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Community Relations

Public Relations

The Superintendent is the District's chief spokesperson and shall plan, implement, and evaluate a District public relations program that will:

- develop community understanding of school operation.
- gather community attitudes and desires for the District.
- secure adequate financial support for a sound educational program.
- help the community feel a more direct responsibility for the quality of education provided by their schools.
- earn the community's good will, respect, and confidence.
- promote a genuine spirit of cooperation between the school and the community.
- keep the news media provided with accurate information.

The public relations program should include:

1. Regular news releases concerning District programs, policies, and activities that will be sent to the news media.
2. News conferences and interviews as requested or needed. Individuals may speak for the District only with prior approval from the Superintendent.
3. Publications having a high quality of editorial content and effective format. All publications shall identify the District, school, department, or classroom and shall include the name of the Superintendent, the Building Principal, and/or the author and the publication date.
4. Other efforts that highlight the District's programs and activities.

CROSS REF.: 2:110 (Qualifications, Term, and Duties of Board Officers)

LEGAL REF.: 23 Ill. Admin. Code § 1.210.

Community Relations

Community Use of School Facilities

School facilities are available to community organizations during non-school hours when such use does not: (1) interfere with any school function or the safety of students or employees, or (2) affect the property or liability of the School District. The use of school facilities for school purposes has precedence over all other uses. Persons on school premises must abide by the District's conduct rules at all times.

Student groups and school-related organizations and local governments are granted the use of school facilities at no cost, provided the District does not incur additional operational expenses in providing facilities. Other organizations granted use of facilities shall pay fees and costs.

The Superintendent shall develop Administrative Procedures to manage community use of school facilities which shall be reviewed and approved by the Board. Use of school facilities requires the Superintendent's or Business Manager's approval and is subject to the Administrative Procedures.

- LEGAL REF.: 20 U.S.C. §7905.
 10 ILCS 5/19-2.2.
 105 ILCS 5/10-20.40, 5/10-22.10, and 5/29-3.5.
 Good News Club v. Milford Central School, 121 S.Ct. 2093 (2001).
 Lamb's Chapel v. Center Moriches Union Free School District, 113 S.Ct. 2141
 (1993).
 Rosenberger v. Rector and Visitors of Univ. of Va., 515 U.S. 819 (1995).
- CROSS REF.: 7:330 (Student Use of Building - Equal Access)
 8:25 (Advertising and Distributing Materials in Schools Provided by Non-School
 Related Entities)
 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on School Property)

Community Relations

Advertising and Distributing Materials in Schools Provided by Non-School Related Entities

No material or literature shall be posted or distributed that would: (1) disrupt the educational process, (2) violate the rights or invade the privacy of others, (3) infringe on a trademark or copyright, or (4) be defamatory, obscene, vulgar, or indecent.

Community, Educational, Charitable, or Recreational Organizations

Community, educational, charitable, recreational, or similar groups may, under procedures established by the Superintendent, advertise events pertinent to students' interests or involvement. This may include displaying posters in areas reserved for community posters, having flyers distributed to students, or being included in the school's or District's website where appropriate. All material and literature must be student-oriented and have the sponsoring organization's name prominently displayed.

Commercial Companies and Political Candidates or Parties

Commercial companies may purchase space for their advertisements in or on: (1) athletic field fences; (2) athletic, theater, or music programs; (3) scoreboards; or (4) other appropriate location. The advertisements must be consistent with this policy and its implementing procedures and must be approved by the Superintendent. No approval is needed for commercial material related to graduation, class pictures, or class rings.

No individual or entity may advertise or promote its interests by using the names or pictures of the School District, any District school or facility, staff members, or students except as authorized by and consistent with administrative procedures and approved by the Board.

Material from candidates and political parties will not be accepted for posting or distribution, except when used as part of the curriculum.

LEGAL REF.: Berger v. Rensselaer Central School Corp., 982 F.2d 1160 (7th Cir. 1993), *cert. denied*, 113 S.Ct. 2344 (1993).
DiLoreto v. Downey Unified School Dist., 196 F.3d 958 (9th Cir. 1999).
Hedges v. Wauconda Community Unit School Dist., No. 118, 9 F.3d 5 (7th Cir. 1993).
Lamb's Chapel v. Center Moriches Union Free School Dist., 113 S.Ct. 2141 (1993).
Sherman v. Community Consolidated School Dist. 21, 8 F.3d 1160 (7th Cir. 1993), *cert. denied*, 114 S.Ct. 2109 (1994).

