

SECTION K: SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

KA	School-Community Relations Goals
KBA	Public's Right to Know
KBCA	News Releases
KC	Community Involvement in Decision Making (Also ABA)
KD	Public Participation at Board Meetings (Also BDDH)
KG	Community Use of School Facilities (Equal Access)
KGB	Public Conduct on School Property
KGC	Smoking on School Premises
KH	Public Gifts to the Schools
KI	Public Solicitations in the Schools
KJ	Advertising in the Schools
KK	Visitors to the Schools
KL	Public Complaints
KLB	Public Complaints About the Curriculum or Instructional Materials
KLD	Public Complaints About School Personnel

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS GOALS

The purpose of the school-community relations program is to establish and maintain in the public mind, respect for the public school system and confidence that it is providing the best possible education for the children of the county in terms of intellectual, emotional, moral, social and physical development.

Toward this end, the Board shall provide parents or guardians and other District residents opportunities for orientation and information regarding state regulations and District procedures, and will utilize, insofar as practical, all appropriate means and media to achieve the public relations objectives with the following:

1. Parents of school children
2. County officials and other county leaders
3. Business and industry
4. Community organizations
5. Special interest groups
6. The community as a whole
7. State and federal agencies

[Adoption date: September 20, 1994]

[Re-adoption date: May 26, 1998]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 3315.07
OAC 3301-35-03(J)

CROSS REF.: AE, School District Goals and Objectives

PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW

The Board supports the right of the people to know about the programs and services of their schools and makes efforts to disseminate appropriate information. Each building administrator is authorized and expected to keep the ESC community informed about the ESC programs and activities. The release of information of Districtwide interest is coordinated by the Superintendent.

Business of the Board is discussed and decisions are made at public meetings of the Board, except such matters required to be discussed in private executive sessions. The official minutes of the Board, its written policies, its financial records and all other public records are open for inspection in the central office during the hours when the administrative offices are open.

Each Board member or their designee shall attend public records training every term for which he/she is elected to public office. The Board may designate one or more persons to attend public records training on its behalf to satisfy this requirement. If so decided, the Board shall appoint a designee every term of office.

The District may ask that the identity of an individual requesting information and the reason the information is sought to be in writing. The District first informs the requester that such disclosure is not mandatory, unless the request is for student directory information. The District also informs the requester that providing such information in writing enhances the District's ability to identify, locate or deliver the records sought. The District may also ask that the request be put in writing, but notifies the requester that it is not mandatory to do so.

Any individual who wants to obtain or inspect a copy of a public record may request to have the record duplicated on paper, on the same medium on which the record is kept or on any other medium that the Superintendent/designee determines reasonable. If the request is ambiguous or overly broad, the District informs the requester of the manner in which records are maintained and accessed in the ordinary course of business and allows the requester to revise the request. Records pertaining to individual students and other confidential materials are not released for inspection. Only that information deemed "directory information" may be released from an individual student's file, and only after complying with the regulations prepared by the administration for the release of such information. Student directory information is not released when parents have affirmatively withdrawn their consent to release in writing. Student records that consist of "personally identifiable information" generally are exempt from disclosure.

All records responsive to the request are made available in a reasonable period of time. The District makes the requester aware of any information that is exempt from disclosure requirements by notifying the requester of any redacted information or by making redactions in a plainly visible manner. If a public records request is denied, the District provides an explanation with legal authority for the denial of the request. This explanation is provided in writing if the request is made in writing or if the Superintendent/designee determines written explanation is necessary.

The Superintendent/designee transmits the information sought by mail or by any other means of delivery requested, if the method is reasonably available. The number of mail requests sent to any one person is limited to 10 a month unless the person certifies, in writing, that the records nor the information in them will not be used for commercial purposes.

A fee may be charged for copies and/or delivery. The District may require the fee charged for copies and/or delivery be paid in advance.

The Board's public records policy is posted in a conspicuous location in the central office and in all other District buildings and employee handbooks provided by the District. The policy is distributed directly to the records custodian and receipt of the policy by the custodian is acknowledged. A copy of the records retention schedule is maintained and readily available to the public in the central office.

