TOP TEN REASONS WHY ETHICS MATTERS
FOR OUR SCHOOL DISTRICT

10. Public Confidence
Our integrity affects the public's willingness to support our schools with tax dollars, bond funding, partnership efforts and student enrollment.

9. Regulatory Freedom
Ethically responsible organizations avoid over-regulation and decrees.

8. Decreased Costs
Ethical practice reduces lawsuits and indictments. Research also shows that conflicts of interest create a rise in the cost of doing business.

7. Increased Performance
Doing things ethically from the get-go is more efficient and prevents the need for "do-overs." People also do their best in an ethical environment.

6. Improved Reputation
A great reputation is built on integrity and helps attract & retain top talent.

5. Survival
As Ethicist Rushworth Kidder says, "Ethics is not a luxury or an option. It is essential to our survival." We could destroy ourselves without it.

4. Personal Satisfaction
Being ethical feels good and allows us to take pride in our own conduct.

3. Respect and Trust
In a successful organization, stakeholders respect and trust one another.

2. It's Just Right
Acting ethically is quite simply a fundamental human imperative.

1. We Are Role Models
The next generation is watching and learning from our every action.

Share your ethics inspiration, heroes and lessons learned at www.lausd.net/ethics!

Facilitator’s Guide
Strengthening the Work Environment
**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- No responsibility of government is more fundamental than the responsibility of maintaining the highest standards of ethical behavior by those who conduct the public business.
  
  "For the basis of effective government is public confidence, and that confidence is endangered when ethical standards falter or appear to falter."
  
  - John F. Kennedy

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**LAUSD ETHICS RIPPLE EFFECT**

**Dear Training Facilitator:**

Thank you for being an ethics champion for LAUSD! Your leadership in facilitating our ethics awareness training program for your school, office or team provides an important and meaningful opportunity for our district to support staff in strengthening ethical-decision making in our workplace.

As you already know, no matter what the job title, every single staff member at LAUSD has the opportunity to make a positive difference in students’ lives through the decisions we make each and every day, not just through our direct interactions but through our example as public servants as well. This responsibility requires us to ensure that our decisions are always made from a strong ethical foundation which builds on our public’s trust. Supporting our staff in meeting this responsibility is the key premise behind this ethics booster kit.

Your thoughtfulness in delivering the training with the appropriate tone and preparation — for example, selecting the case scenarios that would be most relevant for your staff and work environment — is critical to our collective success.

We are also counting on your ongoing wisdom to guide and shape the necessary follow-up efforts for your school, office or team. The research clearly shows that ethics awareness, like any skill or concept, requires consistent reinforcement to be integrated. Thus, building on this initial boost to keep ethics top-of-mind is critical.

Finally, we look forward to your input on how we can continue to refine our training tools, so that they can better support your efforts.

Again, thank you for your leadership in promoting ethics awareness in your corner of LAUSD and beyond. Our small team of six staff members certainly knows we can’t succeed without you. For this and all that you do to put students first, we thank you!

With our deepest gratitude,

*LAUSD Ethics Office*

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TO CONSERVE RESOURCES, PLEASE KEEP KIT CONTENTS SAFE FOR REUSE
1. WHAT’S INSIDE THE ETHICS BOOSTER KIT?

CHECKLIST OF CONTENTS

If anything from your Ethics Booster Kit is missing or damaged, please call the Ethics Office at (213)241-3330.

Reusable Training Resources
- Booster DVD & VHS
- Case Scenarios (deck of 30 cards)
- Core Principles Poster
- Facilitator’s Guide

For Use During Training
- Ask Ethics Stress Cards (50)
- Ethics Pen & Pencils
- Ethics Self-Test (copies need to be made)
- Sign-in Sheet (copies need to be made)
- Questionnaire (copies need to be made)

Ethics Resources to Share
- Ask Ethics Helpline Poster
- Get Disclosure Now Postcard
- Doing Business Ethically with LAUSD Brochure
- Form 700 — SEI Brochure
- LAUSD Employee Code of Ethics

For Sending Wrap-Up Items to the Ethics Office
- Return Envelope
- Training Certification and Evaluation

Thank you for helping to ensure an effective training for your group!
GUARDING PUBLIC TRUST

In today’s world, no organization can hope to succeed or be effective without managing for ethics and supporting its employees with the training to focus on ethical decision-making in the workplace.

On any given day, we see all too many headlines about ethical lapses and the stories of the unfortunate consequences which can result for individuals and organizations due to poor ethical choices. Ethical lapses affect all sectors of our society, whether private, nonprofit or public sector. The costs can be incredibly severe, including job loss, jail time, multimillion dollar fines, irreparable damage to reputation and even organizational collapse. Even more severe can be the loss of public trust which can linger for years. This is why organizations all across the board are becoming so vigilant in guarding the public’s trust. For a public agency like LAUSD, the stakes are even higher since we rely entirely on public confidence and public tax dollars. Building this trust is the goal of our ethics training efforts.

CORE PRINCIPLES

Our success in fulfilling LAUSD’s mission of delivering student achievement is dependent on our ability to make decisions that are consistent with our core principles and the standards of conduct which we are held to as both school officials and government officials. Our core principles serve as the foundation to our Code of Ethics. The principles also guide us in fostering a culture of trust, commitment and teamwork, so that we can conduct our work and ourselves in a manner that’s always above reproach.

