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SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS GOALS

The School Committee believes that Masconomet Regional School 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 through an ongoing dialogue with residents that broadens the community's knowledge of Masconomet, increases engagement and enhances the District's understanding of the community's needs.
- 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 that enable the District's staff and students to express their commitment to the community while enriching student learning.

SCHOOL - PARENT/GUARDIAN RELATIONS

It is the general goal of the Masconomet Regional School District to foster relationships with parent/guardians that encourage cooperation between the home and school in establishing and achieving common educational goals for students.

As appropriate to the age and needs of the student, members of the school staff may consult with parent/guardians or authorized representatives regarding student progress and achievement, methods to enhance student development, and issues of concern.

Additionally, parental/guardian involvement in the schools is encouraged through communication with the school Principal and staff, the parent/teacher organizations, and other opportunities for participation in school activities and Masconomet Regional School District programs.

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)

RELATIONS WITH SCHOOL-COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

The Masconomet Regional School Committee recognizes, appreciates, and supports the need for parents and citizens to be closely involved in the educational process of the Masconomet District. The Committee also recognizes the need for this involvement to be orderly and to operate within clearly defined guidelines.

To foster and enhance communications between parents and school officials and the desire of many parents to support co-curricular activities, the Committee recognizes and encourages the establishment and maintenance of formal parent organizations in support of a given activity. For this purpose, the Committee will officially recognize booster and support organizations according to these requirements and procedures:

A support or booster organization will be officially recognized by the District, upon receipt and acceptance of the group's signed receipt for acceptance of the terms of the Masconomet Student Support Organization (SSO) Guidelines. The Receipt and Understanding form must be filed at least annually and should be refiled immediately upon a change of organization officers.

No SSO will be approved for fund-raising or facilities use unless a current Receipt and Understanding form is on file.

If more than one organization with the same purpose makes such a request, a majority vote open to all parents of children involved in that activity will select the designated organization for that activity.

Per Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972, all support organizations need to recognize that spending on student activities must comply with federal law relating to equity among student genders

Support groups or organizations not complying with the letter and spirit of the Masconomet Student Support Organizations Guidelines will lose recognition and the authority to conduct any activities or business related to Masconomet student activities and programs.

All school/community organizations will operate within the Committee's policies. The Superintendent or designee will establish administrative contacts and assist these groups in developing plans consistent with these policies.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING

The Masconomet Regional School Committee endorses the concept that community participation in the affairs of the schools is essential if the Masconomet Regional School District and the community are to maintain mutual confidence and respect and work together to improve the quality of education for students.

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

The Committee and the staff will consider 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 subjects, but will use their best judgment in arriving at decisions.

CROSS REF.: [Problem-Solver and Communications Quick Reference Guide](#)

PUBLIC GIFTS TO THE SCHOOLS

The School Committee has the authority to accept monetary gifts, gifts of equipment for the schools, or gifts of other tangibles. In the case of gifts from industry, business, or special interest groups, any credit, acknowledgement, or promotion of those gifts to the school must be approved by the School.

Gifts will automatically become the property of the Masconomet Regional School District and be deposited and used as provided by law.

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

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37A

DISTRICT PUBLIC RECORDS

The Masconomet Regional School Committee believes that public records should be readily accessible for examination by the public. Every record in existence, in the custody of the District, and made or received by the District is presumed to be a public record, unless it is subject to an exemption. It is not required that records be created in response to requests.

Any person or entity may request public records orally in person, or in writing, by mail, email, or facsimile to the District's records access officer, whose name and contact information can be found on the District's website and posted at the school administrative offices located at 20 Endicott Road, Boxford, MA. Phone requests will not be considered. The requester should provide a reasonable description of the record(s) sought.

The records access officer will presume that the requester prefers to receive the records in an electronic format, when electronic format is available, unless the requestor specifies otherwise.

The District will comply with all of the fee provisions of 950 CMR 32.07(2), which authorize the District to assess a reasonable fee for production of public records, and permit the District to waive or reduce fees in some instances. The District may delay provision of the records until all assessed fees are paid in full by the requester.

The records access officer will provide a written response to a request, by email and/or mail, within ten business days. The response may include, but not be limited to: (1) an offer to provide some/all of the requested record(s), a fee estimate, if any, for doing so, and a reasonable timeframe in which the records will be produced; and/or (2) a notice of a denial of access to some/all of the records sought, including the basis for the denial, the right to appeal to the Supervisor of Public Records of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in accordance with 950 CMR 32.08(1), and the right to seek judicial review of an unfavorable decision via a civil action in Superior Court.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 4:7; 66:10; 39:23B
 950 CMR 32.00

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 programs, challenges, planning, and activities of the Masconomet Regional 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 issues.

In order that Masconomet Regional 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 spokesperson for the Committee, in particular surrounding legal issues, negotiations, crisis or legal matters, except as this duty is delegated to the Superintendent or other designee. School Committee members may express their individual viewpoints, but may not speak on behalf of the entire School Committee;
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; and
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 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/or Superintendent.

