

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

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Community Relations

Concept, Goals and Roles in Community Relations

The Board of Education recognizes that the community defined broadly as the state and specifically as the area served by the school system, determines the quality of local education. It is imperative that members of the community and the school personnel cooperate in planning, developing policy, implementing programs and evaluating results.

School-community relations are not merely reporting and interpreting. Rather, they are part of a public enterprise in which community members and school personnel play their respective roles in the best interests of the school district.

The Board of Education establishes the following goals for the community relations program:

1. To increase public understanding of the school system.
2. To increase community confidence and interest in the school system.
3. To promote effective dissemination of information concerning school activities.
4. To solicit community opinions about the school system.
5. To encourage the sharing of resources among civic and community organizations for the benefit of the school system.

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

Public Information Program

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent to keep the citizens informed of the activities of the school. It is also his/her responsibility to remain sensitive to the interests and aspirations of the community. The Superintendent from time to time will initiate efforts to assess these interests.

The Bethany Board of Education, through the Superintendent, will seek to keep the public informed as to the needs and activities of the school through the following actions:

1. By encouraging the school administration to cooperate with the various news media in releasing information.
2. Through issuing special publications about the district to parents and the public from time to time.
3. By encouraging school personnel to meet with organizations and groups in the community to explain school programs and to seek community views and opinions.

Public's Right to Know

In today's world of increasing news emphasis on education, the people have become more aware of public education and more interested in it.

The Board supports the right of the people to know about the programs and services of their schools and will make every effort to disseminate such information.

It is the desire of the Board that the citizens of the district be fully informed of Board policies and actions. The exception to this is deliberations involving individual employees or students or school business matters of a confidential nature.

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

Communication with the Public

Parent Involvement

In order to assure collaborative relationships between students' families and the Board of Education and district personnel, and to enable parents(s)/guardian(s) to become active partners in education, the Superintendent shall develop administrative procedures to:

1. Keep parents(s)/guardian(s) thoroughly informed about their child's school and education.
2. Encourage involvement in their child's school and education.
3. Establish effective two-way communication between all families and the Board of Education district personnel.
4. Seek input from parent(s)/guardian(s) on significant school-related issues.
5. Inform parent(s)/guardian(s) on how they can assist their children's learning.

The Superintendent shall periodically report to the Board on the implementation of this policy.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-221 Boards of Education to prescribe rules, policies and procedures as amended by PA 97-290, An Act Enhancing Educational Choices and Opportunities.

Policy adopted: December 9, 1998

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

Communication with the Public

Parent Involvement

The Principal shall advocate effective, comprehensive family involvement in education which will promote parent(s)/guardian(s) becoming active partners in education. The Principal shall provide documentation to the Superintendent on parental involvement programs and efforts in the building.

The following are examples of parental involvement programs for the Principal to consider. This list will be updated as new ideas for involving parents are generated.

- 1. Keep parent(s)/guardian(s) thoroughly informed about their child's school and education.**
 - Develop and distribute a comprehensive student handbook
 - Distribute information to parent(s)/guardian(s) on their school visitation rights
 - Open houses
 - Parent-teacher conferences
 - Home visits
 - Progress reporting and report cards
 - Newsletter
- 2. Encourage involvement in their child's school and education.**
 - Support and encourage parent volunteer opportunities
 - Work with the PTO to promote parent volunteer opportunities
- 3. Establish effective two-way communication between all parent(s)/guardian(s) and the Board of Education and district personnel.**
 - Work with PTO leadership to ensure parental input
 - Support personnel in their efforts to collaborate effectively with families with diverse backgrounds, including backgrounds that might impede parental participation (e.g., illiteracy or language difficulty)
- 4. Seek the advice of parent(s)/guardian(s) on school governance issues and methods to fulfill the district's educational mission.**
 - Work with the PTO leadership to ensure parental input
 - Work with members of the community to solicit input to identify, consider and discuss educational issues

Community Relations

Communication with the Public

Parent Involvement (continued)

5. Inform parent(s)/guardian(s) on how they can assist their children's learning.

- Provide information to parent(s)/guardian(s) on how they can help children learn, including activities that are related to classroom activities
- Provide programs on how to establish a home environment which supports learning and appropriate behavior
- Homework Hotline

Community Relations

School Directory of Personnel

It is the policy of the Bethany Board of Education to protect students, parents and Board employees from harassment and undue influence by groups and agencies whose objective is to use the school directory of personnel for private gain. It is recognized that the best interests of the school system and the community are served by mutual cooperation and understanding with groups and organizations having common goals.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

1-19b Access to public records. Exempt records.

