

Board of Education

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HOOVER CITY SCHOOLS

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December 14, 2011

Dear Parents,

Over the course of the past few weeks parent inquiries regarding acceptable gifts for teachers have increased in light of the recent changes to the Alabama Ethics Law. Last night, our Board of Education adopted a companion resolution to the recently released Advisory Opinion No. 2011-12 from the Alabama Ethics Commission to provide the most up-to-date guidance on this evolving law as it relates to teacher gifts. The purpose of this correspondence is to provide this summary guidance in connection with the fast approaching holiday season.

Currently, teachers may lawfully accept a personal gift of a de minimis (minimal) value. Guiding examples, while not all inclusive, set out in the law include items such as fruit baskets, homemade cookies, Christmas ornaments of little intrinsic value, coffee mugs, books of a nominal value, scarves, etc. A reasonable guideline to use in these instances would be a gift valued at \$10 or less.

Furthermore, a teacher or other school employee may lawfully accept a gift card of a personal and seasonal nature so long as the individual contribution toward the purchase of the gift card is voluntary and does not exceed \$10.00. Alternatively stated, voluntary, individual contributions of \$10 or less may be combined towards the gifting of a single gift card. In practice, this would typically be organized through an adult classroom representative (room mother) or PTO/PTA representative(s).

Gifts of instructional items to be used in the classroom are appreciated at any time, not just during the holidays, and are not otherwise restricted by this law.

The full opinion is available for you to review on the [Alabama Ethics Commission website](#) (Opinion 2011-12, pages 13-17).

Please understand this correspondence is not intended as a solicitation but as a protection of our entire school community. We appreciate the overwhelming support you continue to show toward our Hoover City Schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Craig', written in a cursive style.

Andy Craig