

Sec. 1. PURPOSE OF POLICY

Through this policy, the Board of Directors (hereafter, the “Board”) of LifeSchool of Dallas doing business as Life School (hereafter, the “School”) shall address the legal requirements, as applicable, promulgated at:

- (a) Texas Business Organizations Code (“Tex. Bus. Org. Code”) Sections 3.101, 22.201, 22.221 and 22.235;
- (b) Texas Education Code (“Tex. Ed. Code”) Sections 12.111(a)(16), 12.115(a)(2) and 12.121;
- (c) Texas Administrative Code, Title 19 (“19 TAC”), §§ 100.1033 and 100.1101;
- (d) Code of Federal Regulations, Title 2 (“2 CFR”), § 200.303;
- (e) *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government* (September 2014) promulgated by the Comptroller General of the United States;
- (f) *Internal Control – Integrated Framework* (2013 Update) issued by Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission;
- (g) *Government Auditing Standards* (2018 Revision) promulgated by the U.S. Government Accountability Office; and
- (h) Financial Accountability System Resource Guide.

Additionally, through this policy, the Board shall address best practices adopted by public schools.

Sec. 2. APPLICABILITY

This policy shall act as a keystone fiscal policy and shall apply to all other Board policies or administrative procedures. In the event of any conflict with other Board policy or administrative procedure, the requirements set forth in this policy shall prevail and govern. Accordingly, Board policies should include an appropriate reference to this policy.

Sec. 3. FINAL AUTHORITY¹

Sec. 3.1. Absent a specific delegation of a power or duty (as approved by the commissioner of education, where applicable), the Board may not delegate, and thus retains, functioning as a body corporate, final authority to exercise the following powers and duties:

- (a) Adopt and amend policy;
- (b) Adopt and amend the budget, including the number and type of personnel units to be employed by the School;

¹ Tex. Bus. Org. Code §§ 3.101 and 22.201; Tex. Ed. Code §§ 12.111(a)(16) and 12.121; 19 TAC §§ 100.1033(b)(14)(C)(ii) -(iv) and 100.1101(a)/(d)

- (c) Approve amendments to School’s charter with TEA, including the organizational structure of the School;
- (d) Approve the obligation and expenditure of funds;
- (e) Approve the use of property;²
- (f) Approve the purchase, lease or sale of real property.³
- (g) Direct the disposition and safekeeping of records, including access to, control over and possession of such records;
- (h) Approve the annual financial and compliance report;
- (i) Set compensation for the CEO/Superintendent and for officers, as defined in Sec. 5 of this policy, and employees through the adoption of policy and the annual operating budget, including the School’s compensation plan and salary and wage schedules;
- (j) Approve contracts for the acquisition of personal property⁴ and the purchase of goods and services;⁵
- (k) Amend its governing documents (articles of incorporation or certificate of formation, corporate bylaws and any other document or record establishing the protocols and practices of the Board and School) subject to approval of a charter amendment by the commissioner of education; and
- (l) Establish and staff committees to support the Board with its fiscal oversight of the School’s business affairs, finances and operations.

² At 19 TAC § 100.1001(6), certain economic and financial resources, such as cash, bank accounts, loans and other such items, are defined as personal property. At 19 TAC § 100.1063(a), personal property is public property. Consequently, the use of public property, such as cash, bank accounts, and loans, are subject to the Board’s final authority.

³ Tex. Ed. Code § 12.106(f)(4). 19 TAC § 100.1101(b), (c) requires that the Board of a charter holder maintain the primary responsibility for implementing the public school program authorized by the open-enrollment charter and ensuring the performance of the students enrolled in its charter schools in accordance with the Tex. Ed. Code. The rule further provides, under (b)(1), that “An open-enrollment charter grants to the governing body of a charter holder the authority to operate a charter school” and, under (b)(2), that, “Except as provided by this section, the governing body’s powers and duties to operate the charter school shall not be delegated, transferred, assigned, encumbered, pledged, subcontracted, or in any way alienated by the governing body of the charter holder. Any attempt to do so shall be null and void and of no force or effect and shall constitute abandonment of the contract for charter.”