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

School Directory of Personnel

The personnel directory may be made available to the following:

1. Parent-Teacher Association/Parent Teacher Organization
2. Citizens' groups studying education with the approval of the Board of Education, or the Superintendent of Schools acting as agent of the Board.
3. Such other individuals or groups who may have the express approval of the Superintendent for a recognized and valid purpose.

The Bethany School District may develop a personnel directory subject to the following conditions:

1. The school directory of employed personnel will be distributed only to those governmental agencies and other school-related parties, which have been authorized by the superintendent.
2. Under no circumstances will the school directory of employed personnel be distributed for political or commercial use.
3. Names or addresses of students enrolled in this school system may not be disclosed, except as provided by law, without the consent of parent or guardian of each such student who is younger than eighteen years of age.

(cf. 1340 – Access to School Procedures and Materials)

(cf. 4112.6 – Personnel Records)

(cf. 5125/5125.1 – Student Records; Confidentiality)

(cf. 9330 – Board/School System Records)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

1 – 19 Access to public records. Exempt records [subsection b(11)]

10-221b Boards of education to establish written policies re treatment of recruiters (re-directory information)

Regulation approved: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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Community Relations**News Media Relations**

The Board of Education believes that one of its important responsibilities is to keep the public informed about operations and activities of the schools. Therefore, the Board of Education invites and welcomes the active participation of the media such as the public press, radio and TV.

Information concerning any phase of the schools' operation may be made available by the Superintendent to the press.

The Superintendent will plan for periodic releases to the press and other community media, which will provide information to the community concerning its schools and various phases of the school program.

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

Coverage of Board of Education Meetings

Agendas of Bethany Board of Education meetings will be made available to newspapers for publication in advance of regular meetings. Items may be added to the published agenda by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at the meeting.

(cf. 9324 – Advance Delivery of Meeting Materials)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

1-21 Meetings of government agencies to be public. Recording of votes. Schedule and agenda of meetings to be filed. Notice of special meetings. Executive sessions.

1-21c Mailing of notice of meetings to persons filing written request.

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

School News Releases

The Superintendent of Schools is responsible for all news releases relative to the school and may delegate this authority to the Principal of Bethany Community School to release routine and non-controversial material.

All matters representing the official position of the Bethany School System prepared for publication by any of its employees shall be approved by the Superintendent prior to release to the public press.

Any news releases at the Board of Education level, or public statements, are to come from the chairperson of the Board of Education, the Board as a whole, or by member(s) of the Board, providing the majority of the Board has gone on record as approving the release of the public statement. This refers to all media.

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

News Media Relations

Recognizing that an open relationship should exist between school administrators who are charged with the responsibility of conducting public business, and the news media who has the responsibility of reporting the actions of government to citizens, each administrator is authorized to provide to the members of the press information, which is a matter of record, and public information.

Members of the press, television and radio stations will be directed by the Superintendent of Schools to the administrator directly responsible for the information they seek. Information released to the media shall be that which is public information as covered by statute. It is recognized that there is information of a confidential nature, which shall not be released, such information concerning personnel, grievances, negotiations, court actions and special placement of students.

Information provided to the media should be factual and should not involve speculation or assumptions.

Administrators may release any information, which has been previously generated. This does not include, however, generating new information at the request of a member of the press.

All communications by school officials of Bethany Community School to the press shall be "on the record." Press releases are to indicate the administrator's name and title.

The Principal will be the official spokesperson for the activities and instructional program of Bethany Community School.

Community Relations

News Conferences and Interviews

Media Access to Students

The following regulations pertain to access of the media to students:

1. Release of names and addresses of students is subject to the Freedom of Information Act. For students under the age of 18, disclosure of names and addresses may occur only with the written consent of parent(s) or guardian and the approval of the administrator in charge.
2. Photographing or filming of students in special education programs may be authorized by the administrator in charge only with the written consent of parents or guardian.
3. Photographing or filming of events in the school may be authorized by the administrator in charge with the understanding that the photographing or filming does not interfere with the operation of the school as a safe and orderly environment for learning.
4. Interviewing of students by media representatives in grades K to 6 regarding regular programs shall be authorized by the administrator in charge. When possible prior notification shall be given to the parents. A parent who objects to his/her child being interviewed will give written notification to the principal.
5. With regard to extra curricular activities, athletic teams, or contests, and in absence of an administrator, the supervisor or coach shall have the duties and responsibilities as listed in number 1 through 5 of the administrator in charge.