[Adoption date: September 20, 1994]

[Re-adoption date: May 26, 1998]

[Approved Amendment: September 25, 2007]

LEGAL REFS.: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; 20 USC, § 1232g
ORC 121.22
149.43
OAC 3301-35-03; 3301-35-04

CROSS REFS.: BDC, Executive Sessions
BDDG, Minutes
GBL, Personnel Records
GBS, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA)
IGBA, Programs for Handicapped Students
JO, Student Records
KA, School-Community Relations Goals
KKA, Recruiters in the Schools

NEWS RELEASES

The District is a public institution endeavoring to serve the educational needs of the community. It is important that information be disseminated concerning District activities and problems. The Superintendent will develop procedures to provide wide coverage and to coordinate publicity into a common effort and purpose.

While it is impossible to know how news releases will be treated by the press, efforts should be made to obtain coverage of school activities which will adhere to the professional and responsible image of the District.

[Adoption date: September 20, 1994]

[Re-adoption date: May 26, 1998]

LEGAL REF.: OAC 3301-35-03(J)

NEWS RELEASES

The procedures regarding news releases will be as follows:

1. The Board President will be the official spokesperson for the Board, except as this duty is delegated to the Superintendent or another Board member.
2. News releases which are of a Districtwide nature or pertain to established District policy are the responsibility of the Superintendent or a designated member of the administrative staff.
3. The Board expects the District to maintain a vital and effective link with the media sources of the community.

(Approval date: September 20, 1994)

(Re-approval date: May 26, 1998)

BROADCASTING AND TAPING OF BOARD MEETINGS

Photographic and electronic audio and video broadcasting and recording devices may be used at regular and special Board meetings legally open to the public according to the following guidelines.

1. Photographs, broadcasting and recordings of meetings are permitted only when all parties involved have been informed that cameras, broadcasting and/or recording devices are being used.
2. Persons operating cameras, broadcasting and/or recording devices must do so with a minimum of disruption to those present at the meeting. Specifically, the view between Board members and the audience must not be obstructed, interviews must not be conducted during the meeting and no commentary is to be given in a manner that distracts Board members or the audience.
3. The Board has the right to halt any recording that interrupts or disturbs the meeting.

The Board may make the necessary arrangements to have audio recordings of all regular meetings and any special meeting that it deems appropriate.

[Adoption date: May 26, 1998]

LEGAL REFS.: U.S. Const. Amend. I
ORC 121.22
2911.21
2917.12
2921.31
3313.20

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION MAKING

Community participation in the affairs of the schools is important if the District and the community are to maintain mutual confidence and respect and work together to improve the quality of education for students. The Board will endeavor to identify the wishes of the community and to be responsive to those wishes.

All citizens will be encouraged to express ideas, concerns and judgments about the schools to the school administration, the staff, to any appointed advisory bodies and to the Board.

Residents who are qualified because of interest, training, experience or personal characteristics will be encouraged to assume an active role in school affairs.

The Board and the staff will give consideration to the advice they receive from individuals and community groups interested in the schools. Final authority for all decisions shall rest with the Board.

[Adoption date: September 20, 1994]

[Re-adoption date: May 26, 1998]

LEGAL REF.: OAC 3301-35-03(J)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS

All meetings of the Board will be open to the public.

The Board encourages citizens of the educational service center to attend its sessions so that they become better acquainted with the operation and programs of the service center.

The Board is a policy making body. It delegates the administration of the service center to a professional staff headed by the Superintendent.

The primary duty of the Board is to conduct the business of the service center in an orderly, efficient, and business-like manner. The Board meeting is a time when the Board deliberates and considers items on the Board Agenda. Its meetings are open for public observation but they are not public forums. Therefore, those in attendance at board meetings may not make comments, unless requested to do so, or interrupt the conduct of business. Those individuals who are interested in addressing the board will be provided that opportunity within the limitations of the following procedures and regulations:

1. Anyone wishing to speak before the Board, either as an individual or as a member of a group, should inform the Superintendent of the desire to do so and of the topic to be discussed as early as possible, but at least two days before the meeting. This will permit orderly scheduling of the public remarks on the meeting agenda.
2. Any individual desiring to speak shall give his/her name, address, and the group, if any, that is represented.
3. Public comments may be made only during the portion of the board agenda designated as "Public Comments".
4. Any individual who has properly had his/her name placed on the agenda will be limited to five minutes.
5. The "Public Comments" portion of the agenda shall not exceed a total of thirty minutes.
6. Speakers may offer such objective criticisms of school operations and programs as concern them. But in public sessions, the board will not hear personal complaints of school personnel or against any person connected with the school system. Other channels provide for board consideration and disposition of legitimate complaints involving individuals.

