

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

ADOPTED: December 7, 2017

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 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 communicate with parents regarding student progress and achievement, methods to enhance student development, and matters of student conduct.

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.

SOURCE: MASC

REVISED: November 29, 2017

ADOPTED: December 7, 2017

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. The documents should be kept by the building principal or their designee. These records should be kept classified.
- (c) In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal or their designee.
- (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 or their designee 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

REVISED: November 29, 2017

ADOPTED: December 7, 2017

RELATIONS WITH PARENT/BOOSTER ORGANIZATIONS

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

To accomplish the above and to enhance communications between parents 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 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

ADOPTED: December 7, 2017

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 values/needs of the community and to be responsive, through its actions, to those values/needs.

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 consideration 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.

SOURCE: MASC

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

REVISED: November 29, 2017

ADOPTED: December 7, 2017

PUBLIC GIFTS TO THE SCHOOLS

The Superintendent will have authority to accept or reject 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 system. Any gift of cash, in the amount of \$500 or more, will be accepted by vote of the School Committee, handled as a separate account and expended at the discretion of the Committee or their designee, 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

REVISED: November 29, 2017

ADOPTED: December 21, 2017

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. The District reserves the right to charge for time and materials to make the records public.

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).

Each building administrator is authorized to use all means available to keep parents 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

REVISED: November 29, 2017

ADOPTED: December 7, 2017

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 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 system 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. Press releases that are of a system-wide or a sensitive nature or pertain to established Committee policy are the responsibility of the Superintendent.
3. Press 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 in consultation with the Superintendent. All statements made to the press by other staff members of the particular school must be cleared with the Principal and Superintendent.

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 system.

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

REVISED: November 29, 2017

ADOPTED: December 7, 2017

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

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

The Ipswich School 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 School 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 is received by an individual School Committee member, the complainant should be advised of the procedure to be followed. The School Committee member shall then notify the Superintendent of the complaint.

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

If a complaint, which was presented to the full School 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.

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

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

LEGAL REF.: ITA Contract, Article X

Adopted: August 23, 1984

Adopted Revision: June 1, 2000

Reviewed by the School Committee: December 7, 2017

SOURCE: MASC/Ipswich

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

Recognizing that the public schools are created and supported by the citizens of Ipswich, the School Committee, as a service to the community, will encourage the use of public school property by individuals, groups and associations for educational, cultural and civic activities. Access to school property will be provided consistent with the provisions of Chapter 71 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth and any regulations promulgated in connection therewith.

The following have been established by the Ipswich School Committee to serve as guidelines in the use of school facilities.

General Guidelines:

- A. Ipswich student activities will have priority in the use of all buildings and equipment.
- B. Other groups receiving priority considerations will be educational, school related, governmental, recreational, civic, philanthropic and social organizations of the community of Ipswich.
- C. Permission to use school facilities will be granted by the Superintendent or his/her designee upon completion of the appropriate application and building use form.
- D. Granting permission to use school property should not be construed as an endorsement of any individual or group by the Ipswich School Committee.
- E. The Ipswich Public Schools assumes no liability for injury to persons authorized to use the facilities and further assumes no liability for loss or damage to equipment, materials or other individual property.
- F. The Ipswich Public Schools reserves the right to cancel any event within 30 days notice. In addition, cancellation may occur without advance notice due to emergency situations.
- G. No smoking or use of tobacco products are permitted on school property.
- H. No alcoholic beverages are permitted on school property.

Fees and Other Additional Requirements:

- A. No rental fee will be charged for approved use of any school facility by Ipswich Public Schools' groups or clubs.
- B. Other local non-profit groups, as defined in the policy, will be charged a nominal rental fee. In addition, any police, cafeteria, custodial services, or other personnel deemed necessary by school authorities will be paid for by the renting group.

- C. The School Committee/or its designee may consider waiving a rental fee for other types of non-profit, community and/or youth organizations.
- D. All other groups and/or organizations and individuals shall be subject to the attached fee schedule.
- E. Groups renting school facilities may be requested to provide evidence of their non-profit status.
- F. For-profit groups using the facility must provide documentation of insurance coverage at time of application.