(cf. 5145.11 – Student Interviews)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

1-19 Access to public records. Exempt records [subsection b(11)].

Regulation approved: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

Board of Education Meetings

The regular and special meetings of the Bethany Board of Education are open to the public and representatives of the press except that a part of any meeting may be designated an executive session as provided by law. (See 9322 for details)

The Board of Education welcomes participation of interested organizations and individuals. Advance announcement of all regular and special meetings of the Board of Education is made through the posting of the agenda and notices to newspapers and directly to citizens and community and professional organizations that specifically request such notification. A reasonable charge may be made for those persons or organizations requesting advance announcements of meetings and agenda backup materials.

The Board of Education shall provide for public hearings upon receipt of a petition signed by one percent of the voters or fifty voters, whichever is greater.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

- 1 – 21 Meetings of government agencies to be public.
- 1 – 21a Broadcasting or photographing meetings.
- 1 – 21b Smoking in public meetings in rooms of public building prohibited.
- 1 – 21c Mailing of notice of meetings to persons filing written request. Fees.
- 1 – 21f Regular Meetings to be held pursuant to regulation, ordinance or resolution.
- 1 – 21h Conduct of meetings.
- 1 – 21i Denial of access to public records or meetings.
- 10 – 238 Petition for hearing by board of education.

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

Public Participation at Board Meetings

Provisions for permitting any individual to address the Bethany Board of Education concerning any subject that lies within its jurisdiction shall be as follows:

1. The person wishing to address the Board shall register with the Bethany Board of Education clerk prior to the start of the regular meeting and people will be called by the Board in the order that they are registered. Those who arrive after the start of the meeting may register when they arrive.
2. Five minutes may be allotted to each speaker and a maximum of forty-five (45) minutes to each subject matter. This time may be extended by a majority vote of the Board.
3. No boisterous conduct shall be permitted at any Board of Education meeting. Persistence in boisterous conduct shall be grounds for summary termination by the chairperson of that person's privilege of address. If necessary, the Board chairperson may clear the room so that the Board may continue the meeting. Only matters appearing on the agenda may be considered in such a session. Duly accredited representatives of the press or other news media, except those participating in the disturbance, shall be allowed to attend such session.
4. No oral presentation shall include charges or complaints against any employee of the Board of Education, regardless of whether or not the employee is identified in the presentation by name or by another reference, which tends to identify. All charges or complaints against employees shall be submitted to the Bethany Board of Education under provisions of Board of Education policy as set forth in policy 1312 of this manual.
5. If a major topic is to be discussed, the Board may elect to hold a special Board meeting so all can talk and the limits would be removed.

Board Chairperson's Responsibility

The Board chairperson shall inform the public when the public participation section of the agenda is reached. The chairperson shall remind the public of the following:

1. This is the only regular time a member of the public may address the Board.
2. The press is present and any statements made may be quoted in the newspaper.

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Public Participation at Board Meetings

Board Chairperson's Responsibility (continued)

3. That Sensitive matters involving charges or complaints against personnel or the school shall be handled in executive session unless requested otherwise by the person charged.
4. Complaints against personnel are to be submitted in writing and signed by the complainant prior to any oral presentation.

The Board chairperson is responsible for ensuring that the complaints have been processed through the appropriate channels as set forth in policy 1312 of this manual.

(cf. 1312 – Public Complaints)

(cf. 9020 – Board-Related Responsibilities)

(cf. 9121 – Chairperson)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

1 – 21 Meetings of government agencies to be public.

Community Relations

Use of Students

Printed materials may be distributed to parents by school children as an inexpensive means of mass communications. At the same time this procedure can prove objectionable to parents and the schools, if overdone.

To provide the most effective use of this technique without exploitation of school staff or students; the superintendent or his/her designee may approve such distribution providing:

1. The materials relate to school, community, local recreational or civic activities.
2. The materials do not relate to any religious belief or activity, or promote private gain, or political position.
3. The materials do not promote any political party or candidate.

Budget / Referendum Material

Information general in nature concerning the school board budget or referendum may be disseminated to the students. This information may not contain statements, or be written in a manner, which advocates a position on the budget or on a referendum question.

