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2190: Fundraising, Gifts, Grants, and Commercial Activities

General School Administration/General

The intention of this policy is to support and encourage private fund-raising efforts that will benefit the East Greenwich school community. In accordance with state law, the following restrictions on commercial activity, gifts, grants, and fundraising in the East Greenwich schools shall apply.

Except as permitted by state law and/or regulation, and in accordance with this policy, no East Greenwich school official or employee shall, for any purpose whatsoever, solicit, or exact, from any student in the East Greenwich schools any contribution or gift of money or any article of value, or any pledge to contribute any money or article of value.

Teacher/Employee Gifts

Students and their parents shall be discouraged from the routine presentation of gifts to School Department employees on occasions such as winter holidays or year-end. Any time a student or parent of a student gives a gift to a staff member, the gift shall not be elaborate or unduly expensive. Modest class gifts, and letters to staff members from students and parents expressing gratitude or appreciation are appropriate and encouraged.

Commercial Activities

A Commercial Activity is the sale or offer to sell goods or services to or from students or school faculty. All Commercial Activities that utilize an EGSD school or school resources shall receive approval by the building principal, and the Superintendent where appropriate.

1. No school faculty member in any school shall solicit or receive from the students subscriptions for any newspaper, periodical, or magazine, whether electronic or otherwise, or act as agent directly or indirectly for the distribution of a publication in the schools; nor shall any person distribute on school grounds or through school resources to students on their way to or from school any circular, sample, package, coupon, ticket, or other similar advertising matter.
2. No teacher in the East Greenwich schools shall at any time accept any fee or gift for the tutoring of any child regularly under his or her instruction.

3. No commercial goods or services shall be sold to students in the East Greenwich schools or on school property, whether in person, online, or otherwise, nor shall any commercial materials (flyers, literature, advertisements, including those appearing on flyers, literature, and advertisements that are concerned with non-profit fundraising efforts, or any other solicitation) be given to students from the schools, except as authorized by the Superintendent under the following standards:
4. A Commercial Activity must have as its primary purpose the advancement and benefit of the students and the students' academic or extracurricular activities. However, a school principal may permit sales and sales promotions and other commercial activities connected with fundraising for legally recognized charities from which groups outside the East Greenwich school community also benefit.
5. Participation in Commercial Activities shall be entirely voluntary. No student, teacher, or other employee shall be subject to any punishment, sanction, loss, or other detriment as a result of failing to participate in any sales, sales promotions or other commercial activity. Moreover, no student shall be required to deliver any sales promotion or other commercial materials to their parents or guardians. Prior to the commencement of any sales, sales promotions or other commercial activity, a school principal shall ensure that all members of the school community are reminded of this stricture.
6. The district's finance office shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining financial accounting practices relating to all monies received and disbursed, and these practices shall accord with those used by the finance office for other school business.
7. Proposals for Commercial Activities, including those connected with non-profit fundraising, shall be considered and approved for a limited term. The proposals shall be evaluated in terms of the likely benefit to the students and the East Greenwich school community generally. The proposal evaluation procedure shall be designed and operated in such a manner that no benefit or prejudice will accrue to new or repeated proposed activities. If deemed necessary to avoid disruption of the school curriculum, the principal may limit the number and duration of sales and sales promotions and other commercial activities in any school year or in any particular school.
8. Commercial Activities that require or are likely to require door to door sales or solicitations by students are discouraged. The permission form shall acknowledge an assumption of risk and contain a waiver of liability in the same manner contained on permission forms for field trips and other similar activities.
9. Commercial Activities shall be conducted in a manner that protects the privacy of students. No member of the school community may share personally identifiable information about any student with any person or organization outside of the school department except with the written permission of the students' parents or guardians.
10. Promotions of vacation or summer camps should clearly specify whether the camp is school-sponsored or privately sponsored and whether it is for profit or non-profit. Privately sponsored camps should clearly indicate the recipient of any fees charged for camp attendance.

11. Gate receipts from athletic events shall be maintained in account and dispersed in accordance to business office practices. The athletic director shall report on an annual basis to the Superintendent and School Committee the total gate receipts and how the funds were used to support the athletic department.
12. All written communications regarding an approved Commercial Activity shall include disclosure of the percentage of raised funds that will directly benefit the schools.

