Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners  
200 E. North Avenue  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

ADVISORY OPINION OF THE ETHICS PANEL

The Ethics Panel is issuing this advisory opinion pursuant to Policy BCA Code of Ethics Section III(B)(5), which provides that “[a]ny Board member, student commissioner, official, employee or other person subject to the provisions of this policy may request an advisory opinion from the Ethics Panel concerning the application of this policy.”

On November 18, 2020, the Ethics Panel received a request for an advisory opinion regarding the permissibility of [redacted] Principal at [redacted] Elementary School; accepting a $27,000 monetary gift from a friend to purchase and install safety measures at the school. [redacted] friend is not part of an organization that does business with City Schools. [redacted] provided a detailed list of the safety equipment [redacted] plans to purchase and install.

The Panel concludes that Policy BCA Code of Ethics is not implicated in [redacted] accepting monies from a friend. As stated, [redacted] friend is not part of a City Schools vendor nor is [redacted] involved in any related purchase decisions. However, Policies KCD and KCD-RA Public Gifts/Donations provide the necessary guidance as [redacted] makes [redacted] donations of safety equipment to [redacted] Sr Elementary School, her school. Policy KCD Public Gifts/Donations Section III(B)(7) states “To be acceptable, a donation must: …not carry excessive costs such as costs for maintenance, installation, implementation or distribution.” Further, Policy KCD-RA Section III(L)(4) states that “The following departments or offices are responsible for…improvements to buildings and grounds (Chief Operating Officer)”. Therefore, [redacted] should contact the Chief Operating Officer for approval of the installations that will be required. Lastly, the Engagement Department in the Executive Office must be notified as all donations exceeding $250 in value must be recorded.

This advisory opinion is based solely on the facts as presented. The Ethics Panel expresses no opinion as to matters that may exist now or in the future that have not been presented. The Ethics Panel decisions are based on a case-by-case examination of the relevant factual information and applicable regulations.

Date: November 25, 2020  
Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

The Reverend Domanic A. Smith, M.Div., CHM  
Chair, Baltimore City Public Schools Ethics Panel