

SECTION K

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

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File: KA - SCHOOL/COMMUNITY RELATIONS GOALS

The School Committee believes that the District is an integral part of the community and that community support is necessary for the District's operation and achievement of excellence. The School Committee and District staff members recognize that community support is based on a mutual exchange, a dynamic process in which the District contributes to the community's success and, in turn, benefits from the community's resources.

In order to maintain productive relationships with the community, the District is committed to sustaining:

- Effective, accurate, and meaningful communications that facilitate dialogue, encourage involvement in District programs, and create community advocacy for its public schools.
- Volunteer programs that provide mutually enriching experiences for our students, staff, and community volunteers.
- Recognition programs that publicly honor the contributions of our students, employees, and community partners and express pride in our individual and collective accomplishments.
- Community service efforts which enable the District's staff and students to express their commitment to the community.

SOURCE: MASC - Updated 2022

Approved by Sudbury School Committee: October 3, 2023

File: KBA - SCHOOL PARENT/GUARDIAN RELATIONS GOALS

It is the general goal of the District to foster relationships with parents/guardians, which encourage cooperation between the home and school in establishing and achieving common educational goals for students.

While parents/guardians are individually responsible for their children, the District provides direct services of education and indirect services of childcare for students during the time when they are within the supervision of school personnel. Consistent with these shared responsibilities and as appropriate to the maturity of the student, members of the school staff will consult with parents regarding student progress and achievement, methods to enhance student development, and matters of student conduct.

Additionally, involvement of parents/guardians in the schools is encouraged through regular communication with the school Principal and staff, the parent/teacher organizations, the school volunteer program, and other opportunities for participation in school activities and District programs.

SOURCE: MASC - Updated 2022

Approved by Sudbury School Committee: October 3, 2023

File: KBBA - NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS' RIGHTS

As required by Massachusetts General Law, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with law and Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education Regulations. The school district will follow the law and the regulations developed by the Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education to standardize the process by which public schools provide student records to parents who do not have physical custody of their children ("non-custodial parents").

As required by law, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with the following provisions.

- (a) A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless the school or district has been given documentation that:
 - 1. The parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
 - 2. The parent has been denied visitation, or
 - 3. The parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or
 - 4. There is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.
- (b) The school shall place in the student's record documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted pursuant to regulation.
- (c) In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal.
- (d) Upon receipt of the request the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in regulation.
- (e) The school must delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.

- (f) Upon receipt of a court order which prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to law, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:34D; 71:34H
 603 CMR 23.07 (5) Access Procedures for Non-Custodial Parents
 20 U.S.C. §1232g Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

File: KBE - RELATIONS WITH PARENT/BOOSTER ORGANIZATIONS

To enhance communications between parents/guardians and school officials, the Committee encourages the maintenance of formal parent organizations, including booster organizations, at each school building. For this purpose, the Committee will officially recognize parent organizations. These procedures will be observed:

1. Organizations will be officially recognized upon request by the building Principal who will file a copy of the organizational papers with the Superintendent.
2. A vote, open to all parents/guardians of children enrolled, will designate the organization to be recognized if more than one organization with the same purpose makes the request.
3. All parent organizations shall obtain 501(c)(3) status and file appropriate paperwork with state authorities and make proof of such status available to school district administration.
4. All parent organizations need to recognize that spending on student activities must comply with federal law relating to equity among student genders.

LEGAL REFS: Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972

CROSS REFS: ACA – Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex

SOURCE: MASC - Updated 2022

Approved by Sudbury School Committee: October 2, 2023

File: KCB - COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING

The School Committee endorses the concept that community participation in the affairs of the schools is essential if the school system and the community are to maintain mutual confidence and respect and work together to improve the quality of education for students. It therefore intends to exert every effort to identify the desires of the community and to be responsive, through its actions, to those desires.

All citizens will be encouraged to express ideas, concerns, and/or questions about the schools to the school administration, to any appointed advisory bodies, and to the Committee.

Residents who are specially qualified because of interest, training, experience, or personal characteristics, will be encouraged to assume an active role in school affairs. From time to time, these people may be invited by the Committee to act as advisors, either individually or in groups.

The Committee and the staff will give substantial weight to the advice they receive from individuals and community groups interested in the schools, particularly from those individuals and groups they have invited to advise them regarding specific problems, but will use their best judgment in arriving at decisions.