The board vests in its President or other presiding officer authority to terminate the remarks of any individual when they do not adhere to the rules established above. The board President may request comments from the public at a meeting when those individuals are knowledgeable regarding the items in discussion. The period of public participation may be extended by a vote of the majority of the Board.

[Adoption date: September 20, 1994]

[Re-adoption date: May 26, 1998]

[Amendment date: January 25, 2005]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 121.22
3313.20

CROSS REFS.: BD, School Board Meetings
BDDB, Agenda Format
BDDC, Agenda Preparation and Dissemination

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES
(Equal Access)

The Board may rent such facilities as may be necessary for the conduct of District programs. In all such cases, the rental agreement, if at all possible, shall be with one of the local county districts in order to minimize such costs to the District.

The Superintendent is authorized to review sites for rental purposes. Any such site shall be required to meet state codes. No site may be used for classroom purposes until approved by the Board.

[Adoption date: September 20, 1994]

[Re-adoption date: May 26, 1998]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 3311.215
3313.74; 3313.75; 3313.76; 3313.77; 3313.79
4303.26
Title VIII, § 801

PUBLIC CONDUCT ON DISTRICT PROPERTY

All persons on district grounds will be expected to abide by applicable laws, local ordinances, Board policies and building regulations.

No person on district property will assault, strike, threaten, menace or use improper, indecent or obscene language toward a teacher, instructor, other district employees or students. This prohibition is extended to all athletic officials, coaches and athletes in the district and all visiting teams.

Unless otherwise permitted by law, no person is permitted to bring deadly weapons or dangerous ordnances into a school safety zone.

No person will disrupt, disturb or interfere with the teaching of any class of students or any other activity conducted in a district building or upon the campus or grounds.

Whoever violates the above policy and building regulations will be asked to leave the property by whoever is in charge. Should that person refuse, law enforcement officials will be called. If the offender should be a student, the person in charge should report the student to the appropriate principal. The administration cooperates in any prosecution pursuant to the criminal laws of the State and local ordinances.

[Adoption date: September 20, 1994]

[Re-adoption date: May 26, 1998]

[Re-adoption date: November 25, 2008]

LEGAL REFS.: Gun-Free Schools Act; 20 USC 8921
ORC 2903.13; 2903.22
2911.21
2917.11
2923.1212; 2923.122
3313.20

CROSS REF.: GBCB, Staff Conduct
JFC, Student Conduct (Zero Tolerance)
KG, Community Use of School Facilities (Equal Access)
KGC, Smoking on District Property
KK, Visitors to the Schools

SMOKING ON SCHOOL PREMISES

The Board is dedicated to providing a healthful, comfortable and productive environment for its staff, students and citizens. The Board recognizes that smoking can be hazardous to the health and safety of both the smoker and the nonsmoker; therefore the Board declares all school buildings to be designated smoke-free, prohibiting smoking or use of tobacco in any form.

[Adoption date: September 20, 1994]

[Re-adoption date: May 26, 1998]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 3313.20; 3313.47
3791.031
Goals 2000: Educate America Act

PUBLIC GIFTS TO THE SCHOOLS

The Board accepts its responsibility to provide, from public funds, sufficient supplies and equipment for an effective program; it recognizes, however, that, from time to time, individuals or organizations in the county may wish to contribute additional supplies or equipment to enhance or extend the instructional program.

The Board may, by resolution duly passed at a public meeting, accept any gift, grant, or bequest of land with or without improvement and of money, or other personal property, and acknowledge the purpose, if any, for which the gift was made.

The Board reserves the right to refuse to accept any gift when the conditions and stipulations connected with it deprive the Board of control of the gift when ownership of the gift would not contribute toward the achievement of the goals of this District and when ownership would tend to deplete the resources of the District.

Any gift accepted by the Board shall become the property of the Board, may not be returned without the approval of the Board, and is subject to the same controls and regulations as is other property of the Board.

The Board shall be responsible for the maintenance of any gift it accepts subject to any conditions or stipulations connected with the gift.

