

Merit Preparatory Academy Conflict of Interest Policy

Merit Preparatory Academy (MPA) is publicly funded and bound by applicable federal and state laws governing non-profit and charitable organizations. In order to protect the financial interests and tax-exempt status of the school, MPA prohibits any action that constitutes a conflict of interest in its contracts, agreements, transactions, and services, except as allowed by law. This policy applies to all “Merit Preparatory Academy representatives” defined as board members, administrators, key employees, consultants, and volunteers who make or influence decisions on school contracts, agreements, transactions and services.

Conflicts of interest occur when an MPA representative directly - or indirectly through business, investment, affiliation, family, or other relationships - stands to benefit financially, or otherwise from school-related contracts, agreements, transactions and services. Financial benefit includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors of any amount.

MPA representatives will be required to complete a conflict of interest disclosure statement annually. Any MPA representative who has an interest in a contract or other transaction presented to the board or a committee thereof for authorization, approval, or ratification shall make a prompt and full disclosure of their interest to the board or committee prior to its acting on such contract or transaction. Such disclosure shall include any relevant and material facts known about the contract or transaction that might reasonably be construed to be a conflict of interest. No board member shall cast a vote on any matter which has direct bearing on services to be provided by that member, or any organization which such member represents or which is otherwise interested or affiliated, which would directly or indirectly benefit such member, financially or otherwise. All such services will be fully disclosed or known to the board members present at the meeting at which such contract shall be authorized.. Any exceptions to this policy can only be granted with written approval from both the MPA’s current Director and the Board of Trustees.

Nepotism: Conflicts of interest can also occur when there are close relationships, family or otherwise in direct reporting relationships. MPA strictly forbids related individuals from having a supervisory relationship at MPA unless there is at least 2 levels of supervision between the related employees. If the position cannot be separated by 2 levels, an exception to this policy would be required. The exception would need to be approved by both the Director of the Academy and the Board of Trustees. If a relationship develops within the same team or department, each member of the relationship needs to disclose that relationship to their direct supervisor and the School Director immediately. Developing relationships may require a change to the department and team to remove any potential conflict of interest. If there is not another role available for transfer, employees may be requested to step down from their current position. Exceptions to this policy can only be granted in writing by the Director of MPA and the Board of Trustees.