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File: KA - SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS GOALS

The Gateway Regional School Committee believes that the public schools belong to the people who created them by consent and support them by taxation, and the support of the people must be based on their understanding of and their participation in the aims and efforts of the schools. Therefore, the committee declares its intent:

1. To keep local citizens regularly and thoroughly informed through all available channels of communication on the policies, programs, problems, and planning of the school system, and to carry out this policy through its own efforts, those of the Superintendent, and such information officers as may be appointed.
2. To solicit the studied counsel of the people through advisory committees selected from the community and appointed to consider problems that vitally affect the future of our children.

File: KBA - SCHOOL/PARENT RELATIONS GOALS

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

While parents are individually responsible for their children, the District provides direct services of education and indirect services of child care 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 correction.

Additionally, parental involvement 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.

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)

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

File: KBE - RELATIONS WITH PARENT/BOOSTER ORGANIZATIONS

To foster relationships with parents/guardians that encourage the home and school to work together to establish and achieve common educational goals for students, the Superintendent and the professional staff will:

1. Consult with and encourage parents/guardians to share in school planning and in setting objectives and evaluating programs.
2. Help parents/guardians understand the educational process and their role in promoting it.
3. Provide for parent/guardian understanding of school operations.
4. Provide opportunities for parents/guardians to be informed of their child's development and the criteria for its measurement.

To accomplish the above and 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 501C3 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 October 2016

File: KCB - COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING

The Gateway Regional 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 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

The Superintendent will have authority to accept gifts and offers of equipment for the schools in the name of the Committee when the gift is of educational value. 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 that would involve changes in school plants or sites will be subject to School Committee approval.

Gifts will automatically become the property of the school district. Any gift of cash, whether or not intended by the donor for a specific purpose, will be accepted by vote of the School Committee, handled as a separate account 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 October 2016

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:37A](#)

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 classified 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 October 2016

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [4:7](#); [66:10](#); [30A:18-25](#)

CROSS REFS.: [BEDG](#), Minutes

[GBJ](#), Personnel Records

[JRA](#), Student Records

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 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 system-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 October 2016

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 his 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 October 2016

LEGAL REFS.: MG.L. [76:5](#)

603 CMR [26.00](#)

File: KE-E - PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Complaint Procedure

- (1) A parent, guardian, or other person or group who believes that M.G.L. c. 76, &5 or 603 CMR 26.00 has been or is being violated, may request a written statement of the reasons therefor from the responsible School Committee through the Superintendent and may submit a copy of such request to the Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity of the Department of Education. If such request is made, a copy of such request shall be sent by the School Committee to the Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity.
- (2) The School Committee shall respond promptly, but no later than 30 days, in writing to the complaining party. The School Committee shall also send a copy of its response to the Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity.
- (3) The Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity shall act as the representative of the Board of Education for the purpose of receiving complaints to pursuant to 603 CMR 26.00.
- (4) The Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity shall, pursuant to a complaint received under 603 CMR 26.09 (1) or on its own initiative, conduct reviews to insure compliance with M.G.L. c. 76 &5 and 603 CMR 26.00. The School Committee and the specific school(s) involved shall cooperate to the fullest extent with such review.
- (5) In the event of non-compliance with M.G.L. c. 76 &5 or 603 CMR 26.00 the Board of Education may take such action as it sees fit, including, but not limited to, withholding of funds or referral of the matter to the Office of the Attorney General for appropriate legal action.

Private Right of Enforcement

Nothing in 603 CMR 26.00 shall abridge or in any way limit the right of a parent, guardian, or person affected to seek enforcement of St. 1971, c.622 in any court or administrative agency of competent jurisdiction.

LEGAL REFS.: 603 CMR 26:09 and 26:10

File: KF - COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Information

This policy contains all the information that needed to reserve school facilities in the Gateway Regional School District. The Gateway Regional School District supports the use of school facilities by community groups (after normal use by students and faculty) and believes that such use enriches the quality of life in the Gateway District for everyone-students and adults alike.