Community Relations

Responsibilities of School Personnel

The Principal reserves the right to review all correspondence between teachers and parents before it is sent home.

Community Relations**Recognition of Citizens, Staff Members, Board of Education Members**

The Bethany Board of Education is committed to recognize and to honor citizens, students, staff, and groups whose distinguished or exceptional achievements benefit the school system. Persons so honored shall include retiring staff and Board members who have contributed to the school system over an extended period of time. The Board may extend recognition at Board meetings through letters of recognition, or other methods.

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

School – Community Associations

The Board of Education considers school-community groups such as Parent-Teacher Associations or Parent-Teacher Organizations to be integral parts of the school community, which can promote better educational programs.

The Board of Education encourages active support of and cooperation with school-community associations or organizations by teachers and other employees.

Among the many services, which such associations can offer, the Board of Education especially endorses support for parent/citizen volunteer programs in our schools.

Community Relations

School Volunteers

The Bethany Board of Education recognizes that volunteers can make many valuable contributions to schools. The Board endorses a program encouraging community residents to take an active role in improving schools and to become school volunteers in the Bethany school district. The Board of Education promotes the use of volunteers to: (1) increase students' educational attainment, (2) provide enrichment experiences for students, (3) increase the effective utilization of staff time and skills, (4) give more individual attention to students, and (5) promote greater community involvement.

The superintendent, or designee, shall establish and implement procedures and suitable safeguards for securing, screening, and coordinating the activities of resource persons and volunteers. (refer to Bethany Volunteer Handbook) No person who is a "sex offender," as defined by Public Act 98-111, An Act Concerning the Registration of Sexual Offenders shall be used.

The school administration shall maintain a list of all regular volunteers in the district (chaperones on field trips, aides, library and classroom volunteers, mentors, lunch room / play ground supervisors, special event chaperones, etc.).

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-4g Programs to encourage participation in the educational process

10-235 Indemnification of teachers, board members, employees and certain volunteers and students in damage suits; expenses of litigation.

P.A. 97-290 An Act Enhancing Educational Choices and Opportunities

P.A. 98-111 An Act Concerning The Registration of Sexual Offenders

Policy adopted: November 17, 1998
Policy revised: November 10, 2004

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

Citizens' Advisory Committees

The Board of Education endorses advisory committees for various district programs and activities. The Board may, when occasion warrants it, appoint committees of citizens to advise it on matters where specialized training and experience are needed. Specific topics for study shall be assigned in writing to each committee. When it establishes a committee, the Board shall provide guidelines for membership and delineate its responsibilities and authority and meeting requirements pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act.

Citizens' Advisory Committees should report to the Board of Education with its findings upon completing its assignment. At that time, the Board of Education will decide whether a further study by this Board is necessary. IF not the Citizens' Advisory Committee will stand at rest until the October Board meeting when the committee shall be dissolved by the board. In addition, at the October Board meeting each year, the Board shall review existing advisory committees, membership, and committee goals for the year.

All committees created by the Board of Education shall follow the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act as required by Statute.

(cf. 1312 – Public Complaints)

(cf. 5145.2 – Freedom of Speech/Expression)

(cf. 6144 – Controversial Issues)

(cf. 6151 – Equipment, Books, Materials: Provision/Selection)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

1 – 7 through 1-21K Freedom of Information Act

PA 93 – 195 An act clarifying the meaning of committee under the Freedom of Information Act.

Academic Freedom Policy (adopted by Connecticut State Board of Education, 9/9/81)

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991

Policy revised: October 4, 1993

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations**Citizens Assistance to School Personnel**

The principal, under the direction of the Superintendent, shall have supervisory control over all aspects of the use of citizens for assistance in the work of the school. The Superintendent shall inform the Board of any such assistance and shall report names of persons involved. He/she shall report periodically any changes in these arrangements.

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

Visits to the Schools

The Board of Education and staff school district welcome and strongly encourage members of the community and other interested persons to visit the schools.

The Superintendent shall establish regulations which:

1. Encourage school visitations.
2. Provide for appropriate hospitality for visitors.
3. Channel expressions of approval and constructive criticism to the Board of Education.
4. Ensure that public visits will not hinder the educational program.
5. Require all visitors to register in the Principal's office upon arrival at the school.

Although Board of Education members are encouraged to visit schools independently, they have authority only in regularly called meetings of the Board of Education, or when delegated specific tasks by specific Board of Education action.