CROSS REF.: BDF, Advisory Committees to the School Committee

File: KCD - PUBLIC GIFTS TO THE SCHOOLS

In accordance with state law, all grants and gifts to the District shall be reviewed and accepted by the School Committee before expenditure or use. In the case of gifts from industry, business, or special interest groups, no extensive advertising or promotion may be involved in any donation to the schools.

Gifts will automatically become the property of the school district. Any gift of cash, regardless of donor intent, will be accepted by vote of the School Committee kept separate from the general fund, and expended at the discretion of the Committee, as provided by law.

The Committee directs the Superintendent to assure that an appropriate expression of thanks is given all donors.

SOURCE: MASC - Updated 2022

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 44:53A, 71:37A

CROSS REFS.: DD, Grants, Proposals, and Special Projects
GBEBD, Online Fundraising and Solicitation - Crowdfunding

Approved by Sudbury School Committee: May 6, 2024

File: KDB - PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW

The School Committee is a public servant, and its meetings and records will be a matter of public information except as such meetings and records pertain to individual personnel and other legally confidential matters.

The School Committee supports the right of the people to know about the programs and services of their schools and will make every effort to disseminate information. All requests for information will be acted on fairly, completely and expeditiously.

All commonly available public record documents of the School District shall be posted on the district's website. The length of time such records shall remain posted on the district website shall be in accordance with the Municipal Record Retention Manual. In addition, the official minutes of the Committee, its written policies and regulations, and its financial records will be open for inspection at the office of the Superintendent by any citizen desiring to examine them during hours when the office is open. No records pertaining to individual students or staff members will be released for inspection by the public or any unauthorized persons by the Superintendent or other persons responsible for the custody of confidential files. The exception to this will be information about an individual employee (or student) that has been authorized in writing for release by the employee (or student, or student's parent/guardian).

Each building administrator is authorized to use all means available to keep parents/guardians and others in the particular school's community informed about the school's program and activities.

SOURCE: MASC - Updated 2022

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 4:7; 66:10; 30A:18-25

CROSS REFS.: BEDG, Minutes
GBJ, Personnel Records
JRA, Student Records

NOTE: The cross references are to related categories in this manual.

Approved by Sudbury School Committee: October 3, 2023

File: KDC - COMMUNITY USE OF DIGITAL RESOURCES

On recommendation of the Superintendent in conjunction with the Director of Technology, the district shall determine when and which computer equipment, software, and information access, including the use of wireless internet access, systems will be available to the community.

Those using the district systems as a member of the community must abide by the district's procedures regarding responsible use.

All guests will be prompted to and must accept the district's digital use form before accessing the district network.

The Superintendent or designee may revoke such access at any time.

SOURCE: MASC 2023

CROSS REF: INJD ACCESS TO DIGITAL RESOURCES
INJDC ACCEPTABLE USE OF DIGITAL RESOURCES

Approved by Sudbury School Committee: May 6, 2024

File: KDCB - DISTRICT WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The School Committee wishes to ensure accurate delivery of information, and as such, the Sudbury Public Schools will maintain a district website and such District and School social media accounts as authorized by the Superintendent. All such online platforms will be maintained by District staff, acting in their professional capacities.

In order for public communication with the School Committee and District personnel to be responded to in a timely manner, in line with the legal requirements for public communication, commenting on all District and School sites will be turned off. Every School and District site will clearly indicate this policy and will direct those wishing to contact the School and District personnel to the appropriate venues to do so.

Unauthorized use of district or school name is prohibited.

A high priority will be placed on such platforms being accessible, frequently updated, and user friendly.

SOURCE: MASC 2023

LEGAL REF: Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Declaration of Rights,
Article 16
Constitution of the United States of America, Amendment 1
MGL Ch. 66
MGL Ch. 30A

REF: A Guide to the Massachusetts Public Records Law (Secretary of the
Commonwealth)

CROSS REF: BEDH - PUBLIC COMMENT AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS
GBEE - PERSONNEL USE OF TECHNOLOGY
BHE - USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MEMBERS

Approved by Sudbury School Committee: May 6, 2024

File: KDD - NEWS MEDIA RELATIONS/NEWS RELEASES

Every effort will be made to assist the press and other communications media to obtain complete and adequate coverage of the successes, challenges, programs, planning, and activities of the school district.

