

## Gift Guidelines for Teachers and Staff of the UTPB STEM Academy

UTPB STEM Academy Teachers are employees of the State of Texas as well as UT System and are therefore subject to follow all related rules, regulations, and laws concerning accepting gifts of any kind. A state employee cannot accept or solicit any gift, favor, or service that might reasonably tend to influence the employee in the discharge of official duties or that the employee knows or should know is being offered with the intent to influence the employee's official conduct (Texas Government Code 572.051).

UTPB and the UTPB STEM Academy is committed to ensuring adherence with State law regarding gifts to state employees as well as maintaining an ethical environment. While it is never required nor expected, the UTPB STEM Academy appreciates parents that wish to give to the school. Please use the following guidelines to ensure UTPB and the UTPB STEM Academy remain compliant with State laws and the UT System expectations of ethical behavior for its employees. This differs from independent school district and private school teachers as they have guidance from their own governing bodies. Public and private school teachers and staff are not State of Texas employees.

### Acceptable Gifts to the UTPB STEM Academy

- Donation to UTPB STEM Academy
  - May be cash, gift cards, or food items for the school
  - A certain class may be designated if desired
  - There is no limit on the number of donations accepted throughout the year
  - Donations can be given to Chief Financial Officer and will be processed through the UTPB Development Office

### Acceptable Gifts to Teachers or Staff

- Homemade gifts – valued at *less than* \$50
- Purchased gifts – valued at *less than* \$50 (no gift cards or cash)
- Teachers are allowed to receive **one acceptable** gift per school year per student/parent

### Unacceptable and Unlawful Gifts to Teachers or Staff

- Cash, checks, or gift cards in **any** amount
- Gifts and/or food valued at \$50 and above
- Multiple gifts to a teacher within a school year from the same student/parent
- Gifts given to influence employee decision making

### Accepting Gifts from Students

If you receive a gift meant for you personally from a student or parent, you are responsible for using your best judgment as to if the gift is meant to influence your decision making abilities in regards to a student. You should assess the gift to ensure that it is not cash, checks, gift cards, or an item with a value

of over \$50. If you have received a gift meant for you personally more than once from the same student/parent, you should return the gift. If you know for certain that the gift meets any of the criteria listed above for unacceptable gifts, the gift should be returned or donated to a charity.

If you have a question in regards to the gift's value, the gift should be forwarded to the Superintendent of the UTPB STEM Academy for review. In the event that the gift's value is deemed to be over the acceptable amount, the gift will be returned to the giver or donated to a charity in accordance with State law (Texas Penal Code 36.10).

#### Appreciation Luncheons for Teachers or Staff

Appreciation luncheons may be held up to 2 times per school year **with parents in attendance**. Door prizes given at a luncheon would count as the one *acceptable* gift per school year per student/parent because of the gifts being purchased/made by parents.