

SECTION K: SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

KA	School-Community Relations Goals
KAA	School-Community Relations Priority Objectives
KB	Public Information Program
KBA	Public's Right to Know
KBB	School-Sponsored Information Media
KBC	News Media Relations
KBCA	News Releases
KBCB	News Conferences and Interviews
KBCC	News Media Services at Board Meetings (Also BDDI)
KBCD	Broadcasting and Taping of Board Meetings (Also BDDJ)
KBCE	Sports and Special Events News Coverage
KBD	Speaker Services
KBE	Tax Issues (Also FD)
KBF	Use of Students in Public Information Program
KC	Community Involvement in Decision Making (Also ABA)
KD	Public Participation at Board Meetings (Also BDDH)
KE	Staff Participation in Community Activities (Also GBF)
KF	Community Instructional Resources (Also IIC)
KFA	Special Interest Materials (Also IIAD)
KG	ESC Facilities (Equal Access)
KGA	Public Sales on School Property
KGB	Public Conduct on ESC Property
KGC	Smoking on ESC Property
KH	Public Gifts to the ESC
KI	Public Solicitations in the Schools
KJ	Advertising in the Schools
KK	Visitors to the Schools
KL	Public Complaints
KLA	Public Complaints About Policies
KLB	Public Complaints About the Curriculum or Instructional Materials
KLC	Public Complaints About Facilities or Services

KLD

Public Complaints About ESC Personnel

SECTION K: SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

(continued)

KM Relations with Community Organizations
KMA Relations with Parent Organizations
KMB Relations with Booster Organizations
KMC Relations with Neighborhood Associations
KMD Relations with Religious Organizations
KME Relations with Youth Organizations
KMF Relations with Private Social Service Organizations
KMG Relations with Business Organizations
KMH Relations with Labor Organizations
KMI Relations with Political Organizations
KMJ Relations with Indian Tribal Councils

KN Relations with Governmental Authorities
KNA Relations with Local Governmental Authorities
KNAA Relations with Fiscal Authorities
KNAB Relations with Taxation Authorities
KNAC Relations with Election Authorities
KNAD Relations with Anti-Poverty Authorities
KNAE Relations with Housing Authorities
KNAF Relations with Health Authorities
KNAG Relations with Welfare Authorities
KNAH Relations with Parks Authorities
KNAI Relations with Recreation Authorities
KNAJ Relations with Police Authorities
KNAK Relations with Fire Authorities
KNAL Relations with Civil Defense Authorities
KNAM Relations with Environmental Authorities
KNAN Relations with Planning Authorities
KNAO Relations with Zoning Authorities
KNB Relations with County Governmental Authorities
KNC Relations with State Governmental Authorities
KND Relations with Federal Governmental Authorities

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS GOALS

The purpose of the ESC-community relations program is to establish and maintain in the public mind respect for the public school system and confidence that it is providing the best possible education for the children of the county in terms of intellectual, emotional, moral, social and physical development.

Toward this end, the Board provides parents or guardians and other residents opportunities for orientation and information regarding state regulations and procedures and utilizes, insofar as practical, all appropriate means and media to achieve the following goals:

1. to explain the programs, achievements and needs of the ESC to all their many constituents;
2. to determine what residents expect from their schools and what they think about the accomplishments of their schools;
3. to make efforts to foresee and avoid problems caused by misunderstanding or lack of information;
4. to provide optimum staff performance by keeping all staff members fully informed of policies and procedures, as well as reasons for them when that is relevant, system-wide activities, their own responsibilities, and their rights within ESC policy and under school law;
5. to operate, in accordance with law, in public session as speedily and efficiently as circumstances permit and with public participation and
6. to inform teaching staff personnel that community opinion depends upon the daily life of the school and they should seek the following objectives, as opportunity permits, in their respective fields of service:
 - A. acquaint citizens with the work of the ESC;
 - B. give courteous and thoughtful consideration to all inquiries and suggestions and carefully investigate all complaints;
 - C. cooperate with parent-teacher groups and with other organizations of citizens seeking information or offering assistance to the schools and
 - D. observe interstaff relations conducive to high morale and meriting the respect of students and citizens.

[Adoption date: January 7, 2003]

LEGAL REF.: OAC 3301-35-03(J)

PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM

The Board believes that all reasonable means should be employed to keep the public informed on matters of importance regarding ESC policies, finances, programs, personnel and operations.

The Board will determine which of its official actions have sufficient impact and interest to warrant special release; it alone will release to the media those matters of importance.

All other publications, releases, photographs and the like depicting the accomplishments of the students and staff of the ESC may be approved at the discretion of the Superintendent.