Fundraising, Gifts, and Grants

The East Greenwich School District and its schools may accept gifts, grants, monetary donations from fundraising efforts, and other contributions of value from individuals and entities. Such contributions provide an important source of support for innovative school programs, activities, and events. EGSD may accept gifts and donations as described below; however, the District and its schools reserve the right to reject any and all gifts from individuals and/or entities for any reason.

1) Types of Contributions

A. Gifts

1. **Conditional Gifts.** A Conditional Gift is a monetary gift or grant directly to a specific school, or to the District that is intended for a specified purpose, as expressed in writing by the donor. Conditional Gifts include fundraising donations, voluntary family contributions to a school, and in-kind donations. Monetary Conditional Gifts, once received, are restricted funds, and therefore must be allocated and spent in accordance with the donor's expressly intended purpose.

Where such conditional gifts are allocated for a specified school or school activity, such as field trips, a specific sport or club, or a school department, such funds gifts must be intended to benefit all students eligible to participate in the specified activity. Moreover, any such activity must be included in the district's annual budget, with a budgetary offset for anticipated revenue.

Any Conditional Gift intended for a specific capital expenditure, including, but not limited to In-Kind Donations described below, must be reviewed by appropriate District administrators, and approved by the Superintendent. Proposals for the purchases of capital equipment that will require on-going maintenance by the district must also include an estimate of maintenance costs, or a

plan to support the maintenance in the future. Such approval is to be granted in the same manner as all other capital expenditures, in accordance with District procedure.

- a. **Fundraising Donations.** Monetary donations may be contributed by individuals or outside entities in support of fundraisers sponsored by the District, a school, and/or a school group. Communications regarding such fundraisers must specify the intended purpose of the fundraiser. A sponsor of such fundraising activity must obtain the requisite approval from the appropriate administrator prior to advertising or soliciting contributions for the fundraiser.
- b. **Voluntary Family Contributions.** A school may solicit voluntary contributions from families for the purpose of providing or enhancing specified school trips, programs and activities, so long as such trips, programs and activities are reflected in the District's budget.
- c. **In-Kind Donations.** EGSD and/or its schools may receive in-kind donations of materials or equipment (including but not limited to athletic equipment, technology and permanent playground equipment), services, or any other non-monetary contributions of value that are aligned with the mission and curriculum, and, where applicable, are sustainable within the District's existing capital maintenance plan.

2. Unconditional Gifts.

Unconditional Gifts are monetary gifts or grants donated directly to the school district without an expressly-identified purpose. EGSD has full discretion to allocate Unconditional Gifts as it deems appropriate.

B. **Grants.** Grants are awards of money or property for a specified purpose that may include, but is not limited to, research, program/curriculum development and operation, and/or faculty training. Grant awards to EGSD and any of its schools from outside entities shall be approved by the Superintendent or his/or designee.

2. **Maintenance and Disposition of Funds**

- A. **Gifts to Schools.** Single contributions of less than \$5000 to an individual school shall be deposited by the receiving school into its Student Activity Account. Single contributions of \$5000 or greater may not be deposited into a Student Activity Account, but must be forwarded to the District's finance office for deposit in accordance with District policy #3220: Student Activity Accounts.
- B. **Gifts to the District.** Conditional and Unconditional Gifts tendered to the District will be deposited into the District's general fund, or into a District special revenue fund.
 - a. The District finance office, in cooperation with the town of East Greenwich's finance director, shall maintain a detailed record of all Conditional Gifts tendered to the District. The District finance office shall release such funds upon direction and demand from the appropriate administrator to ensure fulfillment with the donor's intent.
 - b. The District has full discretion to allocate funds from Unconditional Gifts as it deems appropriate.
- C. **Grants.** Monetary grant awards must be forwarded to the district finance office in the form of a check made payable to "Town of East Greenwich," and may not be deposited into a Student Activity Account. Checks for monetary grants must be accompanied by a copy of the grant award and grant budget.

Reference

[RI Gen. Laws § 16-38-6 - Restrictions on Commercial Activity and Fundraising in Public Schools](#)