

PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM

The Board of School Trustees believes that all reasonable means should be employed to keep the public informed on matters of importance regarding Options Charter School policies, finances, programs, personnel, and operations. It is the purpose of this policy to provide the ways and means to accomplish this purpose.

The Director shall coordinate an information program designed to acquaint the citizens of the community and general public with the achievements and the needs of the school. Toward this end, the Board shall provide parents or guardians and other Options Charter Schools residents opportunities for orientation and information regarding State regulations and local school procedures, and will utilize, insofar as practical, all appropriate means and media to achieve this end.

I.C. 20-5-2-2 (17)

Approved 6/17/03

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

Any person or group having a legitimate interest in the operations of the Options Charter School shall have the right to present a request, suggestion, complaint, or concern relating to school personnel, the program, or the operations of the School. At the same time, the Board has a duty to protect its staff from unnecessary harassment. It is the intent of this policy to provide the means for judging each public complaint and concern in a fair and impartial manner and to seek to remedy where appropriate.

It is the desire of the Board to rectify any misunderstandings between the public and the School by direct discussions of an informal nature among the interested parties. Only when such informal meetings fail to resolve the differences shall more formal procedures be employed.

Any requests, suggestions, complaints or grievances reaching the Board, Board members, and the administration shall be referred to the Director for consideration according to the following procedure.

Matters Regarding a Professional Staff Member

A. First Level

If it is a matter specifically directed toward a professional staff member, the matter must be addressed, initially, to the concerned staff member who shall discuss it promptly with the complainant and make every effort to provide a reasonable explanation or take appropriate action within his/her authority and School administrative guidelines.

This level does not apply if the matter involves suspected child abuse, substance abuse, or any other serious allegation which may require investigation or inquiry by school officials prior to approaching the professional staff member.

As appropriate, the staff member shall report the matter and whatever action may have been taken to the Director.

B. Second Level

If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved at the First Level, it shall be discussed by the complainant with the staff member's supervisor and in compliance with provisions of a collective bargaining agreement, if applicable.

C. Third Level

If a satisfactory solution is not achieved by discussions with the supervisor, a written request for a conference shall be submitted to the Director. This request shall include:

1. The specific nature of the complaint and a brief statement of the facts giving rise to it;
2. The respect to which it is alleged that the complainant (or the child of the complainant) has been adversely affected;
3. The action which the complainant wishes taken and the reasons why it is felt that such action be taken.

Should the matter be resolved in conference with the Director, the Board may be advised of the resolution.

D. Fourth Level

Should the matter still not be resolved, or if it is one beyond the Director's authority and requires a Board decision or action, the complainant shall request, in writing, a hearing before the Board.

The Board, after reviewing all material relating to the case, shall grant a hearing before the Board.

After the hearing, the complainant shall be advised, in writing, of the Board's decision, no more than 10 business days following the decision.

Matters Regarding an Administrative Staff Member

Since administrators are considered members of the School's professional staff, the general procedure specified in "Matters Regarding a Professional Staff Member" shall be followed.

Matters Regarding a Support Staff Member

In the case of a support staff member, the concern is to be directed, initially, toward the person's supervisor, and the matter then brought as required to higher levels in the same manner as prescribed for "Matters Regarding a Professional Staff Member."

Matters Regarding Charter School Services or Operations

If the request, suggestion, complaint, or concern relates to a matter of School procedure or operation, it should be addressed, initially, to the program supervisor and then brought, in turn, to higher levels of authority in the matter prescribed in "Matters Regarding a Professional Staff Member."

Matters Regarding the Educational Program

If the request, suggestion, complaint, or concern relates to a matter of School program, it should be addressed, initially, to the principal and then brought, in turn to higher levels of authority in the matter prescribed in "Matters Regarding a Professional Staff Member."

Matters Regarding Challenged Educational Materials

Extreme care shall be taken to select appropriate materials for student and teacher use and all materials shall be selected by highly qualified individuals.

