

# VICTORIA COUNTY JUNIOR COLLEGE DISTRICT

## INVESTMENT POLICY

### I. POLICY

It is the policy of the Victoria County Junior College District (District) that after allowing for the anticipated cash flow requirements of the District and giving due consideration to the safety and risk of investment, all available funds shall be invested in conformance with these legal and administrative guidelines, seeking to optimize interest earnings to the maximum extent possible.

Effective cash management is recognized as essential to good fiscal management. Investment interest is a source of revenue to District funds. The District's investment portfolio shall be designed and managed in a manner designed to maximize this revenue source, to be responsive to public trust, and to be in compliance with legal requirements and limitations.

Investments shall be made with the primary objectives of

- **Safety** and preservation of principal
- Maintenance of sufficient **liquidity** to meet operating needs
- **Public trust** from prudent investment activities
- Optimization of **interest earnings** on the portfolio

### II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this investment policy is to comply with Chapter 2256 of the Government Code ("Public Funds Investment Act"), which requires the District to adopt a written investment policy regarding the investment of its funds and funds under its control. The investment policy addresses the methods, procedures, and practices that must be exercised to ensure effective and judicious fiscal management of the District's funds.

### III. SCOPE

This investment policy shall govern the investment of all financial assets of the District. These funds are accounted for in the District's Annual Financial Report and include

- The General Fund

- Capital Projects Funds
- Auxiliary Funds
- Trust and Agency Funds, to the extent not required by law or existing contract to be kept segregated and managed separately
- Endowed Funds within the Trust fund are not subject to the Public Funds Investment Act, and therefore the District does not subject them to the requirements of this policy.
- Debt Service Funds, including reserves and sinking funds, to the extent not required by law or existing contract to be kept segregated and managed separately

The District may consolidate cash balances from all funds to maximize investment earnings. Investment income will be allocated to the various funds based on their respective participation and in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

This investment policy shall apply to all transactions involving the financial assets and related activity for all the foregoing funds. However, this policy does not apply to the assets administered for the benefit of the District by outside agencies under deferred compensation programs.

## **IV. INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES**

The District shall manage and invest its cash with four primary objectives, listed in order of priority: **safety, liquidity, public trust, and yield, expressed as optimization of interest earnings**. The safety of the principal invested always remains the primary objective. All investments shall be designed and managed in a manner responsive to the public trust and consistent with state and local law.

The District shall maintain a comprehensive cash management program, which includes collection of account receivables, vendor payments in accordance with invoice terms and prudent investment of available cash. Cash management is defined as the process of managing monies in order to ensure maximum cash availability and maximum earnings on short-term investment of idle cash.

### **Safety [PFIA 2256.005(b) (2)]**

Safety of principal is the foremost objective of the investment program. Investments shall be undertaken in a manner that seeks to ensure the preservation of capital in the overall portfolio. The objective will be to mitigate credit and interest rate risk.

- Credit risk and concentration of credit risk – The District will minimize credit risk, the risk of loss due to the failure of the issuer or backer of the investment, and concentration of credit risk, the risk of loss attributed to the magnitude of investment in a single issuer, by
  - Limiting investments to the safest types of investments
  - Pre-qualifying the financial institutions and broker/dealers with which the District will do business
  - Diversifying the investment portfolio so that potential losses on individual issuers will be minimized
  
- Interest rate risk – the District will manage the risk that the interest earnings and the market value of investments in the portfolio will fall due to changes in the general interest rates by limiting the maximum weighted average maturity of the investment portfolio to five years. The District will, in addition,
  - Structure the investment portfolio so that investments mature to meet cash requirements for ongoing operations, thereby avoiding the need to liquidate investments prior to maturity
  - Invest operating funds primarily in certificates of deposits, shorter-term securities or local government investment pools that offer same-day liquidity
  - Diversify maturities and stagger purchase dates to minimize the impact of market movements over time

**Liquidity [PFIA 2256.005 (b) (2)]**

The investment policy shall remain sufficiently liquid to meet all operating requirements that may be reasonably anticipated. This is accomplished by structuring the portfolio so that investments mature concurrent with cash needs to meet anticipated demands. Because all possible cash demands cannot be anticipated, a portion of the portfolio will be invested in local government investment pools or high yield bank accounts that offer same-day liquidity. In addition, a portion of the portfolio will consist of securities with active secondary or resale markets.

**Public Trust**

All participants in the District’s investment process shall seek to act responsibly as custodians of the public trust. Investment Officers shall avoid any transaction that might impair public confidence in the District’s ability to govern effectively.

### **Yield (Optimization of Interest Earnings)**

The investment portfolio shall be designed with the objective of attaining a market rate of return throughout budgetary and economic cycles, taking into account the investment risk constraints and liquidity needs. Return on investment is of secondary importance compared to the safety and liquidity objectives described above.