**Excellence** means committing to doing better and seizing opportunities to surpass expectations. Excellence enables us to problem solve, to be open to new ideas, to share our own ideas and to embrace change when it may lead to a better outcome – even if that change requires a difficult adjustment.

**Integrity** means having the courage to do the right thing. It’s about adhering to a strict ethical code and being honest and respectful in our dealings with each other and with our stakeholders. Integrity also guides us to keep our promises and to make decisions that are free from questionable conflicts.

**Responsibility** is about being accountable and living up to our word and commitments. Responsibility also means taking time to understand policies, rules and precedents as a starting point before taking action. Being responsible also means being willing to be a role model for our colleagues, and even more importantly, for our students.

---

**KEY CONCEPTS TO KNOW**

**Values:** The inner beliefs and judgments that we individually hold about what is important

**Ethics:** The societal standards and norms of conduct that guide us in doing what is right as public school officials at LAUSD

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**Ethical Decision Making**

1. **Analyze the Situation.** Think calmly about your situation and learn what’s fact and what’s assumption. Try to look at the situation from new perspectives.
2. **Identify & Assess the Options.** Find other solutions. Consider the affected parties. Finally, filter your choices through the LUP:
   - **Legal** Is it acceptable under the applicable laws and regulations?
   - **Universal** Does it promote excellence, integrity and responsibility?
   - **Policies** Is it consistent with our policies, procedures and guidelines?
3. **Decide, Evaluate & Learn.** Talk to people about your choices, so you can make the most ethical choice. After implementing your decision, take stock and review your effectiveness. Ask yourself how you might handle things the next time.

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*LUP is a tool inspired by the Ethics Resource Center*
3. LEADING THE SESSION: STEP BY STEP NOTES

OVERVIEW

Facilitating the session is intended to be a fairly straightforward process. After welcoming your group, you’ll screen “The Gray Zone” film for your group’s viewing. Then you’ll lead a brief discussion of the film before engaging participants in dialogue about how they would handle the dilemmas described in the few case scenarios you’ve pre-selected. You’ll end the session by collecting your participants’ feedback. *If you can only devote one-hour, the session will be very fast-paced. If you can allot an additional 15-30 minutes, you will enable a more interactive session.*

SETTING-UP

- Take care of all the necessary room and equipment logistics

GETTING-STARTED

- Make the sign-in and self-test available for participants as they come in

DELIVERING THE MAIN COURSEWORK

- Give your introductory message on the goal and format of the training
- Play the film and facilitate discussion of reflections afterwards
- Share the case scenarios you’ve chosen, after explaining how they are to be reviewed with the Core Principles and the ethical considerations
- Hand out the participant questionnaires and allow time for response

WRAPPING UP

- Confirm that everyone signed in and thank them for their engagement
- Collect questionnaires from participants as they exit and share giveaways

MINIMUM DURATION: 1 HOUR

- Introductory Remarks
- “The Gray Zone”
- Discussion & Cases
- Feedback

LESSON PLAN SYNOPSIS

**Starters**

- Sign-In
- Ethics Self-Test
- Introductory Remarks

**Main Coursework**

- “The Gray Zone” (43:40)
- Discussion and Case Scenarios

**Accompaniments**

- Questionnaire
- Ask Ethics Stress Card Giveaway

**Additional Booster Courses**

- “Leading with Ethics” (43:20)
- “Welcome to the Public Sector” (13:15)
- “Making of ‘The Gray Zone’” (6:00)
- “Walking through the Form 700” (12:30)
- “About Lobbying Disclosure” (20:30)

**COUNTDOWN to the Training**

**Right Away**

- Consult the key leadership group to determine the best date and time slot for your ethics boost.
- Reserve the best room for the training, making sure to check for good viewing and sufficient seating.
- Send out a save-the-date-&-time confirmation to your school or office’s key leadership.
- Reserve the necessary AV equipment to play the film. *Note: Use the DVD if you can.*
- Check that you have all the contents of the kit. Call the Ethics Office for any missing items.

**One Month Before**

- Play “The Gray Zone” film to make sure there are no problems. Get familiar with it for your prep.
- Personalize the introductory remarks and/or any other parts of the talking points for your comfort
- Select the 3 to 5 case scenarios that would be most relevant for your group.
- Send participants the training notice with date, time and place for session. See p.16 for example.

**Three Weeks Before**

- Copy the three items in envelope “A - Repro Prep” (1 questionnaire and self-test for each participant)
VITAL TALKING POINTS

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Of course, please feel free to make these remarks your own:

- **Welcome to our Ethics Boost** which is part of a district-wide effort to strengthen our awareness of the key role that ethics plays in everything we do for LAUSD. Everyday, we each have the opportunity to make a positive difference in students’ lives through our actions and decisions; not just through our direct interactions but through our example as public servants as well. This responsibility requires us to ensure that our decisions are always made from a strong ethical foundation which builds on our public’s trust. This is the key premise behind LAUSD’s ethics initiative which is designed to support us in meeting our personal and shared responsibility to model and promote ethics in our work on behalf of children.