The Board will make every effort to honor the intent of the donor in its use of the gift, but reserves the right to utilize any gift it accepts in the best interest of the educational program of the District. In no case, shall acceptance of a gift be considered to be an endorsement by the Board of a commercial product or business enterprise or institution of learning.

The Superintendent shall counsel potential donors on the appropriateness of gifts and encourage such donors to choose, as gifts, supplies or equipment not likely to be purchased with public funds.

The Superintendent shall encourage individuals and organizations considering a contribution to the District to consult with the principal or Superintendent before appropriating funds to that end.

The Superintendent shall report to the Board, all gifts which he/she has accepted on behalf of the Board.

The Superintendent shall acknowledge the receipt and value of any gift accepted by the District.

The Superintendent shall prepare fitting means for recognizing or memorializing gifts to the District as appropriate.

The Superintendent shall establish rules and regulations implementing the conditions and limitations upon any gift or donation which has been accepted by the Board.

[Adoption date: September 20, 1994]

[Re-adoption date: May 26, 1998]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 9.20
3313.36

PUBLIC SOLICITATIONS IN THE SCHOOLS

No person will sell or offer for sale within school buildings or on school property any articles or services or solicit contributions except those approved by the Superintendent or the Board. This policy does not prohibit any school fund-raising activity authorized by the school administration.

Salespeople representing educational companies may be granted the opportunity to speak to employees by making arrangements through the Superintendent's office. Such appointments will not interfere with employee work time.

The District directory will not be made available to any outside person or agency for a profit-making purpose.

[Adoption date: September 20, 1994]

[Re-adoption date: May 26, 1998]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 2921.43; 2921.431
3319.321

CROSS REFS.: KG, Community Use of School Facilities (Equal Access)
KK, Visitors to the Schools

ADVERTISING IN THE SCHOOLS

No notices, advertisements or written matter of any nature on behalf of persons or organizations not officially connected with the District will be distributed or displayed in any school building or on school property without permission of the Superintendent. Appeal of the Superintendent's decision may be made to the Board.

[Adoption date: September 20, 1994]

[Re-adoption date: May 26, 1998]

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS

The Board encourages parents and other citizens of the District to visit the District's schools.

To ensure that no unauthorized persons enter buildings, all visitors will report in at receptionist's desk when entering.

Unauthorized persons will not be permitted in the buildings or on the grounds. Staff members are authorized to take appropriate action to prevent such persons from entering buildings and loitering on grounds.

[Adoption date: September 20, 1994]

[Re-adoption date: May 26, 1998]

LEGAL REF.: ORC 3313.20

CROSS REFS.: BG, Board-Staff Communications (Also GBD)
KGB, Public Conduct on School Property
KI, Public Solicitations in the Schools

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Constructive criticism of the schools will be welcomed by the Board when it is motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the educational program or equip the schools to do their tasks more effectively.

Although no member of the community will be denied the right to bring his/her complaints to the Board, he/she will be referred to the proper administrative channels for solution before investigation or action by the Board. Exceptions may be made when the complaints concern Board actions or Board operations.

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

1. Employee
2. Principal or Supervisor
3. Superintendent
4. Board of Education

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

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

Matters referred to the Superintendent and/or Board must be in writing and are expected to be specific in terms of the action desired.

[Adoption date: September 20, 1994]

[Re-adoption date: May 26, 1998]

CROSS REFS.: KLB, Public Complaints About the Curriculum or Instructional Materials
KLD, Public Complaints About School Personnel

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE CURRICULUM OR INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The Board recognizes the need and right of students to free access to many different types of books and materials. It also recognizes the right of the certificated staff to select books and other materials supportive of the District's educational philosophy and goals.

Criticism of a book or other materials used in the school may be expected from time to time. In such instances:

1. If a parent requests that his/her own child not read a given book, the teacher and/or school administrator should resolve the issue, perhaps by arranging for use of alternative material meeting essentially the same instructional purpose.
2. The Board will not permit any individual or group to exercise censorship over instructional materials and library collections, but it recognizes that, at times, a re-evaluation of certain material may be desirable. Should an individual or group ask to have any book or other material withdrawn from school use the following steps should be taken:
 - A. The person who objects to the book or other material will be asked to sign a complaint on a standard form documenting his/her criticism.
 - B. Following receipt of the formal complaint, the Superintendent will provide for a re-evaluation of the material in question. He/She will arrange for the appointment of a review committee from among the faculty and community to consider the complaint.
 - C. The Superintendent will review the complaint and the committee's re-evaluation and will render a decision in the matter. Should the decision be unsatisfactory to the complainant, it may be appealed to the Board.