## **V. RESPONSIBILITY AND CONTROL**

### **Delegation of Authority [PFIA 2256.005(f)]**

In accordance with the Public Funds Investment Act, the Board designates the Vice President of Administrative Services and the Director of Finance as the District's Investment Officers. An Investment Officer is authorized to execute investment transactions on behalf of the District. No person may engage in an investment transaction or the management of District funds except as provided under the terms of this investment policy as approved by the Board. The investment authority granted to the Investment Officers is effective until rescinded by the Board.

### **Quality and Capability of Investment Management [PFIA 2256.005(b) (3)]**

The District shall provide periodic training in investments for the designated Investment Officers and other investment personnel through courses and seminars offered by professional organizations, associations, and other independent sources in order to ensure the quality and capability of investment management in compliance with the Public Funds Investment Act.

### **Training Requirement (State Agencies)**

In accordance with the Public Funds Investment Act, a newly appointed Investment Officer and each board member must attend a training session relating to the person's responsibilities under the Act within six months of the date the officer or board member took office or assumed duties. In addition, Investment Officers shall attend an investment training session no less often than once every two years. The investment training session shall be provided by an independent source approved by the Board. For purposes of this policy, an "independent source" from which investment training shall be obtained shall include a professional organization, an institution of higher education, or any other sponsor other than a business organization with whom the District may engage in an investment transaction. The Investment Officers shall deliver a

report on the subchapter to the Board not later than the 180<sup>th</sup> day after the last of each regular session of the legislature.

### **Internal Controls**

The Vice President of Administrative Services is responsible for establishing and maintaining an internal control structure designed to ensure that the assets of the District are protected from loss, theft, or misuse. The internal control structure shall be designed to provide reasonable assurance that these objectives are met. The concept of reasonable assurance recognizes that (1) the cost of a control should not exceed the benefits likely to be derived; and (2) the valuation of costs and benefits requires estimates and judgments by management.

- Accordingly, the Vice President of Administrative Services shall establish a process for annual independent review by an external auditor to assure compliance with policies and procedures.

### **Standard of Care/Prudence (PFIA 2256.006)**

The standard of care to be applied by the Investment Officer shall be the “prudent investor” rule. This rule states that “Investments shall be made with judgment and care, under circumstances then prevailing, which persons of prudence, discretion and intelligence exercise in the management of their own affairs, not for speculation, but for investment, considering the probable safety of their capital as well as the probable income to be derived.” In determining whether an Investment Officer has exercised prudence with respect to an investment decision, the determination shall be made taking the following into consideration:

- The investment of all funds, or funds under the District’s control, over which the officer had responsibility rather than a consideration as to the prudence of a single investment
- Whether the investment decision was consistent with the written approved investment policy of the District

### **Indemnification**

The Investment Officer, acting in accordance with written procedures and exercising due diligence, shall not be held personally responsible for a specific investment’s credit risk or market price changes, provided that these deviations are reported immediately and the appropriate action is taken to control adverse developments.

### **Ethics and Conflicts of Interest [PFIA 2256.005(i)]**

Officers and employees involved in the investment process shall refrain from personal business activity that would conflict with the proper execution and management of the investment program or that would impair their ability to make impartial decisions.

Employees and Investment Officers shall disclose any material interests in financial institutions with which they conduct business. They shall further disclose any personal financial/investment positions that could be related to the performance of the investment portfolio. Employees and officers shall refrain from undertaking personal investment transactions with the same individual with which business is conducted on behalf of the District.

An Investment Officer of the District who has a personal business relationship with an organization seeking to sell an investment to the District shall file a statement disclosing that personal business interest. An Investment Officer who is related within the second degree by affinity or consanguinity to an individual seeking to sell an investment to the District shall file a statement disclosing that relationship. A statement required under this subsection must be filed with the Texas Ethics Commission and the Board.

## **VI. SUITABLE AND AUTHORIZED INVESTMENTS**

### **Portfolio Management**

The District currently has a “buy and hold” portfolio strategy. Maturity dates are matched with cash flow requirements, and investments are purchased with the intent to be held until maturity. However, investments may be liquidated prior to maturity for the following reasons:

- An investment with declining credit may be liquidated early to minimize loss of principal
- Cash flow needs of the District require that the investment be liquidated

### **Investments [PFIA 2256.005(b) (4) (A)]**

District funds governed by this policy may be invested in the instruments described below, all of which are authorized by Chapter 2256 of the Government Code (Public Funds Investment Act). Investments of District funds in any instrument or security not authorized for investment under the Act is prohibited. The District will not be required to liquidate an investment that becomes unauthorized subsequent to its purchase.

