

ADVISORY OPINION 21-01

This Advisory Opinion 21-01 is in response to an Application filed by a petitioner asking if they can classify time participating in a professional organization during normal working hours as “other board business.” The Petitioner seeks an opinion related to inquiry not within the purview of this panel. Policy 8361, Section I, delineates the Purpose and Policy of the Ethics Code. Paragraph D provides:

For the purpose of guarding against improper influence, the Board adopts this Ethics Code to require members of the school board, candidates to be members of the school board and designated school officials to disclose their financial affairs and to set minimum standards for their conduct of school system business.

The Petitioner is not engaged in commerce with the professional organization, that is they do not receive any compensation, gifts, honorariums, etc. The professional organization does not appear to do any business with the Board or the school system. Membership in the association does not appear to raise any issues of conflict of interest, or any other ethical issues. The question of whether leave is available for a Board employee to attend the meetings, or whether this constitutes Other Board Business within the meaning of the personnel rules, is not within the jurisdiction of the Ethics Panel.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, for the reasons set forth above, the Panel has concluded that Petitioner's request for an Opinion is beyond the scope of this Panel's jurisdiction.

This opinion has been adopted by the Ethics Review Panel members on April 16, 2021.

NOTE: We *strongly* advise the Petitioner to discuss this matter with their supervisor or human resources before making any decisions regarding this matter.

Ralph Sapia, Esq.
Chair

Tim Topoleski, Ph.D.
Vice Chair

Dr. Cynthia Boyd
Panel Member

Owen Jarvis, Esq.
Panel Member

Thomas Keech, Esq.
Panel Member