The Superintendent shall direct an information program designed to acquaint the citizens of the county and the public generally with the achievements and the needs of the schools, which shall include, as a minimum, publications such as the Superintendent's annual report, curriculum bulletins and educational reports, news releases and photographs of ESC activities for publications and radio and television programs of ESC information.

The Superintendent will develop guidelines to be observed in matters of taste, relevance and the observation of individual privacy in the writing and photographing for these publications.

[Adoption date: January 7, 2003]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 3313.94
 3315.07
 OAC 3301-35-03(j)

PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW

The Board supports the right of the people to know about the programs and services of their schools and makes efforts to disseminate appropriate information. Each building principal is authorized and expected to keep the school's community informed about the school's programs and activities. The release of information of District-wide interest is coordinated by the Superintendent.

Business of the Board is discussed and decisions are made at public meetings of the Board, except such matters required to be discussed in private executive sessions.

The official minutes of the Board, its written policies, its financial records and all other public records are open for inspection in the central office during the hours when the administrative offices are open.

Each Board member attends public records training every term for which he/she is elected to public office. However, the Board may designate one or more persons to attend public records training on its behalf. If so decided, the Board appointed a designee whenever the composition of the Board changes.

The District may ask that the identity of an individual requesting information and the reason the information is sought be in writing. The District first informs the requester that such disclosure is not mandatory, unless the request is for student directory information. The District also informs the requester that providing such information in writing enhances the District's ability to identify, locate or deliver the records sought. The District may also ask that the request be put in writing, but notifies the requester that it is not mandatory to do so.

Any individual who wants to obtain or inspect a copy of a public record may request to have the record duplicated on paper, on the same medium on which the record is kept or on any other medium that the Superintendent/designee determines reasonable. If the request is ambiguous or overly broad, the District informs the requester of the manner in which records are maintained and accessed in the ordinary course of business and allows the requester to revise the request.

Records pertaining to individual students and other confidential materials are not released for inspection. Only that information deemed "directory information" may be released from an individual student's file, and only after complying with the regulations prepared by the administration for the release of such information. Student directory information is not released when parents have affirmatively withdrawn their consent to release in writing. Student records that consist of "personally identifiable information" generally are exempt from disclosure.

All records responsive to the request are made available in a reasonable period of time. The District makes the requester aware of any information that is exempt from disclosure requirements by notifying the requester of any redacted information or by making redactions in a plainly visible manner. If a public records request is denied, the District provides an explanation with legal authority for the denial of the request. This explanation is provided in writing if the request is made in writing or if the Superintendent/designee determines written explanation is necessary.

The Superintendent/designee transmits the information sought by mail or by any other means of delivery requested, if the method is reasonably available. The number of mail requests sent to any one person is limited to 10 a month unless the person certifies, in writing, that the records nor the information in them will not be used for commercial purposes.

A fee may be charged for copies and/or delivery. The District may require the fee charged for copies and/or delivery be paid in advance.

The Board's public records policy is posted in a conspicuous location in the central office and in all other District buildings and employee handbooks provided by the District. The policy is distributed directly to the records custodian and receipt of the policy by the custodian is acknowledged. A copy of the records retention schedule is maintained and readily available to the public in the central office.

Adoption date: October 2, 2007

LEGAL REFS: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; 20 USC, Section 1232g
ORC 121.22
149.43
3319.321
OAC 3301-35-03; 3301-35-04

CROSS REFS: BDC, Executive Sessions
BDDG, Minutes
GBL, Personnel Records
GBS, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
IGBA, Programs for Students with Disabilities
JO, Student Records
KA, School-Community Relations Goals
KKA, Recruiters in the Schools

Fairfield County Educational Service Center, Lancaster, Ohio

Fairfield County Educational Service Center, Lancaster, Ohio

NEWS MEDIA RELATIONS

Representatives of the local press, radio and TV are an important link in the communications chain between school and community. The maintenance of good working relationships with these persons is essential to meeting those objectives of the school-community relations program which require the support and cooperation of media representatives.

The Board authorizes the development of a sound working relationship between the news media and the ESC, based on mutual respect and cooperation, but reserves the right to negotiate for the radio broadcasting, televising, filming or sound recording of any event by an outside agency. These rights, if sold, shall be contracted under conditions designed to bring the most favorable terms of the ESC.

The Board President or his/her designee shall:

1. be readily available to media representatives;
2. provide media representatives, upon their request, with all facts that give a true picture to the best of his/her knowledge, requesting, at the same time, that they not publish or broadcast any facts which are injurious to ESC personnel or students or which would serve no constructive purpose;
3. keep media representatives fully informed with regard to the system in all aspects, activities and changes so that any reporting will be done on the basis of a complete and valid overview;
4. submit, suggest or request feature stories or articles to media representatives which are of interest or importance;
5. meet periodically with representatives of the news media to discuss ESC progress and review general media impressions of the ESC and
6. protect personnel from any unnecessary demands on their time by news media representatives.