CROSS REF.: 7:325 (Student Fund-Raising Activities)
 7:330 (Student Use of Buildings - Equal Access)

Community Relations

Visitors to and Conduct on School Property or at School Event

The following definitions apply to this policy:

School Property - School buildings and grounds, all District buildings and grounds, vehicles used for school purposes, and any location used for a School Board meeting, school athletic event, or other school-sponsored event ("School Event").

Visitor - Any person other than an enrolled student or District employee.

All visitors to District 126 campuses are required to report to the designated visitor entrance and complete visitor entry requirements in order to receive permission to enter and remain on school property while school is in session. All visitors must present identification for scanning into the District's security software, consent to having their bags searched or stored securely in a locker, pass through a metal detector, and wear a visitor's badge. Visitor entry times may be restricted to non-passing periods, and personal escorts may be provided. Visitors may be denied entry at school officials' discretion. When leaving the school, visitors must return their badge and exit the visitor's exit. On those occasions when groups of parents and friends are invited onto School Property, outside of regular school hours, or in extenuating circumstances (e.g., medical conditions), visitors may not be required to submit to some or all of the foregoing procedures at school officials' discretion, but such visitors must follow school officials' instructions. Persons in or on School Property without permission will be directed to leave and a written notice may be sent apprising the individual that he/she may be subject to criminal prosecution.

Except as provided in the next paragraph, any person wishing to confer with a staff member should contact that staff member by telephone or email to make an appointment. Conferences with teachers are held, to the extent possible, outside school hours or during the teacher's conference/preparation period.

Requests to access a school building, facility, and/or educational program, or to interview personnel or a student for purposes of assessing the student's special education needs, should be made at the appropriate building with approval from the Building Principal or designee.

The School District expects mutual respect, civility, and orderly conduct among all people on School Property or at a School Event. No person on School Property or at a School Event (including visitors, students, and employees) shall:

1. Strike, injure, threaten, harass, or intimidate a staff member, a Board member, sports official or coach, or any other person;
2. Behave in an unsportsmanlike manner, or use vulgar or obscene language;
3. Possess a weapon, any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon or looks like a weapon, or any dangerous device;

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4. Damage or threaten to damage another's property;
5. Damage or deface school property;
6. Violate any Illinois law, or City or county ordinance;
7. Smoke or otherwise use tobacco products;
8. Consume, possess, distribute, or be under the influence of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs;
9. Impede, delay, disrupt, or otherwise interfere with any school activity or function (including using cellular phones in a disruptive manner);
10. Enter upon any portion of school premises at any time for purposes other than those that are lawful and authorized by the Board or its designees;
11. Operate a motor vehicle: (a) in a risky manner, (b) in excess of 20 miles per hour, or (c) in violation of an authorized District employee's directive;
12. Engage in any risky or reckless behavior, including roller-blading, roller-skating, or skateboarding;
13. Violate other District policies or regulations, or a directive from an authorized security officer or District employee; or
14. Engage in any conduct that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the District or a School Event.

Convicted Child Sex Offender

State law prohibits a child sex offender from being present on School Property or loitering within 500 feet of School Property when persons under the age of 18 are present, unless the offender is:

1. A parent/guardian of a student attending the school and has notified the Building Principal or designee of his or her presence at the school for the purpose of: (i) attending a conference at the school with school personnel to discuss the progress of his or her child academically or socially, (ii) participating in child review conferences in which evaluation and placement decisions may be made with respect to his or her child regarding special education services, or (iii) attending conferences to discuss other student issues concerning his or her child such as retention and promotion; or
2. Has permission to be present from the Board, Superintendent, or Superintendent's designee. If permission is granted, the Superintendent or Board President shall provide the details of the offender's upcoming visit to the Building Principal or designee.

In all cases, the Superintendent, or designee who is a certified employee, shall supervise a child sex offender whenever the offender is in a child's vicinity on School Property.