However, should any Options Charter School resident, and/or group, (teacher, student, parent, and/or patron) challenge any educational materials, the following regulations shall apply:

- A. If a complaint is made, procedures shall be as follows:
 1. The School employee receiving the complaint shall be courteous, but make no commitments.
 2. An informal conference shall be scheduled between the complainant and the appropriate level curriculum supervisor.
 3. If no reconciliation appears possible, the complainant and will be invited to file his/her objections in writing on an Options Charter School "Request for Review of Materials". (Only a properly completed and signed application will constitute a formal complaint.)
 4. From the time the complaint is received, and during the review, use of the questioned subject or materials shall be continued in the customary manner.
 5. The Director and appropriate personnel involved shall be informed that a formal complaint has been filed.
 6. Appropriate personnel may review the challenged material.
 7. Within 45 days after receipt of a formal complaint the complainant will be notified of pending actions.
 8. At the discretion of the Director, any questioned subject and/or material they be reviewed by an advisory committee:
 - a. The committee shall consist of 5-7 members appointed by the Director. Committee membership shall represent the teaching staff, the administration staff, and members of the community.
 - b. The committee shall convene and:
 1. examine referred material;
 2. check general acceptance of materials by reading reviews and other sources;

3. weigh the merits and form opinions based on the material as a whole and not on information out of context;
 4. consider the type of subject matter in the course, the maturity of the students, and the uses of the material;
 5. review other information deemed to be appropriate;
 6. interview appropriate staff;
 7. meet to discuss the material and to prepare a written report;
 8. forward a written recommendation to the Director within 90 days of the formation of the committee.
9. After reviewing the committee's recommendation, the Director shall render a decision and shall notify, in writing, the complainant and appropriate school personnel of his/her decision.
10. The complainant may appeal the Director's decision within 30 days:
- a. If appeal is to be made, the complainant must make appeal through the Office of the Director and request permission to appear at a meeting of the Board of School Trustees.
 - b. If no appeal is made within the prescribed time, the Director's decision will stand as originally rendered.

Approved 6/17/03

CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The Board of School Trustees shall establish citizens' advisory committees when there is a definite function to be performed. All appointments to citizens' advisory committees shall be made by the Director. Staff members shall never constitute more than a minority of any such committee. Every effort shall be made to ensure that the makeup of an advisory committee is as truly representative of the community as possible. The chairperson of the advisory committee shall be chosen from among the members. Board members may be ex-officio members of an advisory committee.

The structure and organization of an advisory committee shall be determined by the Director as appropriate to the assignment. Advisory committees shall be encouraged to draw upon a wide variety of resources both inside and outside the school. Each committee shall be encouraged to draw upon the talents of other local residents and to recommend to the Director the official appointment of any such additional members as the committee may desire.

Expenditure of School funds by an advisory committee shall be made only upon the prior approval of the Director. Supplies, equipment, and personnel from the School may be obtained through the appointed staff resource person.

Correspondence between the Board and its committees shall ordinarily be conducted by the Director. The Board shall have the sole power to dissolve any of its advisory committees and shall reserve the right to exercise this power at any time during the life of any committee.

Approved 6/17/03

SCHOOL VISITORS

The Board of School Trustees welcomes and encourages visits to school by parents, other adult residents of the community, and interested educators. But in order for the educational program to continue undisturbed when visitors are present and to prevent the intrusion of disruptive persons into the schools, it is necessary to invoke visitor controls.

The Director has the authority to prohibit the entry of any person to school or to expel any person when there is reason to believe the presence of such person would be contrary to the good order of the School. If such an individual refuses to leave the school grounds or creates a disturbance, the Director is authorized to request from the local law enforcement agency whatever assistance is required to remove the individual.

The Director shall promulgate such administrative guidelines as are necessary for the protection of students and employees of the School from disruptions to the educational program or the efficient conduct of their assigned tasks.

Rules regarding entry of persons other than students, staff, and faculty upon school grounds shall be posted conspicuously at or near the entrances to the building.

Individual Board members who are interested in visiting schools or classrooms on an unofficial basis shall make the appropriate arrangements with the Director. In keeping with Board bylaws, such board member visits shall not be considered to be official unless designated as such by the Board.

The Board member shall be visiting as an interested individual in a similar capacity of any parent or citizen of the community. These visits should not be considered to be inspections nor as supervisory in nature.

**OPTIONS CHARTER SCHOOL
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES**

**RELATIONS
ID# 9150 Page 2 of 2**

If, during a visit to the schools, a Board member observes a situation which causes concern, he/she should discuss the situation first with the Director as soon as convenient or appropriate. Such a report or discussion shall not be considered official dialogue from the Board.

I.C. 20-5-2-2(19)

Approved 6/17/03

PUBLIC ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS

The Board of School Trustees welcomes the attendance of members of the community at public events held by the school, but the Board also acknowledges its duty to maintain order and preserve the facilities of the school during the conduct of such events.

The Board holds the legal authority to bar the attendance of any person whose conduct may constitute a disruption at a school event.

The Board directs that no alcoholic beverage or other controlled substance be possessed, consumed, or distributed nor any betting occur at any function sponsored by the School.