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations**Loitering or Causing Disturbance**

All visitors must register in the office of the school principal. Staff members should be alert to the possibility of unauthorized visitors and promptly report any concerns to the principal. Any person shall be considered loitering on school grounds when he/she loiters or remains in or about a school building or grounds, without any reason or relationship involving custody of or responsibility for a student or any other license or privilege to be there.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

53a – 185 Loitering in or about school grounds; Class C misdemeanor.

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

Staff Participation in Community Activities

The Board of Education encourages staff members to become active participants in the activities of the community in which they work. This involvement provides a community with better understanding of educational programs and gains support of better education for every student. Such activity, however, is not required for initial or continued employment or advancement.

Community Relations

Political Activities of School Employees

School employees are encouraged to assume full responsibilities as citizens of a democracy.

Performance of Civic Duties by Employees

Employees should perform their civic duties commensurate with democratic ideals.

These duties may include:

1. Voting and taking an interesting current social, political, and economic issues.
2. Exercising democratic rights and responsibilities shared with other citizens.
These rights and privileges may include:
 - A. Electioneering for candidates.
 - B. Accepting positions in political campaigns.
 - C. Holding an office in a political party organization.
 - D. Serving as a delegate to political party conventions.

Individual Responsibility in Participating in Political Functions

Employees engaging in political activities shall:

1. Realize their obligation to their work as educators
2. Help others understand that employee opinions and actions are expressed as individuals and not as representatives of the educational institution.
3. Engage in no political activities on school premises during school hours.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

7 – 421 Political activities of classified municipal employees

7 – 421a Inconsistent statutory or charter provisions

7 – 241b Limitation on restrictions of political rights of municipal employees.

10-156e Employees of boards of education permitted to serve as elected officials; exception.

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

Public Complaints

Board members shall refer persons making complaints about the schools to the most immediate level at which the problems can be resolved and, as may be necessary, through lines of organization to the Superintendent. Parents should be made aware of the proper channels of communication and appeal. The decision of the principal regarding a student must include notice to the parents of the next step of appeal. Any appeal from the decision of the Superintendent to the Board shall be in writing and signed.

Challenged Material

A procedure for processing and responding to criticism of approved materials shall be established and followed. This procedure shall include a formal, signed complaint of standard format and an appointed committee to re-evaluate the material in questions.

In all cases, the decision to retain or reject shall be made on the basis of whether the material represents life in its true proportions, whether circumstances are realistically dealt with, and whether the material has literary or social value. Factual material shall be included in all instructional material collections.

(cf. 1220 - Citizens' Advisory Committees)
 (cf. 5145.2 – Freedom of Speech / Expression)
 (cf. 6144 – Controversial Issues)
 (cf. 6161 – Equipment, Books, Materials: Provision / Selection)

Legal Reference: *Keyishian v. Board of Regents* 385 U.S. 589, 603 (1967)

President's Council, District 25 v. Community School Board No. 25
 (457 F. 2d 289 (1972), cert. Denied 409 U.S. 998 (1972))

Minarcini v. Strongsville City School District, 541 F. 2d 577 (6th Cir. 1976).

Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District No. 26 v. Pico, 457 U. S. 853 (1982).

Academic Freedom Policy (adopted by Connecticut State Board of Education, 9/9/81)

Connecticut General Statutes 10-238. Petition for hearing by board of education.

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

Public Complaints

The Superintendent, the person who made the complaint, or the employee involved may request an executive session of the Board to discuss the complaint. Generally, all parties involved, including the school administration, shall be asked to attend such a meeting for the purpose of presenting additional facts, making further explanations, and clarifying the issues.

The Board may request a disinterested third party to act as a moderator to help it reach a mutually satisfactory solution. After the Board's decision, the usual appeal route pertains.

Any parent, guardian, or other person who insults or abuses any teacher or other employee on school property or in the presence of students may be prosecuted by the district under the provisions of law.

Request for Re-Evaluation of Instructional Materials

The following procedure shall be followed whenever there is a request for the evaluation of instructional material other than textbooks:

1. The Superintendent shall establish an ad hoc review committee broadly representative of:
 - A. Teachers competent in the area of the content covered by the material.
 - B. Administrators, directors, and supervisors appropriate to the level and / or subject for which material is used.
 - C. A media specialist shall serve on the review committee.
2. Objections to materials and requests for re-evaluation must be presented in writing on the proper form. Request for Re-Evaluation of Materials forms are available in the office of the Superintendent
3. Initial action on a written request on the proper form shall be taken no later than fifteen school days after receipt of the request.
4. A written report from the review committee shall be submitted to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall then communicate his or her decision to the person requesting the re-evaluation.
5. Should the decision of the Superintendent not satisfy the person requesting the re-evaluation, the Board of Education may hold a special hearing to review the Superintendent's decision.