- **Good intentions, not greed, cause most ethics lapses** The research shows that most lapses actually occur with an organization’s “good” people who may make poor choices with the best of intentions when they are under pressure. I can share with you when I myself faced such a struggle...[insert your short real life example of an ethical dilemma you overcame and end your example with either: a) “I found it helpful to be able to seek out guidance from a respected source,” or b) “I wish I had been able to seek out guidance from a respected source.”]

- **The lesson is that we can help to support each other** through the inevitable ethical challenges we will encounter in our work. Each of us should be comfortable seeking guidance if we ever have a doubt about the responsible course of action. With that, let’s watch the film and then we’ll have a brief discussion, run through a few case scenarios and end the session with your feedback and thoughts on how we can work to keep public service standards and ethical conduct foremost in our work.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

*Here are some ideas for you to draw on to facilitate the discussion:*

1. Which part of “The Gray Zone” resonated with you the most? Why?
2. What were you surprised to learn from the film?
3. Who was your favorite character in “The Gray Zone?” Why?
4. What rationalizations did you hear expressed by the characters as they were struggling to make the ethically responsible choice? (For example: “It’s not against the rules”; “It’s not going to hurt anyone”; “It’s necessary”; etc.) What other common rationalizations have you heard before at work?
5. Good intentions and ignorance seemed to create most of the ethical blind spots for the characters in the film. What steps can every individual take to avoid being blindsided by an ethics concern?
6. Mark, the character who was put in a tough spot when his co-worker asked to use the truck, knew instinctively that the request was inappropriate. Yet, he still made the wrong choice. Why was it so hard for him to do what was right? How would you have responded differently?
7. Is there a big difference between a legal conflict of interest and the appearance of a conflict? Do you think the public sees a distinction?
8. Human nature makes it easier to see other people’s ethics flaws, but good ethics requires introspection. How can we each be more self-reflective?
9. What are the “costs” to LAUSD as an organization when there’s the internal or external perception that we are not living up to the ethical standards required of us as public school officials?
10. What can we all do to be better role models to students and each other?

### COUNTDOWN to the Training (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Three Weeks Before</th>
<th>Two Weeks Before</th>
<th>One Week Before</th>
<th>One Day Before</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Talk up the film and the training to set a good tone! Get other ethics champions to help you.</td>
<td>Conduct and time your own mental run-through of the different components of the training.</td>
<td>Provide verbal and written reminders of the ethics training. Keep the positive energy up!</td>
<td>Confirm all the logistics (room setup, copies, AV equipment, film, etc.) are ready to go.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review your talking points once more, especially your introductory remarks.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One Hour Before</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test TV and DVD or VHS player to make sure all are in working order and that the film is properly cued.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post the Core Principles Poster in an easy-to-see spot for your participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have the sign-in sheet ready for participants, along with the ethics self-test &amp; questionnaire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pull out the 3-5 case scenario cards you have already pre-selected for your group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review your talking points and notes one last time. Collect your thoughts and be ready to facilitate!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CASE SCENARIOS

Here are key points to share to help introduce the cases you’ve selected:

- Now let’s test out what we’ve learned by running through some case scenarios which are based on real-life examples that have occurred at LAUSD or other public agencies.

- What we will do is review the situations described in the cases and then consider what the relevant ethical considerations are, beyond our core principles of excellence, integrity and responsibility. The considerations we’ll be evaluating are listed on the poster I’ve put up (point out poster for group) but you may also think of other ethics considerations.

- After reviewing the considerations, we’ll share how we would respond and then rate where our decision would fall on the ethics meter. Then we can learn what actually happened.

Give next directions based on which format you want to use for scenarios:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whole Group Format</th>
<th>Smaller Groups Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(if you’re short on time or space)</td>
<td>(if you have more time and space)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Ask a volunteer to help you read the scenario aloud</td>
<td>1. Divide your larger group into small teams of 5-8 participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ask what are the relevant ethical considerations(s)</td>
<td>2. Hand out the scenario cards you’ve pre-selected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ask what's a good response</td>
<td>3. Ask the groups to review the cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Rate the response on the meter</td>
<td>4. Reconvene as a large group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Discuss what actually happened</td>
<td>5. Share the responses of each team</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Please remind participants of the following before ending the training:

- Before we close our session today, there are just a few other housekeeping items I need your help with to wrap up:
  
  ➔ First, since we’ll be following up with anyone who has missed today’s session, I just want to make sure we have the correct information on the attendance sheet. If you haven’t signed-in yet, please do so before you leave.
  
  ➔ Next, I want to make sure that everyone has received a copy of the Ethics Self-Test which is yours to take as a fun reference. This is the sheet that’s titled “Can You Make the Ethics Grade?”
  
  ➔ Finally, I need you to take a few minutes to fill out the ethics questionnaire that I will now hand out to everyone. After you fill it out and turn it in, I have the stress card that we heard about in “The Gray Zone” film to give to you.

- With that, I just want to once again thank all of you for your participation today. We count on all of you to live up to our responsibilities as public servants and to seek guidance if you are ever unsure of what would be the ethical and responsible course of action to take.