If a student or adult is asked to leave or is removed from a School event, no admission fees shall be refunded.

Guide dogs used by persons requiring this type of assistance shall be permitted in the School and at all school events. The person may be asked to provide evidence of the dog's certification for that purpose.

The Board is aware of the increasing desire of many parents and other members of an audience to use video recorders and other audio/visual devices at school events. The Board authorizes the use of such devices providing their use does not interfere with the conduct of the particular activity, impinge on the enjoyment of the event by other members of the audience or violate copyright or contract provisions related to the performance. The Director shall establish rules and procedures governing the use of non-School audio/visual devices and equipment at any school-sponsored event. Such rules are to be posted or distributed in such a manner that best insures co-operation and compliance in obtaining recordings that do not delay or disrupt the event.

Any person or organization that wishes to film students or school activities which are not public events must receive prior permission from the Director.

**OPTIONS CHARTER SCHOOL
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES**

**RELATIONS
ID# 9160 Page 2 of 2**

For any school related activity at which tickets for admission are sold, the Director shall establish administrative guidelines for the allocation of tickets.

I.C. 20-5-37-1, 20-5-2-2.1

Approved 6/17/03

PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

The Board of School Trustees supports all organizations of parents whose objectives are to promote the educational experiences of the School's students. However, in using the name of the School, or as a group whose identity derives from the School, the parent organization thereby shares responsibility with this Board for the welfare of participating students.

Any new parent organization desiring to use the name or good offices of the School must obtain the approval of the Director as a prerequisite to organizing.

Representatives and members of approved school-related organizations shall in all circumstances be treated by School employees as interested friends of the School and as supporters of public education in the School.

The Board relies upon approved organizations to operate in a manner consistent with public expectations for the School and reserves the right to withdraw sponsorship from organizations which violate the bounds of community taste.

Approved 6/17/03

RELATIONS WITH PARENTS

The Board of School Trustees believes that the education of children is a joint responsibility, one it shares with the parents of the school community. The Board also recognizes that parent involvement is essential for children to achieve success in school. To ensure that the best interests of the child are served in this process, a strong program of communication between home and school must be maintained.

The Board recognizes that the parent is the child's first teacher, and values parent involvement, support and assistance in realizing the School's vision for all its students.

The Board feels that it is the parents who have the ultimate responsibility for their children's in-school behavior, including the behavior of students who have reached the legal age of majority, but are still, for all practical purposes, under parental authority. During school hours, the Board, through its designated administrators, acts in "loco parentis", or in place of the parents.

The Board directs that the following activities may be implemented to encourage parent-school co-operation:

- A. parent-teacher conferences to permit two-way communication between home and school;
- B. open houses at the School to provide parents with the opportunity to see the School facilities, meet the faculty and sample the program on a first-hand basis;
- C. meetings of parents and staff members to explain and discuss matters of general interest with regard to child-school, child-home, and child-school-home relationships;
- D. meetings of staff members and groups of parents of those students having special abilities, disabilities, needs, or problems;
- E. special events of a cultural, ethnic, or topical nature, which are initiated by parent groups, involve the cooperative effort of students and parents, and are of general interest to the schools or community.

For the benefit of children, the Board believes that parents have a responsibility to encourage their child's career in school by:

- A. instilling in the child an appreciation for the value of a sound education and a sense of individual responsibility for learning and for achievement;
- B. maintaining an active interest in the student's daily work and making it possible for the student to complete assigned homework by providing a quiet place and suitable conditions for study;
- C. sharing with teachers their in-depth and long-term knowledge of their children;
- D. teaching the value of good discipline and committing to a partnership with the teacher's effort in promoting an orderly environment;
- E. volunteering for and attending school-related activities, functions and events;
- F. providing teachers, administrators and School Board members with opinions and viewpoints that will lead to better serve in the needs of students;
- G. serving on school-based committees and assisting in the decision-making.

Approved 6/17/03

RELATIONS WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

It is the policy of the Board of School Trustees that strong lines of communication be maintained by the Options Charter School with other school corporations and with institutions and organizations which provide School students with programs, training, or services not available in the Options Charter School.

The Director may enter into such cooperative ventures with institutions or organizations for the purpose of providing programs which correlate to the School's curriculum and help students better accomplish the educational outcomes established by the Board.

Before entering into any arrangements, the Director shall keep the Board advised of any arrangements that would affect the use of School resources or require any additional resources of the School.

In order to maintain cordial and constructive relationships with other public schools, the Director shall maintain liaison with the administration of all such schools from which the Options Charter School draws its enrollment.