The Gateway District has extraordinary schools and community groups that have used school facilities for meetings and events for many years. The School Committee is pleased to invite you to continue to hold events in our schools. The updated policies, procedures, and regulations represent the efforts of the Gateway School Committee to encourage the use of facilities, bring a greater consistency to the regulations and fee structure associated with facility use, and protect the community's investment in school facilities.

It is the policy of the Gateway Regional School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, mental disability, or physical disability in any of its programs, activities, or employment policies.

Building Use Philosophy

The policy of the Gateway Regional District School Committee is to encourage the use of the schools as community centers within the limits of good management and practical considerations. The Committee feels that it is incumbent upon all users to manage their activities as effectively as possible; first, because of the investment involved and, secondly, because of civic pride.

The use of the Gateway Regional School District buildings will be conducted under the following rules and regulations. These rules, under the provisions of Chapter 71, Section 71, will be operative until further changes are deemed necessary and advisable.

No such use of school facilities, however, shall at any time be allowed to interfere with or limit the regular work or extracurricular activities of the school program, or of classes or activities under the direction of the Gateway Regional School District School Committee.

Additionally, the use of facilities must be consistent with the District's energy conservation and security program.

The Superintendent and/or School Committee reserves the right to modify or waive fees when, in its judgment, circumstances so warrant.

Funds received in connection with the rental of school facilities will be deposited into a separate revolving account. Such funds will be used to pay associated costs of the activity (e.g. custodial fees) and/or make building repairs, replace worn equipment, or offset the costs of energy and custodial supplies.

File: KF-R - RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

Requests for the use of school facilities will be made online using Smart Facilities (found on the district's website (www.grsd.org) at least 14 days prior to the date of use. Any request that does not meet this requirement may be denied due to operational constraints.

- => The use of alcohol, tobacco or any illegal drugs is not permitted in school buildings or on any school property, nor shall a person under the influence of intoxicants be admitted on school property.
- => No gambling of any kind shall take place on school property.*
- => Permission, when granted, does not allow the use of any school supplies, apparatus, telephones or equipment unless permission has been specifically granted.
- => Use of the auditorium requires additional paperwork, and has additional rules & regulations.
- => The use of any kitchen and dining facility for the purpose of preparing and serving a meal (breakfast, luncheon, or dinner) shall require a member of the cafeteria staff and custodial staff be present. Renter shall pay cafeteria and custodial staff fee.
- => Serving of light refreshments. i.e., coffee, tea, cookies, etc. does not require attendance of a cafeteria staff member; however, no refreshments of any kind may be served in the buildings unless specifically approved. If approval is given, serving of refreshments shall be confined to designated areas.
- => The renting organization must assume full responsibility for maintaining order in the building and will arrange for police coverage, when appropriate. All state laws, local ordinances and
- => Sponsoring organization agrees to hold District and the members of the School Committee harmless from any liability or loss of personal injuries, death or property damage, including damage to District property, occasioned by or arising out of sponsoring organization's use of District property. The sponsoring organization must obtain appropriate and adequate insurance naming the District as an additional insured. Renter must provide a Certificate of Insurance to the Business Office prior to the event to be kept on file.
- => A person accepting responsibility for the renting organization and staff member assigned to be on site, shall inspect the designated area prior to and immediately following the activity. The school facilities must be left clean, orderly, and secured. Renter must submit a list of responsible individuals who will be on site.

