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HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: PUBLIC RELATIONS
OBJECTIVES

ADOPTED: December 6, 2004

REVISED:

901. PUBLIC RELATIONS OBJECTIVES	
1. Purpose	The purpose of the school-community relations program is to establish and maintain communication that informs the parents/guardians and public and involves them in the educational goals and programs of the district's schools.
2. Authority	To achieve this purpose, the Board shall provide parents/guardians and other district residents opportunities to receive information and orientation regarding the schools. The Board will utilize all appropriate means and media to achieve its public relations objectives.
3. Guidelines	<p>The objectives of the district's public relations program shall be to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain the programs, achievements and needs of the schools to parents/guardians and to the community as a whole. 2. Determine which particular areas of the school program, policies or operations need further clarification or explanation. 3. Keep students and staff members fully informed about: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. District policies and procedures and the reasons for them. b. System-wide activities.
65 P.S. 701 et seq Pol. 903	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Operate in public session, as speedily and efficiently as circumstances permit and with appropriate public participation. 5. Recognize students and their achievements.
4. Delegation of Responsibility	<p>It shall be the responsibility of all district staff to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acquaint parents/guardians and residents with the work of the schools and students.

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: PUBLICATIONS PROGRAM

ADOPTED: December 6, 2004

REVISED:

<p>1. Purpose</p> <p>2. Authority</p> <p>3. Delegation of Responsibility</p> <p>Pol. 127</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">902. PUBLICATIONS PROGRAM</p> <p>The Board believes that all reasonable means should be employed to keep the public informed on matters of importance regarding district policies, finances, programs, personnel and operations.</p> <p>The Board shall determine which of its official actions have such community impact and interest to warrant special release, and it will release information to the media on matters of importance.</p> <p>Matters of a routine nature may be released by the Superintendent as they have been recorded in the minutes of Board meetings and upon request of media representatives.</p> <p>All publications, releases, photographs and the like depicting the accomplishments of district students and staff may be approved at the discretion of the Superintendent.</p> <p>The responsible district administrator shall direct an information program designed to acquaint the public with the achievements, programs and needs of the schools. The information program shall include as a minimum:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. District newsletter. 2. District activities calendar. 3. Board policies. 4. Financial information. 5. Assessment results. 6. School newspaper. 7. Yearbook.
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HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN
BOARD MEETINGS

ADOPTED: December 6, 2004

REVISED:

903. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS	
<p>1. Purpose 65 P.S. 701 et seq</p>	<p>The Board recognizes the value to school governance of public comment on educational issues and the importance of involving members of the public in Board meetings. The Board also recognizes its responsibility for proper governance of the district and the need to conduct its business in an orderly and efficient manner.</p>
<p>2. Authority 65 P.S. 710 65 P.S. 710.1 65 P.S. 710.1</p>	<p>The Board shall establish guidelines to govern public participation in Board meetings necessary to conduct its meeting and to maintain order.</p> <p>In order to permit fair and orderly expression of public comment, the Board shall provide an opportunity at each open meeting of the Board for residents and taxpayers to comment on matters of concern, official action or deliberation before the Board prior to official action by the Board.</p> <p>If the Board determines there is not sufficient time at a meeting for public comments, the comment period may be deferred to the next regular meeting or to a special meeting occurring before the next regular meeting.</p>
<p>3. Delegation of Responsibility Pol. 006</p>	<p>The presiding officer at each public Board meeting shall follow Board policy for the conduct of public meetings. Where his/her ruling is disputed, it may be overruled by a majority of those Board members present and voting.</p>
<p>4. Guidelines</p>	<p>Whenever issues identified by the participant are subject to remediation under policies and procedures of the Board, they shall be dealt with in accordance with those policies and procedures and the organizational structure of the district.</p> <p>The Board requires that public participants be residents or taxpayers of this district or:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any representative of a firm eligible to bid on materials or services solicited by the Board. 2. Any district employee.