While it is impossible to know how the press will treat news releases, 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 Masconomet Regional School District.

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Although no member of the community will be denied the right to bring his/her complaints to the Masconomet Regional School Committee, he/she 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, school personnel, policy, learning materials or extracurricular activities will be as follows:

1. Teacher (or Coach or Advisor);
2. Department Head (or Director or Athletic Director);
3. Principal
4. Assistant Superintendent; (Where Appropriate)
5. Superintendent
6. School Committee

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

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

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.

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

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 75:6
 603 CMR 26:00

CROSS REF: Problem Solver Guide

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

The Masconomet Regional School Committee grants and encourages use of school facilities to responsible and properly organized groups for the express purpose of pursuing worthwhile educational, recreational, social, and cultural objectives. School facilities may be made available to outside organizations when the facility is not scheduled for a Masconomet activity. Every effort will be made to balance the needs of the various community groups and provide equitable access to the facilities. Fees will be assessed for use by non-Masconomet groups and organizations. The fee must be paid in advance of reserving school facilities.

The Masconomet Regional School Committee has developed a Facility Use Fee Framework to achieve a balance between the Committee's obligation to properly care for and maintain Masconomet's facilities and the Committee's desire to share the facilities with the Tri Town residents who fund them.

The fees underlying this model are based on a review of market rates and past practices. A range of discounts is given based on how closely the organization's use is tied to Masconomet and the Tri Town Community. See the Masconomet Facilities Use Guideline, and related documents at <https://www.masconomet.org/Page/543>

Preference is given in the following order:

1. Masconomet activities
2. Town endorsed group organizations serving Tri-Town students
3. Community-based groups serving adults in Masconomet's member towns
4. Use by individuals in Masconomet's member towns for approved activities
5. Organizations outside of Masconomet's member towns

The Superintendent or designee is authorized to act on requests for the use of school facilities by non-school organizations. All monies are payable in advance according to a schedule of fees established by the administration and approved yearly by the School Committee.

Supervision adequate for maintaining good order must be provided.

Permission to use school facilities does not constitute an endorsement by the School District of any group or organization or any of the positions they represent.

The Masconomet Regional School District's fee schedule is available on-line at <https://www.masconomet.org/Page/543>.

CROSS REFS.: Masconomet Student Support Organizations Guidelines
Use of Facilities Guidelines
Both documents can be found at <https://www.masconomet.org/Page/543>

USE OF DISTRICT ELECTRONIC SIGN AND OTHER OUTDOOR SIGNS

Signage

It is the policy of the Masconomet Regional School Committee that outside signage on the campus shall be limited to designated areas. The electronic sign shall be the only signage placed along the frontage on Endicott Road. Any exception shall be approved by the Superintendent.

LED Sign

The electronic sign shall display only school or official content. School content is defined as an event run by the school or by a partner organization, or event or purpose approved by the School Committee. Official content is defined as information requested by local government authorities relating to local authority or events.

Hours of use of the electronic sign shall be from 6:00 AM until the latter of 9:00 PM or 30 minutes after the cessation of the final official event held on the campus. Hours of use shall not apply to any emergency announcements.

The electronic sign display shall only be monochromatic, non-animated, non-flashing content. Electronic warmth shall be limited to a Kelvin temperature no greater than 3000K. Messages will be displayed for a minimum of 5 seconds before they are changed to minimize neighborhood and driver distraction.

Partner organizations, local government authorities, or other organizations seeking to have content displayed on the electronic sign shall provide the proposed content to the Superintendent or designee for approval. Messages deemed too distracting or densely worded will not be allowed.

Other Signs

All signage on school grounds outside of the school building shall be pre-approved by the Superintendent or designee. A color rendering of the proposed signage, with dimensions, shall be submitted for approval by the Superintendent or designee. All signage not pre-approved will be promptly removed.

CROSS REFS.: KHB - Advertising in Schools
 KFB Community Use of School Facilities

AUTHORIZED USE OF SCHOOL-OWNED EQUIPMENT

The Masconomet Regional School Committee wishes to be of assistance to town departments and community organizations. Permission to use school equipment may be granted by the administration upon request by school and community organizations or town departments. A fee customarily will be assessed for use.

School equipment may be used by staff members when the use is related to their school employment. Students may use the equipment in connection with their studies, extracurricular activities, or community service under the supervision of faculty or staff members.

Proper controls will be established by the Superintendent to assure the user's responsibility for, and return of, all school equipment. At the discretion of the administration, fees may be charged for a trained professional to accompany and operate equipment. Full payment is required in advance of reserving the equipment

STUDENT SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS

Student Support Organizations (SSOs) are composed of parents, community members, and staff members who come together for the purpose of supporting specific school activities for the benefit of students such as athletic teams, musical groups, clubs, etc. SSOs are an important means of connecting parents and other community members with the curricular and co-curricular activities of students. The Masconomet Regional School District (District or MRSD) welcomes and encourages parental interest and participation and understands that it is important to maintain positive and productive working relationships with these important partners. Therefore, best practices have been developed in support of this ideal.