- => The renting organization is responsible for any damage incurred by its use of the school property. Nothing is to be adhered to walls, floors, windows, ceilings, etc. The renter agrees to reimburse the Gateway Regional School District for any damage, destruction, or loss occurring during the renter's occupancy of the building.
- => The School Committee has adopted a fee schedule which may be revised from time to time. Payment is to be made to the Gateway Regional School District, c/o District Treasurer within 3 weeks following the activity. Funds received from use of facilities will be deposited with the District Treasurer and be used for payment of staff for services rendered in regard to such use and for general repair and maintenance of facilities.
- => The renting organization shall sign a release of liability form.
- => Any applications for use of the facilities that are deemed to be out of the ordinary by the Principal, Superintendent of Schools, or finance officer, may be brought to the Gateway Regional School Committee for approval and special arrangements. The 14-day advance notice shall still apply.
- => The School Committee, through the Superintendent, finance officer, or principal reserve the right to restrict the use of facilities during school vacation periods and other times -when it is deemed necessary and appropriate.
- => The Superintendent, finance officer, and Principal reserve the right to specify the level of service staff, areas of use, and police coverage required for specific events. Only the building area and facilities specifically approved may be used and only within the hours stated.
- => On days when school is closed because of snow or other emergencies, all activities scheduled for that day will be cancelled.
- => The number of attendees at any event shall not exceed the authorized capacity of the facility. There shall be one chaperone for every 20 participants.
- => There are to be no unsupervised children at any event.
- => Custodial staff of the Gateway Regional School District are the only authorized personnel allowed to open and close a building for any event on non-school hours unless specific exemptions have been agreed upon.
- => Parking lots must be used. No parking shall be permitted in any marked emergency areas, doorways, and/or yellow painted areas. These vehicles will be ticketed and/or towed by the local authorities at the owner's expense. Under no circumstance should any vehicle be parked on any part of the grass or athletic fields.
- => **Failure to comply with any or all of these rules and regulations may result in denial of the groups' further use of any Gateway facility. Such denial will be at the discretion of the superintendent or his designee.**

File: KHA - PUBLIC SOLICITATIONS IN THE SCHOOLS

The Gateway Regional 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.: GBEB, 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 district 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 district to promote any product will not be permitted by the Committee.

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

CROSS REF.: JP, Student Gifts and Solicitations

[KHA](#), Public Solicitations in the Schools

File: KI - VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS

The School Committee welcomes parents/guardians 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 district's mission and goals.

Visits by parents/guardians 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. Request for classroom visitations by parents/guardians 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/Security 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/Security office. All visitors must wear a visitor's badge.
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

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

File: KI-R - VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS

Procedures for Facilitating Observations of Students and Programs by Parents and Their Designees

1. Observations must be scheduled in advance and approved by the building Principal.
 - a. A request to observe a child (or a program proposed for the child) must be made at least one week in advance of the proposed observation. The Principal should ensure that the Director of Pupil Services is notified immediately if students on an IEP or 504 plan are involved.
 - b. The observer must be accompanied by a staff member of the Principal and the Director's choosing (such as a school administrator or designee) at all times during the observation.
2. Observations are generally limited to two (2) - four (4) hours, with the start and end times clearly specified to the parent prior to the observation.
 3. If the parent's observer is not the parent, the parent should be provided with a release of information form for signature prior to the observation.
4. The number of observers is limited to one (1) per observation, although a parent may accompany the observer during the observation. If additional observers are necessary, the request will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
5. The observer is not to interfere with the educational environment of the classroom. If the observer is disruptive or inappropriate the observer will be asked to leave immediately and the observation will be discontinued.
 - a. Parents should be informed that their presence might influence the performance of their child, as well as the performance of other children.
 1. The observer should be asked to share a copy of his/her observation notes immediately following the observation in order to ensure the confidentiality of other students.
 2. The observer, accompanied by a member of the school staff, should be given the opportunity to meet with the teacher(s) before or after the class to discuss the student, for a period not to exceed 15 minutes, if feasible.
 3. The accompanying staff member will seat the observer (in consultation with the teacher in an unobtrusive location within the classroom).
 - a. The observer may not have access to confidential information regarding other children, including but not limited to grade books, papers, and IEP's.
 4. The accompanying staff member should take observation notes during the observation period, and note anything non-typical that occurs during the observation. If the observation notes made by a staff member are reduced to a written report, said report shall become part of the student record.

File: KJA - RELATIONS WITH BOOSTER ORGANIZATIONS

The Gateway Regional School Committee recognizes that the endeavors and objectives of booster organizations and similar groups can be a valuable means of stimulating interest in and endorsement of the aims and achievements of our public school system.

Generally, actions initiated by boosters provide the atmosphere and climate to foster and encourage community-school relationships.

Booster-proposed plans, projects, or activities must be evaluated and promoted in light of their stated contribution to the academic as well as the athletic and fine arts programs of the schools. Care must be taken to avoid compromising or diluting the responsibilities and authorities of the School Committee.

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 Gateway Regional 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.