The Board assumes final responsibility for all books and instructional materials which it makes available to students, and it holds its certificated staff accountable for their proper selections. The Board also recognizes rights of individual parents with respect to controversial materials used by their own children and will provide for the re-evaluation of materials in library collections upon formal request.

[Adoption date: September 20, 1994]

[Re-adoption date: May 26, 1998]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 3329.07; 3329.08; 3329.09

CROSS REFS.: IIAA, Textbook Selection and Adoption
INB, Teaching About Controversial Issues
KL, Public Complaints
KLD, Public Complaints About School Personnel

CITIZEN'S REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF
LIBRARY/CURRICULUM MATERIALS

Type of material (book, film, pamphlet, etc.) _____

Author _____

Title _____

Publisher (if known) _____

Request initiated by _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Complainant represents: Self _____

Organization _____

Other _____

1. To what do you object? (Be specific, cite pages, frames) _____

2. What do you believe might be the result of reading or seeing this material? _____

3. For what age group do you recommend this material? _____

4. Is there anything good about this material? _____

5. Did you read or see the entire material? _____

What parts? _____

6. Are you aware of the judgment of this material by professional critics? _____

7. What do you believe is the theme of this material?_____

8. What would you like your school to do about this material?_____

Do not assign it to my child.

Withdraw it from all students as well as my child.

Restrict it to more mature students.

Send it back for re-evaluation.

Signature of Complainant

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Complaints about school personnel will be investigated fully and fairly; however, before any such complaint is investigated, it must be submitted in writing and signed. Anonymous complaints will be disregarded.

Whenever a complaint is made directly to the Board as a whole or to a Board member as an individual, it will be referred to the school administration for study and possible solution.

The Superintendent will develop, for approval by the Board, procedures that assure prompt and fair attention to complaints against school personnel. The procedure will require that an employee who is the object of a complaint be informed promptly and be afforded the opportunity to present the facts as he/she sees them.

If it appears necessary, the administration, the person who made the complaint, or the employee involved may request an executive session of the Board for a formal hearing and decision. Statutory restrictions on executive sessions will be observed.

[Adoption date: September 20, 1994]

[Re-adoption date: May 26, 1998]

LEGAL REF.: ORC 121.22

CROSS REF.: BDC, Executive Sessions

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL

The following procedures are to ensure that a citizen's complaint is given respectful attention and that the integrity of the educational program is upheld. "Complaint" in this regulation will be restricted in meaning to that criticism of a particular school employee by a citizen of the school District which includes or implies a demand for action by school authorities. Other comments and suggestions will be referred informally to affected personnel.

1. If a complaint comes first to the person against whom it is directed, he/she will listen and may try to resolve the difficulty by explaining the background and educational purpose involved. If the complaint remains unsatisfied, the employee will refer the complainant to the Superintendent to have his/her views considered further. Whether the complaint terminates with the individual staff member involved or seems likely to go further, the staff member will immediately inform his/her supervisor of the complaint.
2. If a complaint comes first to the Superintendent, he/she should make no commitments, admissions of guilt or threats. If the complaint involves a particular employee, the Superintendent should suggest a conference between the complainant and the employee criticized and should inform that employee immediately of the complaint.

If the complainant has already met with the employee criticized and remains unsatisfied, the Superintendent should invite the complainant to file the complaint in writing and offer to send the appropriate form regarding a school employee's behavior, character or qualifications.

3. If a complaint comes first to any other school employee, that employee will refer the complainant to the person criticized or to the Superintendent and immediately inform both.
4. No further action on the complaint should be taken unless the complainant submits the complaint in writing.
5. When a written complaint form is received, the Superintendent will schedule a conference with the complainant and the person criticized.
6. Should dissatisfaction remain after the above steps have been taken, the matter will be placed on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The decision of the Board will be communicated in writing to all interested persons.

(Approval date: September 20, 1994)

(Re-approval date: May 26, 1998)