Enforcement

Any staff member may request identification from any person on School Property; refusal to provide such information may be subject to criminal prosecution. The Building Principal or designee shall initiate the immediate removal of any person who refuses to provide requested identification.

Any person who engages in conduct prohibited by this policy may be ejected from the School Event

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and off of School Property. Additionally, the Superintendent, Building Principal, Assistant Principal, Director of Safety, or Athletic Director may issue a warning letter to any such person. The letter shall place such person on notice that the prohibited conduct will not be tolerated and any additional prohibitive conduct may lead to denial of admission to School Events or meetings for up to one calendar year.

Procedures to Deny Future Admission to School Events or Meetings

Before any person may be denied admission to School Events or meetings as provided in this policy, the person has a right to a hearing before the Board of Education. The Superintendent may refuse the person admission pending such Board hearing in the form of a written notice. Additionally, the Superintendent or designee shall provide the person with a hearing notice, delivered or sent by certified mail with return receipt requested, at least 10 days before the Board hearing date. The hearing notice must contain:

1. The date, time, and place of the Board hearing;
2. A description of the prohibited conduct;
3. The proposed time period that admission to School Events or meetings will be denied; and
4. Instructions on how to waive a hearing.

LEGAL REF.: Nuding v. Cerro Gordo Community Unit School Dist., 730 N.E.2d 96 (Ill.App.4, 2000).
 People v. Pruitt, 662 N.E.2d 540 (Ill.App.1, 1996).
 Pro-Children Act of 1994, 20 U.S.C. §7181 et seq.
 105 ILCS 5/10-20.5b, 5/24-24, and 5/24-25.
 720 ILCS 5/11-9.3.

CROSS REF.: 4:170 (Safety)
 6:120 (Education of Children with Disabilities)
 6:250 (Community Resource Persons and Volunteers)
 7:190 (Student Discipline)
 8:20 (Community Use of School Facilities)

Community Relations

Exclusive Bargaining Representative Agent

Authorized agents of an exclusive bargaining representative, upon notifying the Building Principal's office, may meet with a school employee (or group of employees) in the school building before and after the employee's work day and during the employee's duty-free lunch period.

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/24-25.

Community Relations

Accommodating Individuals With Disabilities

Individuals with disabilities shall be provided an opportunity to participate in all school-sponsored services, programs, or activities and will not be subject to illegal discrimination. Where necessary, the District may provide to persons with disabilities aids, benefits, or services that are separate or different from, but as effective as, those provided to others.

The District will provide auxiliary aids and services where necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal opportunity to participate in or enjoy the benefits of a service, program, or activity.

Each service, program, or activity operated in existing facilities shall be readily accessible to, and useable by, individuals with disabilities. New construction and alterations to facilities existing before January 26, 1992, will be accessible when viewed in their entirety.

The Superintendent or designee is designated the Title II Coordinator and shall:

1. Oversee the District's compliance efforts, recommend necessary modifications to the School Board, and maintain the District's final Title II self-evaluation document and keep it available for public inspection, for at least 3 years after its completion date.
2. Institute plans to make information regarding Title II's protection available to any interested party.

Individuals with disabilities should notify the Superintendent or Building Principal if they have a disability which will require special assistance or services and, if so, what services are required. This notification should occur as far as possible before the school-sponsored function, program, or meeting.

Individuals with disabilities may allege a violation of this policy or federal law by reporting it to the Superintendent or designated Title II Coordinator, or by filing a grievance under the Uniform Grievance Procedure.

LEGAL REF.: Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12111 et seq. and 12131 et seq.
28 C.F.R. Part 35.
Rehabilitation Act of 1973 §104, 29 U.S.C. §794 (2006).
105 ILCS 5/10-20.46.
410 ILCS 25/, Environmental Barriers Act.
71 Ill.Admin.Code Part 400, Illinois Accessibility Code.

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure)
4:150 (Facility Management and Expansion Programs)

Community Relations

Public Gifts to the District

The School Board accepts gifts from any education foundation or other entity or individual, provided the gift can be used in a manner compatible with the Board's educational objectives and policies. While the Board encourages unrestricted gifts, donations to fund specific projects are acceptable if the project is approved by the Board. The Superintendent shall develop procedures for review and approval of donations that involve incorporating messages into or placing messages upon school property. All gifts received become the School District's property.