All representatives of the media will be given equal access to information about the schools. General releases of interest to the entire community will be made available to all the media simultaneously. There will be no exclusive releases except as media representatives request information on particular programs, plans or problems.

In order that school district publicity is given wide coverage and is coordinated into a common effort and purpose, the following procedures will be followed in giving official information to the news media:

1. The School Committee Chair will be the official spokesman for the Committee, except as this duty is delegated to the Superintendent.
2. News releases that are of a District-wide or a sensitive nature or pertain to established Committee policy are the responsibility of the Superintendent.
3. News releases that are of concern to only one school, or to an organization of one school, are the responsibility of the Principal of that particular school. All statements made to the press by other staff members of the particular school must be cleared with the Principal.

While it is impossible to know how news releases will be treated by the press, every possible effort should be made to obtain coverage of school activities that will create and maintain a dignified and professionally responsible image for the school district.

SOURCE: MASC - Updated 2022

Approved by Sudbury School Committee: October 2, 2023

File: KE - PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Although no member of the community will be denied the right to bring their complaints to the Committee, they will be referred through the proper administrative channels for solution before investigation or action by the Committee. Exceptions will be made when the complaints concern Committee actions or Committee operations only.

The Committee believes that complaints are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible, and that the professional staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to involvement by the Committee. Therefore, the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline or learning materials will be as follows:

1. Teacher
2. School building administrator
3. Superintendent
4. School Committee

If a complaint, which was presented to the Committee and referred back through the proper channels, is adjusted before it comes back to the School Committee, a report of the disposition of the matter will be made to the Committee and then placed in the official files.

Complaints about school personnel will be investigated fully and fairly. However, before any such complaint is investigated, the complainant must submit their complaint in writing. Anonymous complaints will be disregarded.

Matters referred to the Superintendent and/or School Committee must be in writing and should be specific in terms of the action desired.

The Committee expects the professional staff to receive complaints courteously and to make a proper reply to the complainant.

SOURCE: MASC - Updated 2022

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 76:5
603 CMR 26.00

Approved by Sudbury School Committee: October 2, 2023

File: KF - USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

The Sudbury School Committee encourages the use of school buildings, playgrounds, and equipment by groups organized in, and servicing primarily the citizens of Sudbury. Such community use of school facilities shall not interfere with the normal conduct of education, extracurricular, or other school-related use of the facilities.

The Committee exercises exclusive jurisdiction over school property, buildings, furnishings, and equipment installed on school property and may make such facilities available for community use consistent with all federal and state laws. Use of the school facilities, including buildings and grounds shall be subject to the approval of the School Principal and the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee.

The Administration will be responsible for implementation of this policy and will establish procedures and/or regulations for building use, a District-wide building use application and agreement form, and a fee schedule. The purposes of the procedures or regulations governing use of the facilities will include the protection and maintenance of school property. The procedures will provide notice of application timelines, cancellation policies, and the user's responsibilities. The fee schedule must be approved by the School Committee.

All requests will be considered on an individual basis and balanced against any potential financial impact to the Sudbury Public School District's annual budget that such usage may involve.

General Rules:

School grounds, buildings, and equipment shall be used only for educational, recreational, social, civic, philanthropic, or like purposes deemed by the Sudbury School Committee to be in the interest of the community. Town Committees or boards that need meeting places or facilities to conduct programs for the benefit of the community may use school premises. Commercial activities conducted by individuals or groups for private profit will not be permitted on school premises unless specific waiver is granted by the Superintendent. Such a waiver may be granted only when the commercial activity provides a direct benefit to children or to citizens of Sudbury. The School Committee reserves the right to deny the use of a school facility or to cancel a reservation for use when the Committee deems the use inconsistent with this policy or the best interests of the District or the community.

If school is cancelled for inclement weather or any other unforeseeable reason, ALL evening activities and use of school facilities shall also be cancelled.

An adult representative of any group using school facilities must be present for the entire period of the program or activity. A school custodian shall also be present, and the group's representative shall assist the custodian in enforcing the following rules:

- Any person or group granted permission to use school facilities shall assume responsibility for the safety and welfare of all persons on the premises during the period of such use and shall

assure that premises and equipment are clean and in good condition at the end of the program or activity.