- We’ll be planning other follow-up ethics awareness efforts throughout the year, including making use of the cases we didn’t review today. We’d also love your suggestions for what we can do within our teams to strengthen the ethics environment.

- Lastly, I want you to know that you can order a free ethics poster for your space from LAUSD’s Stores Warehouse while supplies last. Call the Warehouse or Ethics Office for more info. THANKS EVERYONE!

TRAINING LIFT-OFF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>As Participants Arrive</th>
<th>To Start Session</th>
<th>With Five Minutes Left</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ask everyone to sign-in and to pick-up a copy of the ethics self-test.</td>
<td>Welcome your group with warm introductory remarks. Then play “The Gray Zone” film.</td>
<td>Hand out the questionnaires. Collect back any case scenario cards you have distributed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check that everyone has signed-in and received their own copy of the ethics self-test.</td>
<td>Give out Ask Ethics Stress Cards to all those who hand-in their completed ethics questionnaires.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TRAINING WRAP-UP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Right After Training</th>
<th>Within Two Weeks After</th>
<th>Before End of Fiscal Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After reviewing your participants’ questionnaires, place them in the pre-addressed return envelope.</td>
<td>Complete the Ethics Training Certification and Evaluation form. Get signature of your site leader.</td>
<td>Make copies of your sign-in sheets and attach to the Ethics Training Certification form. Send participant questionnaires, certification and sign-in sheets to Ethics Office in return envelope.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Ensure make-ups are completed so your school or office achieves 100% training completion! | strengthen the work environment | }
4. SMART FACILITATION TIPS

Make the most of the valuable time being set aside for the ethics boost!

1. **Create an effective learning environment**
   Schedule a date and time that will be most conducive to your group. If the training will be part of a larger meeting, please put it first before tackling other agenda items. Also, arrange the room for best viewing.

2. **Prepare for your role as facilitator**
   Know the training materials so you are prepped on the game plan.

3. **Tailor the training for your group**
   Pick scenarios that highlight the points that would be most meaningful.

4. **Set a positive tone**
   Too often, trainings can feel like a chore. Help set the right tone by talking up the training as a positive opportunity to engage in a vital topic.

5. **Build a network of champions**
   Ask five colleagues to help you create an enthusiastic buzz by being vocal in their support of the training, both before and during the session.

6. **Enlist an assistant’s help**
   Get a volunteer to help you set-up and distribute and collect materials.

7. **Kick-off with an inspiring real-life example**
   Tell the tale of an ethics struggle you’ve overcome to create a connection.

8. **Reward participation**
   Use the “giveaways” in the kit as acknowledgments for participation.

9. **Finish on a high note**
   Summarize the key takeaways: a) we are all stewards of the public’s trust, b) ethics is not always cut and dry and c) it’s wise to seek guidance if we are ever unsure of the most ethical and responsible course of action. Encourage the participants to continue the dialogue about ethics on their own. Identify how you would like to collect their creative input on how ethics can be strengthened in your work environment.

10. **Follow-up with activities for promoting ethics after the training**
    Make sure your school, office or team’s ethics focus is not just a one-time event. Integrate the scenario cards that did not get used into future team meetings and make time to take advantage of the other video segments on the booster DVD/VHS. Draw on your staff’s input and ideas as well!

5. FOLLOW-UP ACTION STEPS

Experts agree that promoting ethics awareness has to be an ongoing effort to have a true impact. Here are five important steps you can take:

1. **Incorporate an “Ethics Moment” into your staff meetings**
   To keep ethics at the forefront, many leading organizations start each staff meeting with an Ethics Moment to underscore the importance of ethical conduct. An Ethics Moment can take the shape of someone sharing an ethics challenge that was overcome; it can be a discussion about ethics in the news or it can be something as simple as an inspirational quote. Alternatively, an Ethics Moment could make use of the scenario cards that did not get discussed during the training session. You could tackle one scenario per meeting with your staff.

2. **Hire for ethics every chance you get**
   Improve the ethical climate straightaway by screening for ethics as part of your team’s hiring process. Here are a few examples of questions you can ask which will also help to signal the importance of ethics:
   - What do you view as the ethical obligations of a public servant?
   - How do you hold yourself to high standards in work and ethics?
   - Talk about a time that you made a mistake at work in the past. How did you correct the mistake?
   - A vendor (or parent) wants to take you to lunch to discuss an LAUSD matter. How would you handle this?
   - What is the greatest contribution you can bring toward building a more ethical environment for LAUSD?

3. **Add ethics awareness training to your orientation process**
   According to recent studies, newer employees are twice as likely to engage in wrongdoing, so work with your supervisory team to integrate ethics training within 30 days of an employee’s hiring date. You can make use of the contents in this Ethics Booster Kit or the other resources on the Ethics Office website such as the interactive online training. Check www.lausd.net/ethics for the latest tools.

4. **Schedule follow-up training opportunities**
   Allow for group viewing of the other components in the Ethics Booster DVD/VHS, especially the “Leading with Ethics” piece which also lends itself to excellent, in-depth discussions.

5. **Give recognition to the ethics heroes**
   Encourage your staff to nominate their ethics heroes on the Ethics Office website at www.lausd.net/ethics. You can also plan your own local recognition efforts.
Please customize for distribution on your school/office stationary or e-mail.