⁴ See 19 TAC § 100.1001(6) and 2 CFR § 200.1 for legal definitions of personal property.

⁵ *El Paso Education Initiative, Inc. v. Amex Properties, LLC*, 385 S.W.3d 701, 706, 708 (Tex. App.–El Paso 2012, pet. denied.). Tex. Bus. Org. Code §§ 3.101 and 22.201; Tex. Ed. Code §§ 12.115(a)(2) and 12.121; 19 TAC §§ 100.1033(b)(14)(C)(ii), 100.1043(a)(2) and 100.1101(a)/(d)

Sec. 3.2. This final authority notwithstanding, the Board hereby authorizes the Chief Financial Officer (the “Delegate”) to initially exercise the authority set forth in Sec. 3.1(d), (e), and (g) of this policy in a manner consistent with this and other Board policy. Notwithstanding the above initial delegation, the Delegate shall bring recommendations to the Board for final review and consideration of approval.⁶

Sec. 3.3. In accordance with applicable Board policy, the Delegate shall report to the Board any business arrangement or transaction with an individual that is an officer, as defined in Sec. 5 of this policy, and any conflicted,⁷ interested,⁸ or related⁹ party, as defined in other Board policy or applicable law, expressly including family members by blood or marriage to the third-degree. The School and its officers may not enter into a business arrangement or conduct a transaction in such a manner so as to circumvent this requirement.

Sec. 3.4. At the Board’s discretion, the Board may, at any time, review any business arrangement or transaction subject to this policy and approve or disapprove the Delegate’s initial action on the Board’s behalf.

Sec. 3.5. Any delegation of authority notwithstanding, the Board remains responsible for any business arrangement or transaction undertaken by the Delegate.¹⁰

Sec. 4. DESIGNEE

Sec. 4.1. In Board policy, where the Delegate is authorized to confer authority to a designee (as denoted by the phrase “or designee”), the Delegate may confer such authority to one or more designees. If the Delegate confers authority to a designee, the Delegate shall do so in writing through an administrative procedure, job description, or internal memorandum. The Delegate’s conferred authority to a designee must be specific and must cite the policy section from which it is derived. Any delegation of authority to a designee not documented as set forth in this section shall be null and void.

Sec. 4.2. Any delegation of authority notwithstanding, the Delegate remains responsible for the business arrangement or transaction undertaken or that should have been undertaken pursuant to this and other Board policy, including the reporting and accounting of business expenses by School officers and employees.

⁶ Consistent with the *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*, the Board is segregating the duties over finances from the duties over operations. Although, through this and other policy, the Board requires that the Delegate report to the Board and the Board authorizes the Delegate to initially exercise certain authority over the School’s finances, the Chief of Staff shall be the Chief Financial Officer’s immediate supervisor for all purposes.

⁷ Tex. Ed. Code § 12.1054; 19 TAC §§ 100.1131 through 100.1135

⁸ 19 TAC § 100.1047(f)

⁹ Tex. Ed. Code § 12.1166

¹⁰ Tex. Ed. Code § 12.121; 19 TAC § 100.1101(d)

Sec. 5. OFFICER

For the purposes set forth in this and other Board policy, *Officer* means a person charged with the duties of, or acting as, a Chief Executive Officer, a Central Administration Officer, a Campus Administration Officer, or a Business Manager¹¹ including individuals employed in the following central administrative and campus leadership positions as outlined in Board Policy PG-1.6 (Ethics, Conflict of Interest, and Nepotism):

- (a) Executives
- (b) Directors
- (c) Principals
- (d) Assistant Principals

Sec. 6. BOARD AUTHORIZATION REQUIRED

Sec. 6.1. Consistent with Sec. 3 of this policy and the Board’s fiduciary duties and standard of care established under applicable law, the Delegate or designee shall present to the Board for approval any business arrangement or transaction with a cost or value of \$50,000 or that relates to an officer, as defined in Sec. 5 of this policy, or conflicted,¹² interested,¹³ or related¹⁴ party, as defined in other Board policy or applicable law.

