

## 9700 SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

The Board of Education recognizes the contributions of persons and organizations outside the school district may take the form of materials, activities, and awards that tend to serve the interests of the contributor as well as benefit the school district and students. For the purposes of this Policy, “organizations outside the school district” shall be any organization, group, activity, club, association, agency, or individual that is not approved or sponsored by the Board of Education.

The Board reserves the right to review, approve, or reject proposed contributions from organizations outside the school district. Proposed contributions may be rejected by the Board, including but not limited to, proposed contributions that have the primary effect of advancing the name, product, or special interest of a person, corporation, or organization; fail to meet district standards of accuracy and good taste; are of little or no educational value to students; make unreasonable demands upon the time and energies of staff and students or upon the resources of the district; interrupt or interfere with the regular school program; or involve a direct cost to the district.

The approval of the use of any material or the conduct of any activity offered by an organization outside the school district shall not under any circumstances be construed as an endorsement by this Board of any interest, cause, or organization.

The Watchung Borough Board of Education acknowledges that students, staff or the school community are a captive audience for donors and solicitation. Therefore the solicitation of funds or goods must be limited to ensure that the students and staff are protected and school programs are not disrupted. The Superintendent shall approve all fund raising activities. The Superintendent may approve the following activities:

- A. Fund-raising that includes the solicitation and collection of money or goods for charitable organizations, charitable events or other benevolent causes, whereby the funds or goods raised are dispersed outside of the school district; and
- B. School initiated fund raising that includes the solicitation and collection of money by students that shall be dispersed within the district to benefit any school related activity or student group.

The Board of Education recognizes the responsibility to provide funds for educational programs and therefore encourages fund raising that supports and/or supplements the educational program. Any fund directly impacting the district's educational program, shall be reviewed by the Superintendent for appropriateness and presented to the Board of Education for approval.

The Board will not be responsible for the protection of or accounting for such funds and these funds may not be deposited in any district account.



The Board requires that material being sent home with students should relate to school matters or student-related community activities. Except when it pertains to the individual student, any such item must be approved in advance by the Superintendent or his or her designee.

There is no district obligation to distribute or post any community group materials.

The determination of the Superintendent will be viewpoint-neutral in order to provide equal access to "limited public forums" including bulletin boards for notices, tables at back-to-school nights, or hand-outs to students.

Students shall not be used to distribute partisan materials or partisan information pertaining to a school or general election, budget or bond issue, or negotiations. Students shall not be exploited for the benefit of any individual, group, or profit-making organization.

No employee of the school system may furnish lists of names and addresses of students or staff without permission of the Superintendent.

No staff member may distribute any material on school property without prior approval of the Superintendent. Materials will clearly indicate their source. Non-school-related items will be plainly labeled, including an express disclaimer, if applicable, that an activity is "not a school-sponsored activity." Flyers and parental permission slips will be subject to the same review and standards.

All surveys, questionnaires and other similar items requiring student or parent or guardian response shall be reviewed and approved by the Superintendent prior to distribution. In accordance with Federal law, the Superintendent shall solicit written permission from parents or guardians before students participate in surveys or research that requests personal information.

The Board prohibits the distribution of political literature to or through the students of this district in school buildings or on school grounds that promotes, favors, or opposes the candidacy of any candidate for election at any annual school election, or the adoption of any bond issue, proposal, or any public question submitted at any general, municipal or school election. No student shall be requested or directed by any school official or employee to engage in any activity that tends to promote, favor, or oppose any such candidacy, bond issue, proposal or a public question submitted at any election.

The Watchung Borough Board of Education shall protect students from possible exploitation. Requests for student participation in advertisement and/or promotional activities by non-school agencies or organizations require Board approval. The Board may allow:



- A. The schools to cooperate in furthering the work of any non-profit community-wide social-service agency, provided that such cooperation does not restrict or impair the educational program of the schools;
- B. The schools to use films or other educational materials bearing only simple mention of the producing firm, provided such materials can be justified on the basis of their actual educational values;
- C. The Superintendent, at his or her discretion, to announce or authorize to be announced, any lecture, community activity, or film of particular educational merit;
- D. The schools to cooperate with any agency in promoting activities in the general public interest, and which promote the education or other best interests of the students.

No advertising material may be distributed to students without the approval of the Superintendent and/or his or her designee. Advertising materials shall not be permitted when they contribute to the personal gain of an individual, business, or company except as follows:

- A. Educational material used by staff for educational purposes;
- B. Samples, calendars, supply catalogs, and similar, which may be distributed for study, purchasing, or routine classroom use, with administrative approval.

The Board will permit the award of scholarships or prizes to deserving students provided that information regarding students is released only in accordance with Policy No. 8330 on Student Records, the manner of selection of the recipient is approved by the Superintendent or designee and includes consultation with appropriate staff members, and the nature of the prize or award is approved by the Superintendent or designee.

N.J.S.A. 18A:42-4

United States Department of Education - Guidance on Constitutionally Protected Prayer in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools

Adopted: 19 October 2016