Dear [1. Insert Name of School/Office] Staff:

As you well know, one of our most valuable assets is the trust of our students, parents, and community. Our excellence and high ethical standards are what help to maintain the public trust we need to ensure student achievement and success.

LAUSD’s ethics initiative is underway to create the necessary organizational-wide awareness and support to help our employees in navigating the complex legal and ethical responsibilities required of us as public school officials.

Our success as an educational institution requires all of us to be knowledgeable about these standards and what role we play in promoting them, especially since the courts have held that “I didn’t know” is not a valid defense. This is why we will be participating in an ethics training as part of LAUSD’s MANDATORY, district-wide Ethics Boost at our next staff meeting on [2. Insert Day of the Week, Date] from [3. Insert Time Slot] in [4. Insert Location].

I expect this training to be an engaging, informative and valuable opportunity for all of us to reflect on the impact we have as character role models for our students.

Since this training is required, I thank you in advance for being on time to the session and for your commitment to take action in support of ethics.

I look forward to seeing you at the training. If you have any questions in the interim, please feel free to contact [5. Insert Name of Facilitator] at [6. Insert Facilitator’s Phone Number].

Sincerely,

[7. Insert Name of Leader of Your School, Office or Team]
### CASE SCENARIOS BRIEFING (CONTINUED)

**CONFLICTING INTERESTS** (excerpted from scenarios cards)

- **Scenario:** Neela is a department supervisor. Her husband recently started his own business and offered to provide Neela’s department with all the materials they needed for the year at a below-market discount rate. Neela declined the husband’s offer because she realized that it would be a conflict of interest, even with the cost savings. Meanwhile, her assistant found better savings with another supplier. The cost savings would be significant for Neela’s department in the time of a budget crunch, but Neela is torn as to whether this is a good idea.

- **Scenario:** Anton has just started work at a local district after leaving a nonprofit that provides tutoring services to LAUSD schools. As one of his first assignments, he’s been asked to evaluate proposals for parent engagement services. In reviewing the proposals, Anton notices his former employer has submitted a proposal. Anton doesn’t want to get off on the wrong foot in his new job, but is unsure of what to do as a public official.

- **Scenario:** Joy recently inherited a number of specific stocks, including stocks in 3 companies on which she often advises in her LAUSD work. Joy also recently obtained funds to help her disclose her new assets, and the friend suggests it’s probably not necessary since she owns stocks in multiple companies. Joy is unconvinced and unsure of what to do as a responsible public official.

- **Scenario:** Dave learned that his son, a high school assistant football coach, is connected to a vendor that makes artificial grass. The ticket is on the 50-yard line and the vendor says that Jin will really be able to assess how well the grass stands up to wear and tear, if he attends the game. Jin checked the ticket value and then by getting a reality check from his boss, the points should be allocated to LAUSD under the terms of a Gift to an Agency. The points ended up helping LAUSD high school students to win an out-of-state competition. Jin is very pleased to help LAUSD to build athletic fields on school campuses. Out of the blue, he receives an invitation to attend a sold-out play-off game from a company that he recently evaluated. The ticket is on the 50-yard line and the vendor says that Jin will really be able to assess how well the grass stands up to wear and tear, if he observes it in use by the pros. Jin would love to take the ticket, but he’s not sure if this would be wise.

**WHAT CAN WE LEARN?**

- Under state law, a source of income for a spouse or domestic partner also counts as an official’s financial interest. Therefore, participating in decision-making relating to the spouse’s or domestic partner’s financial interest would be considered self-dealing and is strictly prohibited. Neela’s wisdom saved her and her spouse from unnecessary heartache and enabled them to enjoy later successes.

- Anton demonstrated good judgment in raising the concern because under state law, participating in official decision-making relating to personal sources of income, royalties, commissions or other compensation from the prior 12 months is considered a conflict. By being proactive, Anton helped our district and himself to avoid a conflict.

- Joy was right to seek out guidance. Under state law, investments such as stock holdings can pose a conflict of interest if an official is involved in decision-making related to the holdings. Joy’s vigilance helped her to safeguard against a conflict and the potential loss of public trust in LAUSD.

**GIFTS AND TRAVEL** (excerpted from scenarios cards)

- **Scenario:** Keisha is a teacher who has been working very hard to help a student who is a new English learner. At the end of the school year, the student’s parents give Keisha a present to thank her for all her help. When Keisha unwraps the gift at home, she finds a very expensive watch that is well over LAUSD’s gift limit. Keisha is unsure of what to do and worried about committing a cultural faux pas that might offend her students.

- **Scenario:** Jin checks the ticket value and found that it was worth $500. Still he thought maybe it was justifiable since he could check out his sons a free football game. The ticket is on the 50-yard line and the vendor says that Jin will really be able to assess how well the grass stands up to wear and tear, if he observes it in use by the pros. Jin decided to decline the ticket and checked the quality at a meeting instead.

**WHAT CAN WE LEARN?**

- After reviewing a questionable invoice, Ana saw that there was merit to request a full investigation. The facts revealed that $4 million worth of goods were purchased and that Jenny personally pocketed $1 million in royalties. Jenny faced many years in prison and both she and the vendor that sold her materials suffered financial hardship after the monies were returned to LAUSD.