#### **I. Authorized Investment Instruments**

1. Treasury bills, treasury notes, and treasury bonds of the United

States and other direct obligations of the agencies and instrumentalities of the United States as permitted by Government Code 2256.009

2. Obligations of states, agencies, counties, cities, and other political subdivisions of any state rated as to investment quality by a nationally recognized investment rating firm not less than AA or its equivalent as permitted by Government Code 2256.009(a)

3. A securities lending program as permitted by Government Code 2256.0115

4. Certificates of deposit and share certificates that are fully guaranteed or insured by the FDIC, through an authorized broker/dealer, to one or more than one depository institution, as permitted by Government Code 2256.010

5. Fully collateralized repurchase agreements and reverse repurchase agreements permitted by Government Code 2256.011

6. No-load money market mutual funds as permitted by Government Code 2256.014

7. Public funds investment pools as permitted by Government Code 2256.016

8. A guaranteed investment contract as an investment vehicle for bond proceeds, provided it meets the criteria and eligibility requirements established by Government Code 2256.015

9. Investments that are fully guaranteed or insured by the FDIC

10. Commercial paper with a maximum maturity of 181 days, rated A1/P1 by a nationally recognized rating agency

## **II. Effect of Loss of Required Rating [PFIA 2256.021]**

The Investment Officer will monitor monthly the credit rating of all investments in the portfolio based upon independent information from a nationally recognized rating agency. If any security falls below the minimum rating required by this policy, the Investment Officer will determine the possible loss of principal if the investment is sold and sell the investment if it is in the best interest of the District.

## **III. Exemption for Existing Investments**

The District is not required to liquidate any investments that were authorized at

the time of the purchase.

#### **IV. Not Authorized [PFIA 2256.005(b) (1-4)]**

Investment in any and all types of derivatives is prohibited.

All investments are prohibited unless expressly described in this policy in the section, Authorized Investment Instruments, which are made in conformity to the PFIA.

## **VII. INVESTMENT PARAMETERS**

#### **Maximum Maturities [PFIA 2256.005(b) (4) (B)]**

The District attempts to match its investments with anticipated cash flow requirements. The District will not directly invest in securities maturing more than ten years from the date of purchase.

#### **Diversification [PFIA 2256.005(b) (3)]**

The District recognizes that investment risks can result from issuer defaults, market price changes or various technical complications leading to temporary illiquidity. Risk is managed through portfolio diversification that shall be achieved by the following general guidelines:

- Limiting investments to avoid over concentration in investments from a specific issuer or business sector (excluding U.S. Treasury securities and certificates of deposit that are fully insured and collateralized in accordance with state and federal law),
- Investing in securities with varying maturities, and
- Continuously investing a portion of the portfolio in readily available funds such as local government invest pools, money market funds, or overnight repurchase agreements to ensure that appropriate liquidity is maintained in order to meet ongoing obligations.

## **VIII. SELECTION OF BANKS AND DEALERS**

#### **Depository (Chapter 51.003 Texas Education Code)**

At least every four years a depository shall be selected through the District's banking services procurement process. The selection of a depository will be

determined by competitive bid, and evaluation of bids will be based on the following selection criteria:

- The ability to qualify as a depository for public funds in accordance with state law
- The ability to provide requested information of financial statements for the periods specified
- The ability to meet all requirements in the banking bid
- Complete response to all required items on the bid form
- Lowest net banking service cost, consistent with the ability to provide an appropriate level of service
- The credit worthiness and financial stability of the bank

### **Authorized Brokers/Dealers (PFIA 2256.025)**

The District shall, at least annually, review, revise, and adopt a list of qualified broker/dealers and financial institutions authorized to engage in securities transactions with the District. Those firms that request to become qualified bidders for securities transactions will be required to provide a completed broker/dealer questionnaire that provides information regarding creditworthiness, experience, reputation, and a certification stating the firm has received, read, and understood the District's investment policy and agree to comply with the policy. Authorized firms may include primary dealers or regional dealers that qualify under Securities & Exchange Commission Rule 15C3-1 (Uniform Net Capital Rule) and qualified depositories. All investment providers, including financial institutions, banks, money market mutual funds, and local government investment pools, must sign a certification acknowledging that the organization has received and reviewed the District's investment policy and that reasonable procedures and controls have been implemented to preclude investment transactions that are not authorized by the District's policy. [PFIA 2256.005(k-l)]

### **Competitive Bids**

It is the policy of the District to require competitive bidding for all individual security purchases and sales except for a) transactions with money market mutual funds and local government investment pools and b) treasury and agency securities purchased at issue through an approved broker/dealer or financial institution. The Vice President of Administrative Services shall develop and maintain procedures for ensuring competition in the investment of the District's funds.

### **Delivery versus Payment [PFIA 2256.005(b) (4) (E)]**

Securities shall be purchased using the delivery versus payment method with the exception of investment pools and mutual funds. Funds will be released after notification that the purchased security has been received.