It is important to understand that SSOs are established on behalf of a Masconomet program but are not under the direct supervision or control of the District. SSOs must be appropriately organized under Massachusetts laws governing non-profit organizations and must maintain their own liability insurance.

This status enables the SSO to raise funds to benefit a Masconomet student program in accordance with their bylaws when its business and activities comply with state laws and regulations and with policies of the Masconomet School Committee and with administrative guidelines issued in concordance with these policies.

Likewise, the District has certain legal and other obligatory responsibilities that it must abide by in the conduct of its mission. There is a high level of due diligence required by public schools to provide for the health and safety of students and their privacy and security are at the center of many regulatory requirements, policies, and administrative guidelines. For this reason, policies and procedures are in place to ensure proper checks and balances exist.

REF: Guidelines and Resources for Student Support Organizations:
<https://www.masconomet.org/cms/lib/MA01907648/Centricity/Domain/4/Student%20Support%20Organization%20Guidelines%20%206-20-%2018%20changes%20accepted.pdf>

CROSS REFS.: KHA, Public Solicitations in the Schools

PUBLIC SOLICITATIONS BY THE SCHOOLS

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

1. The Masconomet Regional School District should provide students, parent/guardians, and employees some measure of protection from exploitation by commercial and charitable fund-raising organizations.
2. The Masconomet Regional School District 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.
3. For the purposes of this policy, local PTA and PTO groups and groups representing school district 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
KHB, Advertising in the Schools

ADVERTISING IN THE SCHOOLS

No advertising of commercial products or services will be permitted in school buildings or on school grounds or properties without the permission of the Masconomet Regional School Committee. Each request will be handled on a case-by-case basis without prejudice. Publications of the Masconomet Regional School District will not contain any advertising. However, this will not prevent advertising in student publications that are published by student organizations, subject to administrative 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 Masconomet Regional School District to promote any product will not be permitted by the Committee.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS IN THE SCHOOLS

Neither the facilities, the name, the staff, the students, the Masconomet Regional School District, nor any part thereof shall be employed in any manner for promoting or otherwise advertising the interests of any commercial or other non-school agency or organization except that:

1. The school may 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. The activities and materials must be nonpartisan, nonsectarian and non-controversial in nature;
2. The schools may use films or other educational materials bearing only simple mention of the producing or sponsoring firm;
3. The schools may participate in radio or television programs under acceptable commercial sponsorship when such participation is supplementary or beneficial to the program of the schools;
4. The Superintendent may, at his or her discretion, announce or authorize to be announced any lecture or other community activity of particular educational merit;
5. The schools may, upon approval of the Superintendent, cooperate with any governmental agency in promoting activities in the general public interest which are nonpartisan and non-controversial and which promote the education or other best interests of the pupils; and
6. School publications may accept and publish paid advertising under established procedures.

Promotional literature will not be distributed through the schools except for recognized educational and youth-oriented organizations. The permission of the Superintendent or designee is required before any materials may be distributed or announcements made.

The foregoing policy is for the purpose of insuring maximum instruction time for the teacher and in no way reflects negative attitudes toward many of the worthwhile activities sponsored within the community.

CLASSROOM VISITATIONS

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 district's mission and goals. Visits by parents to several classrooms in a given grade, for the purposes of comparing teaching styles in order to provide a basis for a request for student assignment to a particular teacher, are not permitted. The following guidelines to classroom and school visits should be followed: 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 48 hours in advance to allow for proper arrangements to be made.

1. 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.
2. Under ordinary circumstances classroom observations will be strongly discouraged during the first three weeks of school in September, immediately before or after school vacation periods, during scheduled exams and during the month of June.
3. For security purposes it is requested that all visitors report to the Main 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 Main office.
4. 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.

RELATIONS WITH POLICE AUTHORITIES

Cooperation with law enforcement agencies is essential for the protection of students, for maintaining a safe environment in the Masconomet Regional School District, 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 will be made to develop and maintain a healthy attitude toward law enforcement agencies and personnel to promote better understanding and communication.

RELATIONS WITH THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Any inspection of the building by the Fire Department should be done with the knowledge of the Principal. A written report of any such inspection should be forwarded to the Principal and Superintendent.

The Masconomet Regional School Committee also recognizes the potential enrichment the fire department can make in the educational program and the contributions it can make to school safety and emergency planning.

RELATIONS WITH PLANNING AUTHORITIES

The Masconomet Regional School Committee will participate in local and state planning functions that could directly affect Masconomet Regional School District and its immediate environment.

The Superintendent or designee will keep the School Committee informed of planning matters bearing directly on the operation of Masconomet Regional School District 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 Masconomet Regional School District.

The Superintendent or designee will notify the School Committee anytime the district receives an abutter notification.

RELATIONS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES

It is School Committee policy that the administration seeks to work cooperatively with elected and appointed officials of the local governments to advise on and influence matters in the best interest of students and the District.

The Masconomet Regional 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.

