulated by, or has interests before CCS.
- Use his or her position at CCS to obtain benefits for him or herself, a family member, or anyone with whom the employee has a business or employment relationship.
- Be paid or accept any compensation from a person or entity other than CCS for her or his services to CCS.
- Hold or benefit from a contract with, authorized by, or approved by, CCS, except for his or her own contract of employment with the Board of Education.
- Authorize, recommend, or in any other way directly or indirectly use his or her position as a CCS employee to secure approval of a CCS contract in which the official or employee, a family member, or anyone with whom the employee has a business or employment relationship, has an interest.

- Solicit or accept honoraria.
- Use or disclose confidential information protected by law, unless appropriately authorized.

### **III. Assistance**

The CCS Office of Legal Services is available to provide advice and assistance regarding the application of these guidelines. In addition, the Ohio Ethics Commission is available to provide guidance regarding the application of the Ethics Law and related statutes. The Commission can be contacted at (614) 466-7090.

### **IV. Penalties**

Failure of any CCS employee to abide to comply with the Ethics Law and related statutes may result in discipline, which may include dismissal, in addition to any potential civil or criminal sanctions under the law.