

2.4 Gifts and Donations

2.4.1 Acceptance of Donations

The Sudbury School Committee recognizes and appreciates the benefits to the schools of donations of time, talent, and money in support of the educational goals of the District. In particular, school support organizations, such as the Parent Teacher Organizations and the Sudbury Education Resource Fund, Inc., have provided highly valuable support to the Sudbury Public Schools. At the same time, the School Committee believes that public education is a common good that should be adequately supported by the federal, state, and local governments. Pursuant to the Constitution and laws of Massachusetts, students are entitled to an appropriate education financed by the public. In general, therefore, private donations should not be used to pay for core curriculum or other programs that fall within the obligations of the District.

The Sudbury School Committee may accept donations to assist the District in furtherance of its educational goals, in accordance with applicable laws. Donations subject to this policy include all monetary gifts, donations, grants, or bequests, and all donations of equipment, materials, or other donations in kind.

Donations may not be spent or used in the schools unless they have been accepted on behalf of the District by a vote of the School Committee, subject to the exceptions stated in §2.4.2 below. Donations, including donations from school support organizations, that would: (1) involve a change to a school physical plant; (2) support the salary of any District personnel; or (3) involve significant or ongoing advertising or promotion of a commercial interest may be spent or used by the District only if approved by the School Committee.

All donations accepted by the School Committee will be expended at the discretion of the School Committee. Donations that are accepted by the School Committee will ordinarily be accepted without condition or restriction, unless the Committee approves a proposed condition or restriction as being in the interest of the District. All donations accepted by the School Committee will become the property of the Sudbury Public Schools to be used as the School Committee deems appropriate and are subject to the same controls and laws that govern the use and disposal of other school-owned property. Monetary donations will be placed in a separate account as needed and in compliance with applicable laws.

The School Committee reserves the right to reject any donation when it finds that the donation would not serve the interests of the District. The School Committee will consider the overall interests of the District in reviewing each donation, but generally will not accept donations in the following circumstances:

1. The donation is incompatible with existing or planned curriculum, programs, or educational goals of the District.

2. The donation would result in an unreasonable inequity among schools, classes, or groups of students within the District
3. The donation may tend to result in a recurring cost to the District such as the salary or benefits for a staff position, or ongoing maintenance or support of equipment or materials, or would create a cost to the District to terminate or eliminate the staff, equipment or materials (e.g. unemployment.)
4. The donation may require special supplies, maintenance, or installation, or entail other significant costs not covered by the donation.
5. The donation would involve unreasonable advertising or promotion of a commercial interest.
6. The donation would support a program that has been discontinued or any program, equipment or materials, or a capital item that was proposed but not funded in the budget approved for the Sudbury Public Schools by the voters of the Town of Sudbury at a Town Meeting or Town Election.

2.4.2 Exceptions to Requirement of School Committee Approval

Donations may not be spent or used in the schools unless they have been accepted by a vote of the School Committee, except in the following circumstances when District personnel are authorized to accept donations on behalf of the School Committee:

1. The Superintendent is authorized to accept grants from the federal or state government, private foundations, or non-profit organizations when a school or staff member has applied for the grant with the approval of the Superintendent.
2. The school principals, teachers, and other staff are authorized to accept on behalf of the school gifts from individuals or organizations in the form of supplies and materials for the school or for classrooms (or money for the purchase of such supplies and materials) not to exceed donations valued at \$500 per family in a single school year.
3. School principals and librarians are authorized to accept library books or materials or donations to purchase library books or materials that they deem educationally appropriate.
4. Donations of time and personal services by parents and Sudbury residents shall not be subject to this policy. This exemption shall apply to individual volunteerism only, and shall not extend to donations of services by employees and agents of businesses or commercial entities, which shall be treated the same as donations of money or other contributions of economic value under this policy.

5. The Superintendent is authorized to accept on behalf of the School Committee donations from school support organizations, including Parent Teacher Organizations, as follows:
 - a. The Superintendent or his or her designee may accept donations of any value to support enrichment programs or guest speakers or programs in the schools.
 - b. Any donation for a capital item, equipment, or technology may be spent or used in the schools only if approved by the Superintendent.
 - c. Any donation for materials that are directly related to the District curriculum may be spent or used in the schools only if approved by the Superintendent.
 - d. The Superintendent or his or her designee may accept donations other than those identified in (b.) and (c.) above when the donation does not exceed \$3,000 in value in total to support a specific program area or initiative or to purchase any item or group of similar items. Donations that exceed \$3,000 in value must be submitted to the School Committee for consideration prior to being spent or used in the schools.

2.4.3 Fundraising

Any group or organization that seeks to raise significant funds to support the District, especially to support a particular program or initiative, should communicate with the District to ensure its efforts are compatible with the District's educational goals. Generally, communication and coordination with the District is encouraged for any fundraising efforts. Donations from fundraising efforts are subject to the donation approval policy, §2.4.1. The School Committee may choose not to accept donations from fundraising efforts in the absence of approval prior to the fundraising effort.

Any fundraising that involves students must be approved by the Superintendent in accordance with the fundraising policy, §4.6.2.

Reference: Mass. Gen. Laws ch.71, §37A; Mass. Gen. Laws ch.44, §53A