

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF BALTIMORE COUNTY
Ethics Review Panel

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TO: Principals and Office Heads
FROM: Ethics Review Panel
DATE: May 21, 2007
RE: Advisory Opinion 07-04

At its May 8, 2007, meeting, the Ethics Review Panel adopted Advisory Opinion 07-04 in response to an application received from a petitioner.

In compliance with Ethics Code Policy 8366, "any Board member, employee, volunteer, or other person subject to the provisions of the policies of the Ethics Code may request that the Ethics Review Panel issue an advisory opinion concerning the applications of these policies." In an effort to keep individuals abreast of the Panel's interpretations of the Ethics Code policies, please share this information with your staff.

Consistent with the Panel's rules of procedure, you will note the deletion of the petitioner's name and any personally identifiable information in order to ensure anonymity. As subsequent advisory opinions are issued, they will be made available through the *Superintendent's Bulletin* and Outlook.

If you or members of your staff have any questions, please contact Dr. Carol Batoff, Administrative Liaison to the Ethics Review Panel, at 4138.

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF BALTIMORE COUNTY
ETHICS REVIEW PANEL
ADVISORY OPINION 07-04

This Advisory Opinion 07-04 is in response to a request made by Petitioner, an employee of Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS), inquiring as to whether it is permissible for a BCPS temporary employee to supply babysitting services in the home of a BCPS student that receives services from the same employee during the school day.

The relevant sections of the Ethics Code are as follows:

Section 8363

Board members, employees, and volunteers shall not participate on behalf of the school system in any matter which would, to their knowledge, have a direct financial impact, as distinguished from the public generally, on them, their spouse, dependent child, ward, parent, or other who shares the Board member's, employee's, or volunteer's legal residence or a business entity with which they are affiliated.

1. Outside Employment

(a) Board members, employees, and volunteers may not participate in outside employment if the work:

- is incompatible with the proper performance of official duties*
- impairs the impartiality or independence of judgment or action of the employee*
- affects the performance of the employee.*

(b) A person engaged in outside employment may not:

- benefit from business with the school system or from relationships with students*
- represent any party before the school system*
- use confidential information acquired in his or her official school system position for personal benefit or that of another.*

(c) Any employee with instructional responsibility shall not tutor, for compensation, any student whom he or she is currently teaching.

The matter before the Ethics Panel is whether an individual employed as a Personal Assistant (temporary position) in providing special education services for a student during school hours may provide babysitting services for compensation for that student during non-school hours.

The Ethics Panel has concluded that BCPS employees and volunteers may not provide babysitting services to students for whom such employees or volunteers provide BCPS services.

Section 8363, 1. (b) of the Ethics Code prohibits any employee or volunteer engaged in outside employment from benefiting from relationships with students. Since the employee would be engaged in outside employment with a student with whom that employee has a working relationship, such activity would not be consistent with the cited relevant section of the Code.

This opinion has been signed by the Ethics Panel members and adopted on May 8, 2007.

Roland L. Unger, CPA, Chair

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