## **IX. CUSTODIAL CREDIT RISK MANAGEMENT**

### **Safekeeping and Custodial Agreements**

The District shall contract with a bank or banks for the safekeeping of securities either owned by the District as part of its investment portfolio or held as collateral to secure demand or time deposits. Securities owned by the District shall be held in the District's name as evidenced by safekeeping receipts of the institution holding the securities.

Collateral for deposits will be held by a third party custodian designated by the District and pledged to the District as evidenced by safekeeping receipts of the institution with which the collateral is deposited. Original safekeeping receipts shall be obtained. Collateral may be held by the depository bank's trust department, a Federal Reserve Bank or branch of a Federal Reserve Bank, a Federal Home Loan Bank, or a third party bank approved by the District.

### **Collateral Policy (PFIA 2257.023)**

Consistent with the requirements of the Public Funds Collateral Act, it is the policy of the District to require full collateralization of all District funds on deposit with a depository bank, other than investments. In order to anticipate market changes and provide a level of security for all funds, the collateralization level will be 102% of market value of principal and accrued interest on the deposits or investments less an amount insured by the FDIC. At its discretion, the District may require a higher level of collateralization for certain investment securities. Securities pledged as collateral shall be held by an independent third party with whom the District has a current custodial agreement. The Vice President of Administrative Services is responsible for entering into collateralization agreements with third party custodians in compliance with this policy. The agreements are to specify the acceptable investment securities for collateral, including provisions relating to possession of the collateral, the substitution or release of investment securities, ownership of securities, and the method of valuation of securities. A clearly marked evidence of ownership (safekeeping receipt) must be supplied to the District and retained. Collateral shall be reviewed at least monthly to assure that the market value of the pledged securities is adequate.

### **Collateral Defined**

The District shall accept only the following types of collateral:

- Obligations of the United States or its agencies and instrumentalities

- Direct obligations of the state of Texas or its agencies and instrumentalities
- Collateralized mortgage obligations directly issued by a federal agency or instrumentality of the United States, the underlying security for which is guaranteed by an agency or instrumentality of the United States

### **Subject to Audit**

All collateral shall be subject to inspection and audit by the Investment Officers or the District's independent auditors.

## **X. PERFORMANCE**

### **Performance Standards**

The District's investment portfolio will be managed in accordance with the parameters specified within this policy. The portfolio shall be designed with the objective of obtaining a rate of return through budgetary and economic cycles, commensurate with the investment risk constraints and the cash flow requirements of the District.

### **Performance Benchmark**

It is the policy of the District to purchase investments with maturity dates coinciding with cash flow needs. Through this strategy, the District shall seek to optimize interest earnings utilizing allowable investments available in the market at that time. Market value will be calculated on a quarterly basis on all securities owned and compared to current book value. The District's portfolio shall be designed with the objective of regularly meeting or exceeding the average rate of return on 90 day U.S. Treasury Bills, six month U.S. Treasury Bills, the Fed Fund rate, and 10 year U.S. Treasury Notes.

## **XI. REPORTING (PFIA 2256.023)**

### **Methods**

The Investment Officers shall prepare an investment report on a quarterly basis that summarizes investment strategies employed in the most recent quarter and describes the portfolio in terms of investment securities, maturities, and shall explain the total investment return for the quarter.

The quarterly investment report shall include a summary statement of investment activity prepared in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles.

This summary will be prepared in a manner that will allow the District to ascertain whether investment activities during the reporting period have conformed to the Investment Policy. The report will be provided to the Board. The report will include the following:

- A listing of individual securities held at the end of the reporting period
- Unrealized gains or losses resulting from appreciation or depreciation by listing the beginning and ending book and market value of securities for the period
- Additions and changes to the market value during the period
- Listing of investments by maturity date
- The percentage of the total portfolio that each type of investment represents
- Statement of compliance of the District's investment portfolio with state law and the investment strategy and policy approved by the Board

An independent auditor will perform a formal annual review of the quarterly reports with the results reported to the governing body [PFIA 2256.023(d)].

#### **Monitoring Market Value [PFIA 2256.005(b) (4) (D)]**

Market value of all securities in the portfolio will be determined on a quarterly basis. These values will be obtained from a reputable and independent source and disclosed to the governing body quarterly in a written report.

## **XII. INVESTMENT POLICY ADOPTION [PFIA 2256.005(e)]**

The District's investment policy shall be adopted by resolution of the Board. It is the District's intent to comply with state laws and regulations. The District's investment policy shall be subject to revisions consistent with changing laws, regulations, and needs of the District. The Board shall adopt a resolution stating that it has reviewed the policy and investment strategies annually, approving any changes or modifications.