Community Relations

Public Performances by Students

The Board of Education recognizes the educational value from student participation in civic and community affairs. Teachers are encouraged to prepare students for public performances, which contribute to student education when they don't interfere unduly with other educational activities or programs.

School groups may, as authorized by Superintendent's regulations, participate in local public events.

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

Public Performances by Students

School groups may participate in:

1. Events sponsored by the schools. Educational events in which the school serves as host shall have priority in scheduling appearances.
2. Community functions in the interests of the school, such as those originated by a PTA/O or other parent groups.
3. Non-commercial civic occasions of local, state or national interest.
4. Events that are primarily patriotic in nature, such as Veteran's Day.
5. Charity benefit activities provided such activity has been specifically approved in advance by the superintendent.
6. Programs sponsored by established public agencies, or programs sponsored jointly by the school system and mass communication media where the time or space given to the programs are of a public nature.

School groups may not participate in events that fall into any of the following classifications:

1. Events for private gain or for advertising of commercial projects or products. A school name, the names of school-sponsored groups or school equipment shall not be exploited in commercial events.
2. Events for furtherance of any politically partisan interest. In questionable cases the matter shall be referred to the Board of Education for its review.
3. Events primarily for furtherance of any religious concern, whether sectarian or non-sectarian in nature.
4. Events which unduly interfere with regular school programs, or that require excessive time for rehearsal or preparation.

Community Relations

Contests for Students

The evaluation and scheduling of and consent to participate in district-wide contests shall first be approved by the principal. Final approval of the contest must be given by the superintendent.

Community Relations**Soliciting Funds from and by Students**

School personnel shall educate students about services performed by humanitarian agencies and shall encourage student participation in financial support of agencies as a social and community project, but fund-raising shall not be conducted by non-school agencies or for non-school activities among students except as provided by law and approved by the Board of Education.

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

Use of School Facilities

Since school buildings and grounds are public property, the Board of Education may make them available for purposes other than education when they are not in use for school purposes.

School facilities may be rented only when arrangements have been made in advance with the office of the Superintendent. Written permission must be secured for each facility used.

All applications shall be signed by a responsible official of the renting agency, which must abide by all the provisions of the application. Said agency shall be responsible for the damages which occur to the building, its equipment or its furnishing and shall make immediate and complete restoration for said damages.

It shall be the responsibility of the renting agency to provide, upon request, a certificate of insurance.

The Superintendent shall grant the use of school facilities for activities of an educational, cultural, civic, social, recreational, governmental or general political nature which are sponsored by responsible local persons, organizations, agencies, or institutions, as permitted under law.

In order to maximize student learning and community use of facilities, the Superintendent, in cooperation with representatives of the public library and recreation department of the community shall on a regular basis conduct an instructional time and facility usage assessment.

The Superintendent's office may refuse to rent the facilities to any agency, which has misused the privilege on any previous occasion. The Superintendent will notify the Board of any requests for use of the facilities. The Board may deny or cancel any approval of an application, which appears inimical to the best interests of the school.

Types of Activities which will not be Permitted

1. Activities advocating the overthrow of the United States or the state of Connecticut, or of local governmental agencies.
2. Any activity that may violate the canons of good morals, manners or taste according to the standards of the community.
3. Any purpose in conflict with the mission or goals of the school district or school activities.
4. Commercial advertising.

Community Relations

Use of School Facilities

Types of Activities Which Will Not be Permitted (continued)

5. Fund-raising campaigns except as permitted by Board of Education policy or by special action of the Board of Education or its designated agent.
6. Any activity, which may be injurious to the buildings, grounds or equipment of the schools.
7. Activities which are discriminatory in nature.

Consistent with this policy the Superintendent shall approve and schedule the use of school facilities by an individual or group and shall develop guidelines for community use of the schools.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-239 Use of school facilities for other purposes.