Sec. 6.2. The Delegate or designee shall present all contracts to the Board for its approval.¹⁵

Sec. 7. PRUDENT PERSON RULE¹⁶

In their use of the funds, property and other organizational resources, such as established lines of credit and the talents of and time worked by employees and contractors, officers and employees shall limit their use of funds and property to purposes pertaining to the School’s mission and to those activities, functions, programs, and services that are ordinary and necessary for the conduct of the School’s mission. Importantly, in their use of funds, officers and employees shall only incur costs that, by their nature and amount, do not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time that the decision was made to incur the cost.

¹¹ 19 TAC § 100.1001(16)

¹² Tex. Ed. Code § 12.1054; 19 TAC §§ 100.1131 through 100.1135

¹³ 19 TAC § 100.1047(f)

¹⁴ Tex. Ed. Code § 12.1166

¹⁵ *El Paso Education Initiative, Inc. v. Amex Properties, LLC*, 385 S.W.3d 701, 706, 708 (Tex. App.—El Paso 2012, pet. denied.). Tex. Bus. Org. Code §§ 3.101 and 22.201; Tex. Ed. Code §§ 12.115(a)(2) and 12.121; 19 TAC §§ 100.1033(b)(14)(C)(ii), 100.1043(a)(2) and 100.1101(a)/(d)

¹⁶ Tex. Bus. Org. Code § 22.221; Tex. Prop. Code §§ 163.004, 163.005 and 163.006; 2 CFR § 200.303(a) and *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government* § 8.03; 2 CFR § 200.404; *Government Auditing Standards* §§ 6.23, 7.25, and 8.122.

Sec. 8. ABUSE AND WASTE PROHIBITED

Sec. 8.1. Officers and employees shall not abuse or waste funds, property and other organizational resources, such as established lines of credit and the talents of and time worked by employees and contractors.

Sec. 8.2. For purposes of this policy, abuse is defined as behavior that is deficient or improper when compared with behavior that a prudent person would consider reasonable and necessary business practice given the facts and circumstances. Abuse includes misuse of authority or position for personal financial interests or those of an immediate or close family member or business associate.¹⁷

Sec. 8.3. For purposes of this policy, waste is defined as the act of using or expending resources carelessly, extravagantly, or to no purpose. In this context, waste relates primarily to mismanagement, inappropriate actions, and inadequate oversight.¹⁸

Sec. 9. TRAINING AND UPDATES¹⁹

The Delegate or designee shall properly train or ensure training is provided to School officers and employees on the requirements of this policy and any administrative procedures adopted to implement this policy. Additionally, the Delegate or designee shall keep School officers and employees informed of any changes to this policy and related requirements.

Sec. 10. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES²⁰

The Delegate or designee shall formally adopt administrative procedures as reasonably necessary to properly administer this policy and to adhere to applicable law and rule. In doing so, the Delegate or designee shall not adopt, and is prohibited from adopting, an administrative procedure that conflicts with applicable law or this policy. Accordingly, the Delegate or designee shall confer with the Board or legal counsel before deviating from the requirements set forth in this policy. In the event that a deviation from this policy becomes necessary, the Delegate or designee shall either recommend an amendment to this policy or the Board's approval of a specific deviation, including the purpose, scope and duration of the requested deviation.

¹⁷ *Government Auditing Standards*, Sec. 6.23, 7.25 and 8.122

¹⁸ *Government Auditing Standards*, Sec. 6.21, 7.23 and 8.120

¹⁹ 2 CFR § 200.303(a), U.S. Government Accountability Office *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*, 4.02 and 4.05.

²⁰ Consistent with 19 TAC § 100.1033(b)(14)(C)(iv), the Board has the final authority to adopt policies governing charter school operations, including authorizing the Delegate or designee to adopt an administrative procedure to implement this policy. Moreover, as set forth in School's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws and in accordance with Tex. Bus. Org. Code §§ 3.101 and 22.201, the Board is School's governing authority and, as such, manages and directs School's business and affairs through Board actions, resolutions and policy.