Approved 6/17/03

RELATIONS WITH SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Any request from city institutions, charitable organizations, or special interest groups which involves such activities as patriotic functions, contests, exhibits, sales of products to and by students, sending promotional materials home with students, graduation prices, fund-raising, and free teaching materials must be carefully reviewed to ensure that such activities promote student interest without advancing the special interests of any particular group.

It is the policy of the Board of School Trustees that students, staff members, and facilities not be used for advertising or promoting the interests of any non-school agency or organization, public or private, without the approval of the Board or its delegated representatives; and any such approval, granted for whatever cause or group, shall not be construed as an endorsement of said clause or group by this Board.

A. Political/Commercial Interests

All materials or activities proposed by outside political or commercial sources for student or staff use or participation shall be reviewed by the Director on the basis of their educational contribution to part or all of the school program, benefit to students, and good taste, and no such approval shall have the primary purpose of advancing the name, product, or special interest of the proposing group.

The Board shall not permit the use of any type of educational material, program, or equipment in its curricular or extra-curricular activities or at any time during the school day if such materials, programs, or equipment contain partisan political or commercial messages or are designed to persuade students or staff members to acquire a particular product or service offered by an unnamed individual, company, organization, association, or agency. Professional staff may, however, utilize political materials or those provided by special interest groups

in adopted courses of study with the approval of the Director.

The Board shall permit the use of educational materials, programs, and equipment which contains commercial messages providing the content of such messages and the manner of presentation has been approved by the Director and is in compliance with the School's administrative guidelines.

Outside speakers representing commercial organizations will be welcome only when the commercial aspect is limited to naming the organization represented and the subject matter advances the educational aims of the School.

B. Contests/Exhibits

The Board recognizes that contests, exhibits, and the like may benefit individual students or the School as a whole, but participation in such special activities may not:

1. have the primary effect of advancing a special product, group, or company;
2. make unreasonable demands upon the time and energies of the staff or students or upon the resources of the School;
3. involve any direct cost to the School;
4. interrupt the regular school program;
5. cause the participants to leave the School, unless the Board Policy 2340--Field and Other Sponsored Trips has been complied with in all aspects.

C. Distribution/Posting of Literature

No outside organization or staff member or student representing an outside organization may distribute or post literature on that organization's behalf on School property either during or after school hours without the permission and prior review of the Director.

The Director shall establish administrative guidelines which ensure that:

1. principles established in policy 5870 - Student Production Of Goods And Services are used to make a decision regarding materials that students seek to post or distribute;
2. distribution or posting of materials employees wish to distribute on behalf of an employee organization comply with the terms of negotiated, collective-bargained agreements;
3. the School mail system is not used by students or staff for the mass distribution of non-school-related materials;
4. the time, place, and manner of distribution of all non-school-related materials is clearly established and communicated.

D. Solicitation of Funds

Any outside organization or staff member representing an outside organization desiring to solicit funds on school property must receive permission to do so from the Director.

Permission to solicit funds will be granted only to those organizations or individuals whose purposes are consonant with the goals of the Options Charter School and the interest of the community and meet the permission criteria established in the School's administrative guidelines. Solicitation must take place at such times and places and in such a manner as specified in the administrative guidelines.

1. The Board disclaims all responsibility for the protection of, or accounting for, such funds.
2. Solicited funds are not to be deposited in any regular or special accounts of the School.
3. A copy of this policy as well as the relevant administrative guidelines shall be given to any individual granted permission to solicit funds on School property.
4. This policy does not apply to the raising of funds for School-sponsored activities.

E. Surveys and Questionnaires

Neither School-related nor non-school-related organizations shall be allowed to administer a survey or questionnaire to students or staff unless the instrument and the proposed plan is submitted, in advance, to the Director. If approved in accordance with the Director's criteria, a copy of the results and the proposed manner of their communication are to be provided to the Director for review and approval before they are released.

F. Prizes/Scholarships

The Board is appreciative of the generosity of organizations which offer scholarships or prizes to deserving students enrolled at Options Charter School. But, in accepting the offer of such scholarships or prizes, the Board directs that these guidelines be observed:

1. No information, either academic or personal, shall be released from the student's record for the purpose of selecting a scholarship or prize winner without the permission of the student who is eighteen (18), or the parents of a student who is younger in accordance with the Board's policy on student records.
2. The type of scholarship or prize, and any restrictions upon it, shall be approved by the Director.
3. When appropriate, the Director shall form a committee of staff members for the selection of the recipient.

Approved 6/17/03