

Tularosa Municipal Schools
Board Policy Manual

SECTION VI

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

6.1 PUBLIC RELATIONS

The understanding and support of the community are necessary to the smooth operation of a school district. This does not mean that all problems in communications will be eliminated even when all media problems are being used. The Board of Education recognizes that problems will arise, and that decisions resulting therefrom cannot possibly be pleasing to everyone. However, it shall be the policy of the Board to encourage maximum effort in keeping the public informed as to the policies, problems, progress, and plans inherent in the general operation of the schools within the district.

To this end, it shall be the practice of the Board to utilize the advice and assistance of the school staff and interested individuals and groups within the community in arriving at solutions which will best serve the development of a superior educational program.

However, being the official governing body of the school district, the Board of education shall in no manner seek to escape its responsibility in exercising its full legal authority in the rendering of final decisions on matters of school district policy.

A. Visitors

Visitors shall be welcome at schools at all times. Parents of students, in particular, are urged to visit with teachers and other school officials at school on matters of mutual concern.

Visitors are welcome at all meetings of the Board of Education except on those infrequent occasions when the Board is meeting in executive session.

B. Open House

Each school shall set aside at least one day each year when emphasis shall be placed on parent visitation.

C. The Superintendent and the school Principals, will disseminate publicity on a system wide-level. The Administration will meet with any community group to explain school problems if arrangements are made a week in advance.

The local newspaper will be furnished news releases that the Board or Administration feel worthy of public notice.

D. Individual school news should be released through the school's authorized correspondent, with the approval of the department head affected and the Principal. Each Principal may organize his/her own news reporting system and may designate their own news correspondent.

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6.2 GIFTS AND DONATIONS

The Board of Education shall exercise appropriate control over receiving of gifts including awards to students, and all other contributions to any school or department in a school from any source.

- A. It shall be expected that any individual or organization desiring to make a contribution or an award to any school first discuss such matter with school officials regarding the acceptableness of the contribution. This shall be done in advance of any solicitation of funds or the making of budgetary appropriations.
- B. Contributions of equipment or services which may involve installation or major maintenance expenditures, or which may necessitate initial or continuing financial commitments from the school district shall be proposed through the office of the Superintendent of School for Board consideration.
- C. It shall be the policy of the school district to direct contributions generally toward the purchase of those items which would not normally be considered appropriate public fund expenditures, or for which the regular budget may be inadequate.
- D. Any contributions made to the school shall become the sole property of the school district and shall be subject to the same controls and regulations, which govern the use of other school owned property.
- E. Each school shall keep a list of all donated property which list shall be made available to the Board of Education when needed.

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6.3 USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES AND PROPERTY

- A. The use of the gyms and other school plant facilities is restricted to bona fide community, civic and fraternal organizations.
- B. Use of the facilities of the school plant or grounds shall be restricted to the above community organizations and shall specifically exclude use for private purposes.

Exception: Private teachers of music and similar fine arts who teach in sufficient numbers pupils who reside in the community may use school facilities for recitals which do not involve admission charges, and in which profit making is not a motive.

- C. Civic and fraternal organizations may use the school plant for the following purposes:
 - 1. Regularly scheduled meetings when said organization has no meeting place of its own.
 - 2. Theatrical productions and other related activities which are for the purpose of raising funds to be used for community betterment or charitable enterprises; sporting events, such as basketball games, volleyball contests, or other types of sporting events conducted for the purpose of raising funds as herein before stated with the exception of such events as professional wrestling exhibitions, professional boxing matches, or other related commercial events which, in the opinion of the school authorities would be harmful to school property.
- D. Any sponsoring organization using school facilities is totally responsible for any damage to said facilities when such damages are considered to be in excess of that normally expected from the activity for which such facilities are used.
- E. Tobacco use on school property or in school vehicles is strictly forbidden.
- F. Alcoholic beverages are strictly forbidden on school property.
- G. The sponsoring organization is responsible for taxes due the Bureau of Revenue on admissions charged.
- H. All school and community activities held in school buildings or on school grounds must be terminated not later than 1:00 A.M.
- I. The sponsoring organization using the gymnasium for the purpose of raising funds shall pay a fee of \$100 to the building custodian who shall be required to properly clean the area used both before and after the activity and shall be present during such activity for assisting the organization and requiring the enforcement of regulations governing building use. This, however, does not relieve the organization from responsibility for damages to the building or equipment.

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If the school cafeteria is used for fund raising, the sponsoring organization shall pay a janitorial fee of \$100.

The above fees shall be paid directly to the janitor involved.

- J. School gyms will not be rented for dances.