[Adoption date: January 7, 2003]

LEGAL REF.: OAC 3301-35-03

BROADCASTING AND TAPING OF BOARD MEETINGS

Use of Mechanical Recording Devices

No mechanical methods of recording, such as tape recorders etc., will be used to record either public or executive sessions of meetings of the Fairfield County Governing Board unless unanimous consent for such is given by all of the members of the Board who are present. Such consent must be given through a formal motion duly seconded and passed unanimously and would only apply for the particular meeting at which such permission was given.

Photographic and electronic audio and video broadcasting and recording devices may be used according to the following guidelines.

1. Photographing, broadcasting and recording meetings are permitted only when all parties involved have been informed that cameras, broadcasting and/or recording devices are being used.
2. Persons operating cameras, broadcasting and/or recording devices must do so with a minimum of disruption to those present at the meeting. Specifically, the view between Board members and the audience must not be obstructed, interviews must not be conducted during the meeting and no commentary is to be given in a manner that distracts Board members or the audience.
3. The Board has the right to halt any recording that interrupts or disturbs the meeting.

The Board may make the necessary arrangements to make audio recordings of all regular meetings and any special meeting that it deems appropriate.

[Adoption date: January 7, 2003]

LEGAL REFS.: U.S. Const. Amend. I
ORC 121.22
2911.21
2917.12
2921.31
3313.20

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION MAKING

Community participation in the affairs of the schools is important if the ESC and the community are to maintain mutual confidence and respect and work together to improve the quality of education for students. The Board makes efforts to identify the wishes of the community and to be responsive to those wishes.

The Board and the staff give consideration to the advice they receive from individuals and community groups interested in the schools. Final authority for all decisions rests with the Board.

[Adoption date: January 7, 2003]

LEGAL REF.: OAC 3301-35-03(J)

CROSS REFS.: BCE, Board Committees
BCFA, Business Advisory Council to the Board

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS

All meetings of the Board and Board-appointed committees are open to the public.

In order for the Board to fulfill its obligation to complete the planned agenda in an effective and efficient fashion, a maximum of 30 minutes of public participation may be permitted at each meeting.

Each person addressing the Board shall give his/her name and address. If several people wish to speak, each person is allotted three minutes until the total time of 30 minutes is used. During that period, no person may speak twice until all who desire to speak have had the opportunity to do so. Persons desiring more time should follow the procedure of the Board to be placed on the regular agenda. The period of public participation may be extended by a vote of the majority of the Board present and voting.

Agendas are available to all those who attend Board meetings. The section on the agenda for public participation shall be indicated.

[Adoption date: January 7, 2003]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 121.22
3313.20

CROSS REFS.: BCE, Board Committees
BD, Board Meetings
BDDC, Agenda Preparation and Dissemination

ESC FACILITIES
(Equal Access)

The Board may rent such facilities as may be necessary for the conduct of ESC programs. In all such cases, the rental agreement, if at all possible, shall be with one of the Fairfield County districts in order to minimize such costs to this ESC.

The Superintendent is authorized to review sites for rental purposes. Any such site shall be required to meet State codes.

[Adoption date: January 7, 2003]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 3311.215
3313.74; 3313.75; 3313.76; 3313.77; 3313.79
4303.26
Title VIII, Section 801

PUBLIC CONDUCT ON ESC PROPERTY

All persons on ESC grounds will be expected to abide by applicable laws, local ordinances, Board policies and building regulations.

No person on ESC property will assault, strike, threaten, menace or use improper, indecent or obscene language toward employees of the ESC.

No person will disrupt, disturb or interfere with any activity conducted on the Fairfield County ESC property.

Whoever violates the above policy and building regulations will be asked to leave the property by whoever is in charge. Should that person refuse, the police will be called. If the offender should be a student, the person in charge should report the student to the appropriate staff member. The ESC will cooperate in any prosecution pursuant to the criminal laws of the state of Ohio and local ordinances.

[Adoption date: January 7, 2003]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 2907.03
2909.05-2909.07
3313.20

CROSS REFS.: KG, ESC Facilities (Equal Access)

SMOKING ON ESC PROPERTY

The Board is dedicated to providing a healthy, comfortable and productive environment for its staff, students and citizens. The Board recognizes that smoking can be hazardous to the health and safety of both the smoker and the nonsmoker. The Board declares all ESC facilities to be smoke-free.

Citizens caught smoking in ESC facilities are educated as to the Board's policy on nonsmoking; if caught smoking a second time, they are directed to leave the facilities.