Adopted: December 2, 1982

Adopted Revision: May 4, 2000

Adopted Revision: May 16, 2002

SOURCE: Ipswich

REVISED: November 29, 2017

ADOPTED: December 7, 2017

USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES –REGULATIONS

- I. Upon application, the conditions of use which are agreed to by the sponsoring organizations shall include the following:
- A. No smoking or use of tobacco and electronic cigarettes products on school property.
 - B. No alcoholic beverages are permitted on school property.
 - C. A school custodian, administrator, or staff member designated by the superintendent or building Principal must be on duty at all times when the building is in use.
 - D. Proper public safety personnel must be provided by those renting or using facilities for public functions. The School District reserves the right to determine the need for public safety personnel. All expenses will be paid by the renter.
 - E. Use of the kitchen will require supervision by the food services manager or his/her designee.
 - F. No private concessions or private sale of items will be allowed on district property or facilities unless prior written approval is granted.
 - G. The organization using school property shall be responsible for controlling the behavior of persons using the buildings or attending the function by assuring the following:
 - 1. No one is to enter the building until the responsible person is present. That person shall remain until all persons related to or associated with the event have left the premises.
 - 2. Children must be supervised at all times. One responsible adult should be in charge and present at all times for every 10 participants.
- II. The organization using school property shall protect it from damage by assuring the following:
- A. Use must be limited to the specific area granted/approved.
 - B. Approved food and beverage will be served and consumed only in the designated areas.
 - C. Persons using the gymnasium will wear appropriate footwear to be determined by the supervisor in charge.
 - D. No school equipment is to be moved, altered, adapted or adjusted without the approval of the building Principal or his/her designee.
 - E. Nothing shall be pinned, taped, or fastened to the walls, curtains, or floors, etc., without the approval of the building principal or his/her designee.
 - F. All scenery, decorations, fixtures, etc., used in school buildings must conform with the applicable fire safety laws, regulations and procedures and shall be removed from the building immediately unless previous arrangements have been made.

- G. The facility must be left in a clean and orderly condition or there will be a charge for custodial services and or damage/repair.

General Release:

The applicant agrees to abide by all of the aforementioned rules and regulations of the Ipswich Public Schools. As a condition of access to the property, the requesting organization and the undersigned applicant agrees:

- A. To pay for and assume full liability for any and all loss or damages to person or property or claim thereof resulting to or arising from the use of district property or facilities by such organization or individual (and those granted access to the facility thereby) whether from an occurrence at the property or facility itself during such use, before or after such use, going to and from such use, in or about available parking areas or otherwise.
- B. To reimburse or hold harmless the district and the members, agents, and employees thereof from any such loss, damage or claim, including, but not limited to, it or their attorney's fees.
- C. To pay any attorney's fees and costs paid or incurred by the district to enforce any obligation imposed under this paragraph or otherwise in the application.

Adopted: February 17, 1983
Adopted Revision: November 17, 1983
Adopted Revision: May 4, 2000
Adopted Revision: May 16, 2002

SOURCE: Ipswich

REVISED: November 29, 2017

ADOPTED: December 7, 2017

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.

SOURCE: MASC

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

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

ADOPTED: December 7, 2017

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.

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

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

REVISED: November 29, 2017

ADOPTED: December 7, 2017

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 and guests. 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 required that all visitors report to the Principal's office upon entering and leaving the building, sign a guest log showing arrival and departure times and display proper ID. Teachers are encouraged to ask visitors if they have registered in the Principal's office.

CROSS REF.: IHBA, Observations of Special Education Programs

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

REVISED: November 29, 2017

ADOPTED: December 7, 2017

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.

SOURCE: MASC

ADOPTED: December 7, 2017

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.

SOURCE: MASC

ADOPTED: December 7, 2017

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.

SOURCE: MASC