



## **POLICY NO. 2300**

### **BUSINESS-EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS**

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#### **POLICY**

The Board of Education supports business-education partnerships that provide value-added experiences for students.

Business-education partnerships are mutually beneficial partnerships between employers and educators that enhance learning for students and other learners. They may involve other education stakeholders as partners, including students, employees, parents, communities, labour, and Government organizations. Most business-education partnerships are cooperative partnerships in which partners share values and objectives, human, material or financial resources, and roles and responsibilities in order to achieve desired learning outcomes.

This Policy applies to all partnerships the District enters into with business. This includes, but is not limited to, corporate sponsorships and contracts which involve education-related work (such as the development of programs, resources, and technology supports). It does not apply to other partnerships which the District enters into in order to maintain its own business.

Partnerships can be with business/industry, Government, Unions, community groups and other organizations. They can vary in size and scope reflecting the diversity of their communities, and differences in goals and objectives.



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**REGULATIONS:**

When determining if a business-education partnership is appropriate the following criteria shall be used:

- contribute to educational goals and maintain educational integrity;
- equity and inclusiveness;
- acknowledgement of contribution/benefit;
- accountability;
- administration and management.

1. Contribute to Educational Goals and Maintain Educational Integrity

A relationship must meet an identified educational need(s). Educators have an obligation to ensure the integrity of education within a relationship. It is important that the financial incentives that partnerships represent do not skew public education's priorities or goals.

Partnerships will:

- complement the purpose and goals of the British Columbia education system;
- support the academic and social values of the schools;
- take into account the mandates and operations of the partner(s) to ensure they support the standards, values and goals of the education system, and are able to withstand public scrutiny;
- enhance the quality and relevance of education for students; and
- ensure materials and learning resources provided by partners are subject to the same review process that all other provincial and district approved resources go through.

2. Equity and Inclusiveness:

Important social goals and values are imbedded in the education environment and experience, such as gender equity, sensitivity to equity considerations, and valuing diversity. Partnerships must not conflict with these values.

Partnerships will:

- abide by equity considerations, especially ensuring there is no bias and stereotyping in areas including, but not limited to, sex, race and religion;
- treat the welfare of students as a paramount concern, in particular their age and vulnerability to commercial values and messages; and,
- use objective criteria to determine awards and benefits to participants.

3. Acknowledgement of Contributions/Benefits:

Partnerships need to maintain a balance between retaining educational integrity and permitting partners to receive public acknowledgement for their contributions. Schools will not send home with students, or put in school newsletters, any information advertising goods and services of a business (the Board authorizes the Superintendent to make exceptions to this in specific circumstances). The commercial aspects of a partner must not “spill over” into the educational environment.

Partnerships will:

- acknowledge there is no implied endorsement by the schools or the District of products or services provided by the partner;
- ensure students, parents and staff are not required to support the commercial, or other, activities of the partner; and,
- ensure students and staff participation is voluntary.

4. Accountability

Participants must be accountable for the partnerships into which they enter. There must be a clear understanding of what each party brings to the partnerships in terms of funding, resources, and personnel. There must be clear deliverables and a common understanding of the objectives of the relationship.

Partnerships will:

- state clearly all contractual obligations, including goals and objectives. Benefits, which accrue to all parties, must be defined with associated outcomes such that they can be evaluated. Monitoring and reporting must be carried out on the goals, objectives and benefits of partnerships;
- define clearly the roles and responsibilities of all parties (students, teachers, parents, schools, District, and business partners) and reflect each partner's expertise;
- describe clearly resources provided by all parties, including budgetary and financial details and timelines; and,
- ensure there is clear separation of the commercial aspects of business partners from the educational programs or activities being provided.

5. Administration and Management

Successful partnerships are characterized by effective administration and management. How partnerships are operated and administered is just as important as the benefits they bring to students.

Partnerships will:

- schedule regular reviews to evaluate the progress and outcomes of partnerships. Regular reports must be issued describing the programs and activities of partnerships and how successful the goals and objectives have been achieved;
- keep records of the operational activities of partnerships. The activities of partnerships must be kept separate from the activities of each partner; and,
- adhere to all relevant Government statutory and regulatory requirements (e.g. conflict of interest guidelines and freedom of information considerations).