- Keisha’s (in)decisions to accept gifts from students and their parents can be a serious ethical issue. When the grand jury questioned her on the steps she took as a manager to protect public resources, she impressed them with her efforts to create an open and knowledgeable team environment through continuing ethics training and resources which empowered her staff to help her safeguard against conflicts.

- If Jin’s public judgment not only cost him, but LAUSD as well.

- Danica works with the Special Education Division and helps to make recommendations about the services and care that students receive. She is going through a tough divorce at home and is in search of housing when the parents of one of the children she has been helping offers up their nearby vacation home for free, rent of.

**WHAT CAN WE LEARN?**

- As a vendor that makes artificial grass. The ticket is on the 50-yard line and the vendor says that Jin will really be able to assess how well the grass stands up to wear and tear, if he observes it in use by the pros. Jin decided to decline the ticket and checked the quality at a meeting instead.

- Since things were rough at home, Jin decided to check the ticket value and then by getting a reality check from his boss, he realized that the points should be allocated to LAUSD under the terms of a Gift to an Agency. The points ended up helping LAUSD high school students to win an out-of-state competition.

- Accepting an inappropriate gift can be a violation of district policies and state laws since receiving free housing is considered a gift under California’s Political Reform Act. Though it’s easy to sympathize with the personal challenges Danica was experiencing at home, such circumstances as Danica learned do not excuse anyone and in fact helped LAUSD build greater trust with our parents. In the end, she was recognized for her hard work without any cloud of any inappropriate personal relationship.
### CASE SCENARIOS BRIEFING (CONTINUED)

#### OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES (excerpted from scenarios cards)

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<tr>
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<td>Elle is an office worker at a school who has a good friend who is starting a business. Her friend asks her for two favors: 1) to write a nice reference on her school stationary that she can use in her advertising, and 2) to help her pass around flyers that promote her new business to teachers and parents at her school. Elle agrees, but has an uneasy feeling about what’s appropriate. Elle talks with one of her mentors, who has a rock solid reputation for always doing the right thing. Her mentor explained that it’s inappropriate to use official stationery or her position to endorse any private product, service, or political group. Elle explained this to her friend who said, “Yeah, I thought so too, but it’s not like you’re already giving away flyers to other friends in other businesses aren’t allowed to help market either.” Elle exercised sound judgment in seeking out advice from a trusted and respected mentor before taking any rash actions to lobby on behalf of a friend’s outside activities. In addition to following the Employee Code of Ethics, advertising on LAUSD premises would also be against Board Rules and the Lobbying Disclosure Code.</td>
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<td>Quaye’s friend Juan just started an advocacy group to support positive change in the community. Juan invites Quaye to serve on their Board and asks Quaye to put together a presentation about the challenges children face. Juan wants him to include personal information about two LAUSD students who got arrested this week. He said he needed the presentation “more interesting.” Given his experience, Quaye knew as soon as Juan asked him that he couldn’t divulge any personal information about the students due to confidentiality laws. But Quaye didn’t say anything because he didn’t want his friend to think he couldn’t get the information. When Juan started telling everyone that Quaye would deliver the scoop, he had to correct him in a way that embarrassed both of them. Student records have a special protection under the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Quaye already knew that compliance with FERPA is a condition of receiving federal funds and that he could only disclose student information under specific circumstances or with parent consent. His lapse in judgment allowed the story to go the way of good, proactive communication.</td>
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<td>Serena is an administrative assistant in charge of attendance records for her team. She receives an email from a friend that two staff members recently used “illness” and “Personal Necessity” time to go on a 2-week business trip to promote a clothing line they’ve developed. Serena believes that the two are very close with her supervisor, so she’s not sure if she should just look the other way. Serena clowned on a trusted friend who encouraged her to do the right thing by sharing the note with her another friend and supervisor. He was grateful to her for letting him know and said: “I appreciate this. I think there’s a rumor going around that I would approve the time off for them.” Falsifying payroll records is dishonest and violates LAUSD’s Employee Attendance Policy along with the state’s ethical work standards. Serena and her friend both demonstrated courage and responsibility by not letting perceptions derail their efforts. This also means that she and her friend shared their values in the workplace by doing the right thing. Always think about the effect this might have on others and consider the effect on the institution.</td>
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<td>Malak works as a planner for LAUSD. His friend recently started his own company and asks Malak to freelance for him. After Malak agrees, he finds out that his friend is actually serving as a subcontractor to a company that is a vendor with his department at LAUSD. Malak isn’t sure if he can do the freelance work anymore. Malak went to the Ethics Office website to review the online ethics scenarios and district policies which told him to avoid any outside work that overlaps with his LAUSD responsibilities. He called his friend to say that he couldn’t do the freelance work. Malak also disclosed what happened with his supervisor, so that he would know a conflict was avoided. Malak was not only above board, but comprehensive in the steps that he took to avoid a conflict. He recognized the potential for conflict with LAUSD and immediately addressed it with effective communication to both his friend and manager. In the end, his thoughtfulness protected everyone, including his friend who, as a subcontractor, would still be bound by the rules of the Contractor Code.</td>
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<td>Isabel is a passionate new teacher. She wants to light a fire under her students and help them become activists. Isabel has political posters she wants to put up and buttons and t-shirts she wants to wear in class, but when her fiancé asks her if this is wise, Isabel wonders if she should rethink her plans. Isabel called her mentor teacher and learned that state law and district policies prevent her from sharing a specific political view. Her mentor teacher reminded her that she must present multiple views to her students and avoid political statements. He advises her to keep her political actions and thought to the personal realm. While teachers can be political in their personal lives, the Education Code, Government Code, Code of Ethics, Board Rules and even collective bargaining agreements all reinforce the notion that it is inappropriate for teachers to use their classrooms or school premises to assert a specific view since students are a captive audience.</td>
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<td>Vinh Dan is adjusting to his new department. He’s become friendly with two co-workers and is out with them on a Saturday night when they tell him they want to show him the bars where they go on their days off. Vinh Dan’s co-workers tell him to follow them to an LAUSD garage where they procured their own cars up with gasoline and 3 years delivery way: “You’re next for the ‘free’ gas.” Vinh Dan isn’t sure what to do. Malak spoke to his co-workers about the potential conflict. He didn’t want to say anything to upset his co-workers. A surveillance camera recorded one of the co-workers leaving all three to be charged. After a legal battle, Vinh Dan was cleared. His co-workers lost their jobs, spent 30 grand for their sorry tales and had to pay back the costs for the stolen gasoline.</td>
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<td>Taylor is earning extra cash on the side as a realtor, outside of her LAUSD work. Until now, the realtor work has only been on weekends, but she’s suddenly picking up a lot of clients. To be more accessible for her customers, Taylor wants to print up business cards using her LAUSD contact information. A friend told her this was okay as long as she limited her calls to her lunch hour and pays LAUSD back. Taylor is not sure. Taylor checked with her boss before taking any other action. She learned that under both the Employee Code of Ethics and state law, it’s inappropriate to use district resources to facilitate a private business and that it’s not about just her lunch hour. After some thought, Taylor realized her true passion was in real estate and then left LAUSD to pursue her passion.</td>
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<td>Michael is a project manager who is also a newlywed. Lately, he’s been absent from home due to long hours at work. He’s been invited to attend a professional conference in Chicago that extends into the weekend. At his prior firm, when there was a week-end event paid for with company money, he was allowed to join on company expense. So Michael is considering using his LAUSD Procurement card to pay for a ticket to Chicago. Outside her LAUSD work, she is heavily involved with planning a fundraiser for a nonprofit group that works with orphans in Mexico. Since it’s a great cause, Ekaterina is considering using her LAUSD database to send out invitations for the fundraiser. She would also like to invite her friends who have a rock solid reputation for always doing the right thing. Her mentor explained that it’s inappropriate to use agency resources for personal gain. Though it’s easy to sympathize with Vinh Dan, he made a mistake by remaining silent. His co-workers paid a big price for their theft of thousands of dollars of gasoline, but Vinh Dan threatened to get reprimanded for both legal costs and the cost to his otherwise spotless reputation.</td>
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<td>Aasif had noble intentions and started a business. Her friend asks her for two favors: 1) to write a nice reference on her school stationary that she can use in her advertising, and 2) to help her pass around flyers that promote her new business to teachers and parents at her school. Elle agrees, but has an uneasy feeling about what’s appropriate. Elle talks with one of her mentors, who has a rock solid reputation for always doing the right thing. Her mentor explained that it’s inappropriate to use official stationery or her position to endorse any private product, service, or political group. Elle explained this to her friend who said, “Yeah, I thought so too, but it’s not like you’re already giving away flyers to other friends in other businesses aren’t allowed to help market either.” Elle exercised sound judgment in seeking out advice from a trusted and respected mentor before taking any rash actions to lobby on behalf of a friend’s outside activities. In addition to following the Employee Code of Ethics, advertising on LAUSD premises would also be against Board Rules and the Lobbying Disclosure Code.</td>
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Abdullah demonstrated ethical responsibility by helping to ensure a safe environment for students and by talking to his principal again.

Abdullah met with his principal who responsibly to resolve a critical concern. Not addressing the suspected mismanagement of PTA funds would be wrong because it could lead to a further loss of trust for the PTA and LAUSD which could jeopardize future fundraising efforts that support student needs.

Abdullah is a new teacher who is concerned that a colleague is using a district computer to view pornography. He’s worried since students have access to the computer. Abdullah spoke to his principal about the issue, but he sees that the teacher still has not been fired. Abdullah wonders if he needs to escalate the issue.

Dakota is working on a big project with her team. Her co-workers are counting on her piece of the work to get completed by the end-of-the-day deadline she promised, so that they can do their part of the project. It’s been a long day for Dakota however, and she’s been distracted. Her work day is coming to an end and Dakota is thinking it might be more convenient for her to just slip out quietly and tackle her work some other time.

Carlos receives an e-mail joke from a co-worker which includes ethnic and religious references which seem offensive. Carlos is concerned since it’s not the first time he’s received this type of e-mail from the individual. He knows that many people are offended by these e-mails, but so far no one has said anything. Carlos doesn’t know if he should be the one to say anything.