[Adoption date: January 7, 2003]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 3313.20; 3313.47
3791.031
Goals 2000: Educate America Act

CROSS REF.: GBK, Smoking on ESC Premises by Staff Members

PUBLIC GIFTS TO THE ESC

The Board accepts its responsibility to provide from public funds sufficient supplies and equipment for an effective program. It recognizes, however, that from time to time individuals or organizations in the county may wish to contribute additional supplies or equipment to enhance or extend the instructional program.

The Board may, by resolution duly passed at a public meeting, accept any gift, grant or bequest of land, with or without improvement and of money or other personal property and acknowledge the purpose, if any, for which the gift was made.

The Board reserves the right to refuse to accept any gift when the conditions and stipulations connected with it deprive the Board of control or achievement of the goals of this ESC.

Any gift accepted by the Board shall become the property of the Board, may not be returned without the approval of the Board, and is subject to the same controls and regulations as is other property of the Board. The Board shall be responsible for the maintenance of any gift it accepts, subject to any conditions or stipulations connected with the gift.

The Board will make efforts to honor the intent of the donor in its use of the gift, but reserves the right to utilize any gift it accepts in the best interest of the educational program of the ESC. In no case shall acceptance of a gift be considered to be an endorsement by the Board of a commercial product or business enterprise or institution of learning.

The Superintendent shall counsel potential donors on the appropriateness of gifts and encourage such donors to consult with the Superintendent before appropriating funds to that end, shall report to the Board all gifts which he/she has accepted on behalf of the Board, shall acknowledge the receipt and value of any gift accepted by the ESC, shall prepare fitting means for recognizing or memorializing gifts to the ESC as appropriate, and shall establish rules and regulations implementing the conditions and limitations upon any gift or donation which has been accepted by the Board.

[Adoption date: January 7, 2003]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 9.20
3313.36

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Any person or group having a legitimate interest in the ESC shall have the right to present a request, suggestion, complaint or grievance concerning ESC personnel, the program or the operations of the ESC. 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 grievance in a fair and impartial manner and to seek a remedy where appropriate.

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

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

1. Matters Regarding a Certified Staff Member

First Level. If it is a matter specifically directed toward a certified 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 rules and regulations. As appropriate, the staff member shall report the matter, and whatever action may have been taken, to the building supervisor. 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 officials prior to approaching the certified staff member.

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.

Third Level. If a satisfactory solution is not achieved by discussion with the supervisor or department director, a written request for a conference shall be submitted to the Superintendent. This request shall include the specific nature of the complaint and a brief statement of the facts giving rise to it. Should the matter be resolved in conference with the Superintendent, the Board shall be advised of the resolution.

Fourth Level. Should the matter still not be resolved, or if it is one beyond the Superintendent's authority and requires a Board decision or action, the complainant shall request, in writing, a hearing by the Board. The Board, after reviewing all material relating to the case, shall provide the complainant with its written decision or grant a hearing before the Board. The complainant shall be advised, in writing, of the Board's decision, no more than 10 days following the hearing.

2. Matters Regarding an Administrative Staff Member

In the case of a complaint directed toward an administrative staff member, the general procedure specified in Part 1 shall be followed. The complaint shall be discussed, initially, with the person toward whom it is directed and, if a satisfactory resolution is not achieved at this level, the matter shall be brought, as required, to higher levels terminating with the Board.

3. Matters Regarding a Classified Staff Member

In the case of a complaint directed toward a noninstructional staff member, the same procedure is to be followed as in Part 1. The complaint is to be directed, initially, to the person's supervisor and the matter then brought, as required, to higher levels in the manner prescribed in Part 1.

4. Matters Regarding ESC Services and Operations

If the request, suggestion, complaint or grievance relates to a matter of ESC or school policy, procedure, program or operation, it should be addressed, initially, to the appropriate administrator who is most directly concerned, and then brought, in turn, to higher levels of authority in the manner prescribed in Part 1.

5. Matters Regarding Educational Programs

If the request, suggestion, complaint or grievance relates to instructional materials such as textbooks, library books, reference works and other instructional aids used in the district. The complainant shall be referred to the appropriate ESC administrator.

[Adoption date: January 7, 2003]

RELATIONS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES

It is the policy of the Board that this Board, officials and county officials maintain a close and harmonious association within their respective areas of authority. Such liaison is requisite for dealing with ESC/community matters and problems in the most satisfactory manner and assuring the most prudent expenditure of tax dollars.

The Board recognizes that other agencies of government have an interest in the welfare of children and, therefore, their functions and authority should be understood by administrators of this ESC.

In order to maintain cooperation with county offices that have an interest in students, the Superintendent or designee shall meet periodically with administrators of the Health Department, Welfare Department, Juvenile Court and other youth and family-oriented agencies to explore mutual problems and concerns and to formulate programs for children. Any such program, however, shall be approved by this Board prior to its implementation.

[Adoption date: January 7, 2003]