- Use of tobacco products and/or any illegal substances are prohibited on school property.
- Use of alcoholic beverages are prohibited on school property.
- Decorations shall be put up and removed by the persons granted the use of the building.
- No gifts or gratuities shall be given to school personnel assigned to supervise activities in the schools.
- Food shall not be prepared in any school space other than the school kitchen. Any use of the kitchen shall be supervised by the District Kitchen Supervisor.
- Violations of any, or all, of the within rules may result in the denial of future use of school facilities at the discretion of the Administration and/or School Committee.
- Fireworks, pyrotechnics, and inflatables are prohibited.

Procedures:

Any individual or group seeking to use the school facilities must submit an application in accordance with the District procedures at least thirty (30) days in advance of use. The Director of Business and Finance shall have the discretion to permit use of the facilities at any time less than thirty days. Potential Users may request an appeal on the fees applied by School Committee Policy by requesting an appeal hearing before the Sudbury School Committee at a regularly scheduled public meeting at least thirty (30) days before requested facility use. Requests will be heard for special circumstances only.

Any individual or group using school facilities shall assume full responsibility and financial liability for any damage to school property that occurs during the use of such facilities and shall indemnify the District for any loss or liability arising out of the use of the facility.

A Certificate of Insurance, naming the Sudbury Public Schools as an additional insured, will be required of all users.

Police and fire protection shall be arranged by the user at their own expense.

The following priorities will generally govern District decisions concerning the approval and scheduling of individuals or groups using school facilities:

1. School programs;
2. School-sponsored or school-related programs;
3. Student clubs and activities;
4. Parent-Teacher Organization events;
5. After-School care provided on school premises;
6. The needs of Town boards, committees, or departments, including the Park and Recreation Department

7. Children-oriented, non-school programs not operated for profit, especially those sponsored by local groups;
8. Adult-oriented, non-school programs not operated for profit, especially those sponsored by local groups;
9. Traditionally recurring users for other purposes; and
10. Any commercial user granted approval.

Fees:

The Administration shall exercise appropriate discretion to implement additional fees as they may pertain to excessive use of the facilities by User Groups.

Labor fees cover custodial, kitchen, or other staff costs associated with use.

Facility use fees include fees in addition to labor fees intended to cover other reasonable costs that may be incurred by the District, such as utilities, wear and tear of the facilities and additional maintenance. As the fees are intended to reflect the costs of the use to the District, the fee schedule may provide for different fees based on factors such as the need for additional staff, the time of day or day of the week of the use, the size of the user group, or other significant labor support for set-up or clean-up.

A cleaning surcharge or repair costs for damage to facilities or equipment may be charged as needed at the discretion of the building principal.

Users with facilities fees of more than \$40,000 (excluding personnel costs) will be given a 30% discount pending superintendent approval and agreeing to administrative procedures for volume rentals.

Category 1 All School and Town Group Use:

Facilities are maintained for school purposes. School Educational Programs shall have precedence over all others. This category also includes all other school or town groups, boards, committees and departments. Such use shall be approved by the Building Principal. The Principal, or his/her employee designee, is responsible for the supervision and security of the building and groups during affiliated group use of the facility. These groups will be exempt from facility use fees and labor fees, during operational school building hours.

Category 2 Non-School and Non-Town Affiliated Group Use:

Facilities may be used by individuals and associations for activities of an educational, recreational, social, civic, philanthropic and like purposes as may be deemed for the interest of the community. The affiliation of any such association with a religious organization shall not disqualify such association from being allowed such a use for such a purpose.

These groups shall be charged Facility Use Fees, Labor Fees, and Other Costs beyond Sudbury Public Schools' standard school building operational costs.

Groups may be approved for use by the Administration under the following guidelines:

- Participation Fees are referenced on the Fee Schedule;
- Designated Volunteer to Oversee;
- Sudbury Recreation Leagues only;
- Individual Signed Waiver of Liability;
- Will be cancelled for other Facility Use requests.

File: KHA - PUBLIC SOLICITATIONS IN THE SCHOOLS

The School Committee will place limits on commercial activities and fund-raising activities in the schools for the following reasons:

1. The school system should provide students, parents, and employees some measure of protection from exploitation by commercial and charitable fund-raising organizations.
2. The school system should not give the public the impression of generally endorsing or sanctioning commercial and fund-raising activities.
3. Commercial and fund-raising activities may disrupt school routine and cause loss of instructional time.

