

# Multnomah Education Service District

Code: **GBC-AR**  
Revised/Reviewed: 1/26/09; 8/01/11; 2/18/14;  
8/20/14; 8/30/18

## Staff Ethics

MESD employees are allowed financial benefits as identified in ORS 244.040(2), such as their official compensation package, reimbursed expenses, limited honoraria and unsolicited awards for professional achievement. MESD employees are prohibited from using or attempting to use their MESD positions to obtain a financial gain or to avoid a financial detriment for the MESD employee, a relative or member of the household of the employee, or any business with which the employee or a relative or member of the household of the employee is associated, if the opportunity for financial gain or avoidance of a financial detriment would not otherwise be available but for the employee's position with the MESD. Specifically, this means that:

1. Employees shall not use MESD equipment for personal use, unless it is available to a significant segment of the general public. This includes, but is not limited to, the personal use of MESD's:
  - a. Fax machine<sup>1</sup>;
  - b. Phones to make long distance personal calls;
  - c. MESD vehicles;
  - d. Professional technology equipment (e.g., wood shop, automotive shop, CAD);
  - e. Athletic facilities (e.g., pool or weight room);
  - f. Computers and printers.

Further, the MESD's supplies, facilities, equipment, employees, records or any other public resources are not to be used to engage in private business interests. For example, MESD's computers cannot be used to sell products on an auction website during school hours.

2. When MESD employees are traveling on official MESD business, any gift given because of this travel must be either declined or passed on to MESD for use for future MESD travel. For example, if the hotel where the employee is staying gives the employee a free night's stay on a future visit, this must be declined or given back to MESD for future MESD travel. The frequent flyer miles earned when traveling on official MESD business can only be used for MESD travel. If the employee's spouse is traveling with the employee, the employee is responsible for all additional charges (e.g., additional room charge).
3. MESD employees shall not use personal credit cards for MESD travel or other MESD business and receive incentives such as cash reimbursements, frequent flyer miles and other benefits based upon the dollar amount of purchases made.
4. MESD employees shall not use discounts offered by private companies for the employee's personal benefit if the discount is only offered because of the employee's official position. For example, an

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<sup>1</sup>The MESD could establish a fee schedule that would allow only MESD employees to pay for the personal use of the MESD fax machines. If the MESD established a fee schedule for the use of fax machines the fee schedule must be equal to or exceed the prevailing rates offered at commercial businesses.

office supplies store provides all teachers a 10 percent discount. Because the teachers are receiving this discount only because of their official position, they cannot use the discount to purchase personal items. Teachers may use the discount to purchase items for MESD use. Employees can accept the discount if it is also available to a substantial segment of the population who are not public officials.

5. MESD employees may accept free passes to MESD extracurricular events if they are attending these events in their official capacity (e.g., chaperoning, ticket sales, or managing concession sales). In order to promote MESD employee participation in extracurricular activities, the MESD may include free passes in employees' official compensation packages or employees may be reimbursed by the MESD for the cost of admission.
6. The employee's MESD position is not to be used to take official action that could have a financial impact on a private business with which the employee, a relative or member of the employee's household are associated. For example, if the employee's brother owns a pest-control business which is seeking a contract with the MESD, the employee must declare an actual conflict of interest in writing, describing the nature of your conflict, and provide this to the employee's supervisor.
7. Confidential information gained as an MESD employee is not be used to obtain a financial benefit for the employee, a relative or member of the public official's household or a business with which any are associated. For example, the employee should not use the information that a student in his/her class is falling behind in math to provide the parent a referral to the sister's tutoring business.
8. MESD employees who mentor student teachers shall not receive direct payments from sponsoring colleges or universities. The payment shall be provided by the college or university to MESD, which can then distribute the compensation to the teachers as an element of their official compensation package.
9. MESD employees must follow Oregon Government Ethics Commission guidelines for outside employment if the MESD employee acts as a chaperone for student group trips on personal time and the MESD employee accepts compensation in the form of travel expenses from a private business or organization. Specifically, MESD employees must conduct all activities related to the trip on personal time and cannot use the classroom or school environment to plan or advertise the off-campus trip. Employees may use MESD facilities for this purpose only if they comply with MESD's public use of facilities policy. It is not an ethics violation to accept reasonable expenses for accompanying students on an education trip.

These restrictions do not apply if the teacher is chaperoning students on a fact-finding mission that is officially sanctioned by the Board. The definition of a "fact-finding mission" is, in part, any activity related to a cultural or educational purpose. *See* OAR 199-05-0020(3)(a). The MESD employee must be directly and immediately associated with the event or location being visited. If an MESD employee only acts as a chaperone and does not provide instruction or guidance for the students in language usage or cultural events, the trip may not meet the requirements of ORS 244.020(6)(H)(i).

These restrictions do not apply if the MESD compensates the MESD employee for chaperoning the trip.