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6.4 USE OF SCHOOL VEHICLES

School owned vehicles are secured for the exclusive use of school personnel and their use is to be restricted to school purposes.

- A. Vehicles owned by the School District are not to be used for private purposes.
- B. The Board will provide a vehicle to the Superintendent of Schools for use in those duties generally associated with the Superintendent or Board of Education. This vehicle will be available 24-hours per day and may be taken home.
- C. The Superintendent may authorize use of vehicles under the conditions of the above policy and regulations. Any misuse of vehicles or personal use of school vehicles may result in dismissal of the person involved in the infraction.
- D. All "moving violations", when using vehicles owned by the school district will be reported to the Office of the Superintendent.

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6.5 MOVABLE SCHOOL PROPERTY

Portable school property such as chairs, tables, projection equipment and similar items may be used by the same organizations authorized to use buildings. However, these must be checked out and signed for through the building principal or his authorized representative. Such equipment must be returned on the day following its use except if such day should fall on Sunday, it may be returned on Monday.

In the case of the movie projectors or other mechanical equipment, the organization involved shall either secure the services of school personnel qualified to operate such equipment or provide the principal with assurance that a competent operator, not a school employee, is available to operate and care for the equipment.

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6.6 PATRON COMPLAINTS

The method by which complaints from parents, patrons, community groups or employees are handled may well set the pattern for harmony or lack of it. Complaints, whether they be large or small, must not be ignored. It shall be the policy of the Board of Education to individually and collectively encourage those having complaints, real or imagined, to bring them to the attention of the proper authorities through very specific, recognized channels of communication.

Individual Board Members should not refuse to listen to grievances, but shall guide individuals or groups through proper procedures. Board Members should avoid giving the public the impression that their grievances are being ignored. Many times knowledge of policies on the part of an individual Board Member will make it possible for him to stop a grievance by a simple explanation of a policy already in effect and its purpose. This should not be attempted, however, unless there is a strong reason to believe the result will be settlement of the grievance at that point.

1. Step I - Informal

- a. The district official receiving the concern or complaint will inform the Superintendent of the nature of the concern. If the district official is a school Principal and his/her school is involved see Step I, Part b. A member of the Board of Education is considered a district official during this procedure.
- b. If the Principal is the district official, he will manage the problem "in house" if he/she can possibly do so. If not, he will then bring the problem to the Superintendent; who in turn, will immediately notify the parties involved and will make every effort to bring the employee and/or program chairman and the complainant together for a conference.
- c. Should the complainant not wish to meet with the employee, the Principal will make an effort to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of those concerned. The principal will keep all parties informed of the progress toward solution of the problem.

2. Step II - Formal (Building)

- a. Should the complaint not be settled through Step I, the Principal will request the complainant to prepare a review form (all district officials have a supply). A signed copy will be given to the employee.
- b. The Principal will forward the review form to the Superintendent, who will form a committee of the Director of Instruction, the Principal, and a fellow teacher acceptable to the employee.

3. Step III - Superintendent

The Superintendent will review the written conclusions of the committee and communicate his decisions to the complainant and the challenged employee. The Superintendent may decide to request a review of program or a review of personnel services.

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4. Step IV - Formal (Board of Education)

- A. The complainant may wish to appear before the Board of Education, at which time the Superintendent shall present a review of the situation and make his recommendation. The final decision will rest with the Board of Education.

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6.7 EMPLOYEE DIRECTORY

Directories listing the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of school district employees shall be made available only to educational institutions, professional organizations, or to those businesses or organizations, which clearly state the use to which such directories will be put. When such use is considered by the Superintendent of Schools to be not in the best interests of employees or the school, requests for directories shall be denied.

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6.8 SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCILS

In compliance with HB212 of 2003, Tularosa Municipal Schools sets forth the following guidelines for School Advisory Councils:

- A. Each school shall have a School Advisory Council.
- B. Each School Advisory Council shall consist of six members plus the Principal. The Principal shall be the chairperson of the Council.
- C. The Council shall be made up of the following individuals:
 - 2 staff members (re-submit name each year for re-appointment)
 - 2 parents who are not employed by the District (term to be for the duration of time children are in that school)
 - 1 business person (re-submit name each year for re-appointment)
 - Plus:
 - 1 community member in schools with grades K-5
 - OR
 - 1 student in grades 6-12
- D. Selection: The Principal shall solicit volunteers. From this group of volunteers, the Council will be elected.
- E. If a person resigns from the Council, the Principal shall appoint the next available volunteer that meets the vacancy criteria.
- F. These councils work in compliance with HB212 and are advisory only.
- G. These councils shall meet a minimum of three times per year.