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/16-1.

Community Relations

Parent Organizations

Parent organizations and booster clubs are an invaluable resource to the District's schools. While parent organizations have no administrative authority and cannot determine District policy, the School Board welcomes their suggestions and assistance.

Parent organizations and booster clubs are recognized by the Board and permitted to use the District's name, a District school's name, or a District school's team name, or any logo attributable to the District provided they first receive the Superintendent or designee's express written consent. Consent to use one of the above-mentioned names or logos will generally be granted if the organization or club has by-laws containing the following:

1. The organization's or club's name and purpose, such as, to enhance students' educational experiences, to help meet educational needs of students, to provide extra athletic benefits to students, to assist specific sports teams or academic clubs through financial support, or to enrich extracurricular activities.
2. The rules and procedures under which it operates.
3. An agreement to adhere to all Board policies and administrative procedures.
4. A statement that membership is open and unrestricted, meaning that membership is open to parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school, District staff, and community members.
5. A statement that the District is not, and will not be, responsible for the organization's or club's business or the conduct of its members.
6. An agreement to maintain and protect its own finances.
7. A recognition that money given to a school cannot be earmarked for any particular expense. Booster clubs may make recommendations, but cash or other valuable consideration must be given to the District to use at its discretion. The Board's legal obligation to comply with Title IX by providing equal athletic opportunity for members of both genders will supersede an organization or club's recommendation.

Permission to use one of the above-mentioned names or logos may be rescinded at any time and does not constitute permission to act as the District's representative. At no time does the District accept responsibility for the actions of any parent organization or booster club regardless of whether it was recognized and/or permitted to use any of the above-mentioned names or logos. The Superintendent shall designate an administrative staff member to serve as the liaison to parent organizations or booster clubs. The liaison will serve as a resource person and provide information about school programs, resources, policies, problems, concerns, and emerging issues. Building staff will be encouraged to participate in the organizations.

CROSS REF.: 8:80 (Gifts to the District)

Community Relations

Parental Involvement

In order to assure collaborative relationships between students' families and the District, and to enable parent(s)/guardian(s) to become active partners in their children's education, the Superintendent shall develop administrative procedures to:

1. Keep parent(s)/guardian(s) thoroughly informed about their child's school and education.
2. Encourage parents/guardians to be involved in their child's school and education.
3. Establish effective two-way communication between parents/guardians and the District.
4. Seek input from parent(s)/guardian(s) on significant school-related issues.
5. Inform parents/guardians on how they can assist their children's learning.

The Superintendent shall periodically report to the Board on the implementation of this policy.

CROSS REF.: 6:170 (Title I Programs)
6:250 (Community Resource Persons and Volunteers)
8:10 (Connection with the Community)
8:90 (Parent Organizations and Booster Clubs)

ADMIN. PROC.: 6:170-E1 (District Level Parental Involvement Compact in Title I Programs)
6:170-E2 (School Level Parental Involvement Compact in Title I Programs)

Community Relations

Relations With Other Organizations and Agencies

The District shall cooperate with other organizations and agencies, including but not limited to the:

- County Health Department;
- law enforcement agencies;
- fire authorities;
- planning authorities;
- zoning authorities; and
- Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA), local organizations for civil defense, and other appropriate disaster relief organizations concerned with civil defense
- other School Districts.

CROSS REF.: 1:20 (District Organization, Operations, and Cooperative Agreements)
4:170 (Safety)
5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting)
7:150 (Agency and Police Interviews)

Community Relations

Public Complaints

The School Board is interested in receiving valid complaints and suggestions from members of the community. Any individual may make a suggestion or express a complaint at any District or School office. All suggestions and/or complaints will be referred to the appropriate level staff member or District administrator who is most able to respond in a timely manner. Each complaint or suggestion shall be considered on its merits.

An individual not satisfied after using the channels of authority, may file a grievance under the Uniform Grievance Procedure. This policy shall not be construed to create an independent right to a hearing before the Board.

CROSS REF.: 2:140 (Communications To and From the Board)
2:230 (Public Participation at School Board Meetings and Petitions to the Board)
2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure)
3:30 (Chain of Command)
6:260 (Complaints About Curriculum, Instructional Materials and Programs)
8:10 (Connection with the Community)