Dakota decided to leave work without delivering on the work that she promised. Driving home, she spoke to her mother about the situation. Her mom said that it was a poor decision to not live up to her word and to leave her co-workers in a lurch. When Dakota got home, she sent an e-mail to her co-workers, clarifying that she had not forgotten the deadline. She spent the rest of her night finishing the work she promised to keep her commitment.

Carlos took an important step to promote a positive work environment by speaking to his co-worker who was shocked to realize this and decided to send an e-mail to formally apologize to everyone for what he said was “a misguided effort to provide humor.” Carlos’ co-worker then thanked him for his honesty.

Zoya reassured the parent that she was right to raise the concern and promised to do what she could to support her. Zoya then requested an investigation which revealed that the new president stole $31,992 from the PTA. The president was arrested, sentenced to 2 years in state prison and ordered to pay restitution to the school.

Both Zoya and the parent acted responsibly to resolve a critical concern. Not addressing the suspected mismanagement of PTA funds would be wrong because it could lead to a further loss of trust for the PTA and LAUSD which could jeopardize future fundraising efforts that support student achievement.

CASE SCENARIOS BRIEFING (CONTINUED)

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<td>Zoya is a principal with a very supportive PTA. After a recent PTA fundraiser, a parent tells Zoya that she thinks the new PTA president is embezzling their PTA funds because the amount deposited in the account did not match what she processed. The parent tells Zoya she wishes she hadn’t noticed and asks Zoya for guidance.</td>
<td>Zoya reassured the parent that she was right to raise the concern and promised to do what she could to support her. Zoya then requested an investigation which revealed that the new president stole $31,992 from the PTA. The president was arrested, sentenced to 2 years in state prison and ordered to pay restitution to the school.</td>
<td>Having a bad day is understandable, but as Dakota’s mother reminded her, a person of character keeps commitments and takes responsibility to deliver results. Dakota started down a poor track, but she quickly self-corrected. On top of being an ethical course of action, Dakota’s ultimate follow-through also demonstrates what it means to be a true professional.</td>
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<td>Carlos receives an e-mail joke from a co-worker which includes ethnic and religious references which seem offensive. Carlos is concerned since it’s not the first time he’s received this type of e-mail from the individual. He knows that many people are offended by these e-mails, but so far no one has said anything. Carlos doesn’t know if he should be the one to say anything.</td>
<td>Carlos mustered up the courage to say to his co-worker: “I don’t know if you realize but these e-mails are most certainly offensive to some individuals.” His co-worker was shocked to realize this and decided to send an e-mail to formally apologize to everyone for what he said was “a misguided effort to provide humor.” Carlos’ co-worker then thanked him for his honesty.</td>
<td>Having a bad day is understandable, but as Dakota’s mother reminded her, a person of character keeps commitments and takes responsibility to deliver results. Dakota started down a poor track, but she quickly self-corrected. On top of being an ethical course of action, Dakota’s ultimate follow-through also demonstrates what it means to be a true professional.</td>
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<td>Uri is processing bills when he notices that the name of the consulting firm on the invoice he’s processing is the same name as the individual who appears to be approving the transaction at LAUSD. After reviewing the prior six months of records, Uri sees that it’s been the same individual signing for the vendor and LAUSD. Uri believes this is a conflict, but is unsure what to do.</td>
<td>Uri shared what he uncovered with his supervisor. Together, they contacted the senior manager of the LAUSD department for which the vendor was working to alert her of what was going on. She was grateful to learn of the conflict, ended the vendor’s self-dealing and then worked with the necessary departments to bring about the appropriate sanctions for the vendor’s misconduct.</td>
<td>Having a bad day is understandable, but as Dakota’s mother reminded her, a person of character keeps commitments and takes responsibility to deliver results. Dakota started down a poor track, but she quickly self-corrected. On top of being an ethical course of action, Dakota’s ultimate follow-through also demonstrates what it means to be a true professional.</td>
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1. How is this training going to benefit my school or office?
   This training will help your staff in having greater awareness of the ethics standards to which we are held as public school officials, so as to avoid unintended violations or lapses. While there are many laws, codes, policies and rules within LAUSD which explain these standards, our internal findings indicate that there is an inconsistent understanding of these standards. We have developed this training because research shows that an interactive training is a far more effective way to assist people in understanding complex policies and laws.

2. When does the ethics training have to be delivered by?
   Preferably, every school, office or team will deliver the training to their site by December 31st; however the hard deadline for you to get everyone trained by is the end of our fiscal year, June 30th.

3. What should we do about individuals who missed the training?
   You have two options. The preferred option is for you to host a make-up session that you facilitate. A second option is to have individuals go on the Ethics Office website (www.lausd.net/ethics) to complete an online version of the training on their own. The individuals would then need to show you the certification of completion that they print out.

4. Why does LAUSD have an ethics initiative?
   LAUSD’s leadership recognizes that ethics is a foundation for personal and organizational success. To ensure that we maintain our public’s trust, our ethics initiative seeks to support our employees in having greater awareness of the public service standards to which we are held and the specific ethics and conflict-of-interest laws which applies to us.

5. Are other school districts also working to promote ethics?
   Yes, school districts – all across the country – have existing ethics programs or are developing ones similar to ours.