Following these guiding statements, the Superintendent and Principals may permit occasional commercial or fund-raising activities related to the objectives of the schools with the following exceptions:

1. No direct solicitation of students or employees may take place without School Committee permission.
2. No general or class distribution of commercial or fund-raising literature may take place without School Committee permission.

For the purposes of this policy, local PTA and PTO groups and groups representing school system employees will be considered "school groups" and will be governed by the Committee's policy on staff solicitations.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 44:53A

CROSS REFS.: GBECB, Staff Gifts and Solicitations
JJE, Student Fund-Raising Activities
JP, Student Gifts and Solicitations
KHB, Advertising in the Schools

File: KHB - ADVERTISING IN THE SCHOOLS

The School Committee may grant permission for advertising of commercial products or services in school buildings or on school property under guidelines or regulations it may approve. Otherwise, no advertising of commercial products or services will be permitted in school buildings or on school property. Publications of the school system will not contain any advertising. However, this will not prevent advertising in student publications that are published by student organizations, subject to administration controls, or the use of commercially-sponsored, free teaching aids if the content is approved by the administration.

Solicitation of sales or use of the name of the school system to promote any product will not be permitted by the Committee.

CROSS REF.: JP, Student Gifts and Solicitations
KHA, Public Solicitations in the Schools

File: KI - VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS

The School Committee welcomes parents and guests to visit classrooms to observe and learn about the instructional programs taking place in our schools. Such visits can prove most beneficial in promotion of greater school-home cooperation and community understanding of how we carry out the school system's mission and goals.

Visits by parents to several classrooms in a given grade for the purposes of comparing teaching styles to provide a basis for a request for student assignment to a particular teacher are strongly discouraged because the School District's policy of assigning a student to a particular class is the sole responsibility of the building Principal in consultation with the staff of that school.

The following guidelines to classroom and school visits should be followed:

1. Parental requests for classroom visitations will be welcomed as long as the educational process is not disrupted. To this end we request that such requests be made at least forty-eight hours in advance to allow for proper arrangements to be made.
2. The building Principal has the authority to determine the number, times, and dates of observations by visitors. This will be done in consultation with staff members so as to give adequate notice to the staff members of the impending visits.
3. For security purposes it is requested that all visitors report to the Principal's office upon entering and leaving the building and sign a guest log showing arrival and departure times. Teachers are encouraged to ask visitors if they have registered in the Principal's office.
4. Under ordinary circumstances classroom observations will be strongly discouraged during the first three weeks of school in September and during the month of June.
5. Any student who wishes to have a guest in school MUST ask permission of one of the administrative staff 24 HOURS in advance of the proposed visit. If permission is granted, the guest is expected to follow the standards of behavior expected of all students. Upon arrival the guest must register in the office. Any guest who fails to comply with student regulations will be asked to leave the school building and grounds immediately.

CROSS REF.: IHBA, Observations of Special Education Programs

File: KLG - RELATIONS WITH POLICE AUTHORITIES

Cooperation with law enforcement agencies is essential for the protection of students, for maintaining a safe environment in the District schools, and for safeguarding all school property.

Relationships between the schools and officials of law enforcement agencies in investigative matters concerning pupils will take into consideration the respective roles of the schools and law enforcement agencies in assisting and protecting the interests of the community, and ensuring the rights of all concerned.

The School Committee also recognizes the potential enrichment that law enforcement agencies can make in the educational program.

Efforts should be made to develop and maintain a healthy attitude toward law enforcement agencies and personnel to promote better understanding and communication.

File: KLJ - RELATIONS WITH PLANNING AUTHORITIES

The School Committee will participate in local and state planning functions that could directly affect District schools and their immediate environment.

The Superintendent or designee will keep the School Committee informed of planning matters bearing directly on the operation of District schools or school-sponsored programs, and will undertake action on behalf of the School Committee to influence matters in the best interests of the students, the schools and the District.

File: KLK - RELATIONS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES

The School Committee and its administrative officers welcome all who seek to serve the residents of the community and will participate with them in the planning and execution of such projects as will be mutually beneficial for students.

It is School Committee policy that administration inform elected and appointed officials of the local and county government of the desire to work cooperatively for improved services.