



GIFTS TO EMPLOYEES AND SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

POLICY:	421
ADOPTED:	12/07/98
REVISED:	06/26/23

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to avoid the appearance of impropriety or the appearance of a conflict of interest with respect to gifts given to school district employees and school board members.

II. General Statement of Policy

- A. The school district recognizes that students, parents, and others may wish to show appreciation to school district employees. The policy of the school district, however, is to discourage gift-giving to employees, and to encourage donors instead to write letters and notes of appreciation or to give small tokens of gratitude as memorabilia.
- B. A violation of this policy occurs when any employee solicits, accepts, or receives either by direct or indirect means, a gift from a student, parent, or other individual or organization of greater than nominal value.
- C. A violation of this policy occurs when any employee solicits, accepts, or receives a gift from a person or entity doing business with or seeking to do business with the school district. Employees may accept items of insignificant value of a promotional or public relations nature in accordance with Minnesota Statute section 10A.071.
- D. Teachers may accept from publishers free samples of textbooks and related teaching materials. Accepted samples and materials obtained become property of the school district.
- E. This policy applies only to gifts given to employees where the donor's relationship with the employee arises out of the employee's employment with the school district. It does not apply to gifts given to employees by personal friends, family members, other employees, or others unconnected to the employee's employment with the school district.
- F. An elected or appointed member of a school board, a school superintendent, a school principal, or a district school officer, including the school business official, may not accept a gift from an interested person.

III. Definitions

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- A. "Gift" means money, real or personal property, a service or promise of a service, a loan, a forbearance or forgiveness of indebtedness, or a promise of future employment, that is given without something of equal or greater value being received in return.
- B. "Interested Person" means a person or a representative of a person or association that has a direct financial interest in a decision that a school board member, a superintendent, a school principal, or a district school officers is authorized to make.
- C. "Financial interest" means any ownership or control in an asset which has the potential to produce a monetary return.

IV. Implementation

A. Funding

Funding allocations and limitations are based on a per employee per fiscal year basis. Allocations shall not carry over into a future fiscal year nor shall they be spent prior to the start of the designated fiscal year. Allocations per employee will include all full time and part time employees. Student, casual, temporary, and short-term substitute employees will not be included in this allocation. The allocations will be calculated at the beginning of the fiscal year by the Director of Business Services and will not adjust during the fiscal year.

B. Annual Allocation of Funds

The Board of Education may authorize a total annual allocation of up to \$1.50 per employee for district-wide appreciation and recognition events. These funds may be used at the School Board's and the Superintendent's discretion.

C. Additional Annual Allocation of Funds

An additional annual allocation of \$3.50 per employee may be allocated for the purpose of recognition events specific to each school or department. The expenditure of these funds will be at the discretion of the principals at the school locations and administrators at the department level at the District Office, Transportation Department, Buildings and Grounds Department, Food Service Department and Community Education. These expenditures must meet the stated employee recognition procedures as outlined below.

D. Additional Donated Funds

School Principals or the Superintendent may use up to \$5 per employee of

donated funds to provide additional recognition to employees. The athletics and activities department may also allocate up to \$5 per coach of donated funds to provide recognition to coaches. This additional funding must come from donations from outside organizations specifically designated to be allowed to be used for district employee recognition programs. Taxpayer dollars will not be used for this portion of the recognition program.

V. Procedures

Any employee considering the acceptance of a gift shall confer with the administration for guidance related to the interpretation and application of this policy.

VI. Violations

Employees who violate the provisions of this policy may be subject to discipline, which may include reprimand, suspension, and/or termination or discharge.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 10A.07 (Conflicts of Interest)
Minn. Stat. § 10A.071 (Prohibition of Gifts)
Minn. Stat. § 15.43 (Acceptance of Advantage by State Employee; Penalty)
Minn. Stat. § 471.895 (Certain Gifts by Interested Persons Prohibited)

Cross References: Policy 209 - Code of Ethics
Policy 210 - Conflict of Interest - School Board Members
Policy 306 - Administrator Code of Ethics
Policy 422 - Employee Recognition