PA 97-290 An Act Enhancing Educational Choices and Opportunities

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991
Policy revised: December 9, 1998

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

Smoking in School Facilities

The following rules shall apply to all facilities operated by the Board of Education. As used here, “smoke” or “smoking” shall mean the lighting or carrying of a lighted cigarette, cigar, pipe or similar device.

1. No person shall smoke in any room of any school district facility.
2. Students are not permitted to smoke in any school district facility or on school grounds at any time, nor while under school supervision away from the school facilities, nor while on a school bus.

(cf. 1120 – Board of Education Meetings)

(cf. 5131.1 – Bus Conduct)

(cf. 5131.6 – Drugs, Tobacco, Alcohol)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

21a – 242 Schedules of controlled substances.

1 – 21b Smoking prohibited in certain places.

Community Relations

Access to School Procedures and Materials

Ideas, operating procedures, records and publications developed in or for the school district may be made available to outside non-profit or profit organizations for use or distribution when such use or distribution will reflect favorably upon the school district and the community. No outside organization shall be granted exclusive access to or control over the material made available to it.

Disclosure of records containing privileged or confidential information about staff or students will be restricted to the extent permitted by law in the interests of the person or persons involved.

A reasonable charge may be made for copying available records.

(cf. 5125 – Student Records)

(cf. 4112.6 – Certified Personnel Records)

(cf. 4212.6 – Non-certified Personnel Records)

Legal reference: Connecticut General Statutes

- 1-15 Application for copies of public records. Certified copies. Fees.
- 1-16 Photographic reproduction of documents.
- 1-19 Access to public records. Exempt records.
- 1-19a Access to computer-stored records.
- 1-20a Public employment contracts as public record.
- 1-21 Meetings of government agencies to be public.
- 1-21a Recording, broadcasting or photographing meetings.
- 1-21i Denial of access to public records or meetings. Notice. Appeals.
- 1-21k Penalties.

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations**Law Enforcement Agencies**

Because of the many support services which local law enforcement agencies provide to the schools, staff and students, the Board of Education shall maintain close relationships with those agencies consistent with protecting legal rights of staff and students.

The Superintendent shall establish lines of communication with local law enforcement agencies for the security of school facilities, safety of students and staff, and for better education of students concerning law enforcement agencies.

Community Relations

Fiscal Authority

The Bethany Board of Education shall work with appropriate fiscal authorities throughout the budgeting process to develop a clearer understanding of Bethany Community School and student needs to improve education.

The Board of Education will meet and confer with the fiscal authority prior to collective bargaining, and further, it will cooperate with the fiscal authority in developing a sound fiscal base for school operation.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-153d Meeting between board of education and fiscal authority required. Duty to negotiate.

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

Relations between Area, State, Regional & National Associations and the Schools

Membership in recognized associations will be maintained by the schools for several reasons, including:

1. Benefits to staff and Board of Education from professional meetings, conferences, clinics and conventions.
2. Access to the communication media of such associations, such as newsletters, periodicals and advisory services.
3. Representation in legislative and other actions affecting education generally and our school district in particular.

The Superintendent of Schools shall budget funds for memberships approved by the Board and for the costs of appropriate participation by Board members, administration and staff in the activities of such associations.

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut

Community Relations

Otherwise Lawful Possession of Firearms on School Property

Notwithstanding the otherwise lawful possession of firearms defined in Section 53a-3 in or on the real property comprising school district property by persons who hold a valid state or local permit to carry a firearm and would otherwise legally traverse school property with an unloaded firearm for the purpose of gaining access to public or private lands open to hunting or for other lawful purposes, such entry onto school property by these persons for these purposes is prohibited by the Board of Education.

The issuance of a permit to carry a pistol or revolver does not authorize the possession or carrying of a pistol or revolver on school district property. The Board of Education prohibits such possession on school district property.

Students are prohibited by the Board of Education from possessing firearms for any reason, whether otherwise lawful or not, in or on the real property comprising the school district or at a school sponsored activity as defined in subsection (h) of section 10-233a.

(cf. 5114 – Suspension / Expulsion / Exclusion / Removal)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

29-28 Permit for sale at retail of pistol or revolver. Permit to carry a pistol or revolver. Confidentiality of name and address of permit holder. (as amended by PA 98-129)

29-33 Sale, delivery or transfer of pistol and revolvers. Documentation requirements. Waiting period. Exempted transactions. Penalty. L(as amended by PA 98-129)

52a-3 Definitions.

Policy adopted: September 9, 1998

BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethany, Connecticut