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: PUBLIC ATTENDANCE AT
SCHOOL EVENTS

ADOPTED: December 6, 2004

REVISED:

904. PUBLIC ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS	
1. Purpose	The Board welcomes the public at activities and events sponsored by the school district, but the Board also acknowledges its duty to maintain order and preserve school facilities during such events.
2. Authority SC 511, 775	The Board has the authority to prohibit at a school event the attendance of any individual whose conduct may constitute a disruption. The Board prohibits gambling and the possession and use of controlled substances, alcoholic beverages and weapons on school premises.
3. Guidelines	<p>A schedule of fees for attendance at school events shall be prepared by the Superintendent or designee and adopted by the Board.</p> <p><u>Tobacco Use</u></p> <p>The Board prohibits tobacco use by any persons in its school buildings and on any property, buses, vans and vehicles that are owned, leased or controlled by the school district.</p> <p>The district shall annually notify staff, parents/guardians and members of the public about the district's tobacco use policy by publishing such in handbooks, newsletters, posted notices, and other efficient methods.</p> <p><u>Free Admittance</u></p> <p>Two (2) non-transferable reserved seat football tickets for all home games will be distributed to all current Board Members, Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Assistant, and all principals on a yearly basis.</p> <p>Past Board members who have served a full term shall, upon request, be granted a lifetime pass to all Highlands School District functions.</p> <p>One (1) free ticket will be provided to all middle school athletes in their sport. These are non-transferable.</p>
20 U.S.C. Sec. 7181 et seq 35 P.S. 1223.5	

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: CITIZEN ADVISORY
COMMITTEES

ADOPTED: December 6, 2004

REVISED:

905. CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEES	
1. Purpose	Citizen advisory committees can be useful in keeping the Board and administration informed with regard to community opinion and in representing the community in the study of specific school issues.
2. Authority	<p>The Board shall appoint any advisory committee it deems necessary. The Board shall seek the advice of the Superintendent before establishing or dissolving any advisory committee.</p> <p>In creating an advisory committee, the Board shall define the committee assignment.</p> <p>The advisory committee is an agency created by the Board. It cannot determine educational policies. Its function is strictly an advisory one within established limits. They express this function by studying educational needs and conditions and by offering suggestions for improving the school system. The Board may accept, reject or return the recommendations to the committee for further study. The Board reserves the right to approve all publicity released and reports released.</p> <p>Meetings of an advisory committee are not regular meetings of the Board and shall be open to the public only upon invitation of the committee.</p>

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

ADOPTED: December 6, 2004

REVISED: August 15, 2005

906. PUBLIC COMPLAINTS	
1. Authority	<p>Any parent/guardian, resident or community group shall have the right to present a request, suggestion or complaint concerning district personnel, programs, or operations of the district. Anonymous complaints will not be addressed by the Board, but referred to the Superintendent for disposition. At the same time, the Board has a duty to protect its staff from unnecessary harassment. It is the Board's intent to provide a fair and impartial manner for seeking appropriate remedies.</p> <p>Any misunderstandings between the public and the school district shall be resolved by informal, direct discussions among the interested parties, following the established organizational structure. Only when informal meetings fail to resolve the differences shall more formal procedures be employed.</p>
2. Delegation of Responsibility	<p>Any requests, suggestions or complaints directed to individual Board members and/or the Board shall be referred to the Superintendent for consideration and action. If further action is warranted, based on the initial investigation, such action shall be in accordance with established guidelines.</p>
3. Guidelines	<p><u>Matters Regarding A Staff Member</u></p> <p>First Level - A matter specifically directed toward a district staff member shall be addressed initially to the concerned employee, who shall discuss it with the complainant and make every effort to provide a reasonable explanation or take appropriate action within the employee's authority.</p> <p>As appropriate, the staff member shall report the matter and the resolution to the building principal or immediate supervisor.</p> <p>Second Level - If the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily at the first level, it shall be discussed by the complainant with the building principal or the employee's immediate supervisor.</p>

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: RELATIONS WITH PARENTS/
GUARDIANS

ADOPTED: December 6, 2004

REVISED:

908. RELATIONS WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS	
<p>1. Purpose Pol. 917</p>	<p>The Board believes that the education of students is a joint responsibility that is shared by the parents/guardians. To ensure that the best interests of each student are served in the educational process, a strong program of communication and cooperation between home and school must be maintained and parental involvement encouraged.</p>
<p>2. Authority Pol. 235</p>	<p>The Board feels that it is the parents/guardians who have the ultimate responsibility for their children's behavior in school, including the behavior of students who have reached the legal age of majority but are, for all practical purposes, under parental authority.</p>
<p>3. Delegation of Responsibility SC 1317</p>	<p>During school hours, the Board acts in loco parentis or in place of the parents/guardians, through its designated administrators.</p>
<p>4. Guidelines Pol. 212</p>	<p>Parents/Guardians are requested to keep the school staff apprised of changes in the home situation that may affect a student's conduct or performance.</p> <p>The Board directs that the following activities be implemented to encourage parent-school cooperation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parent-teacher conferences to permit two-way communication between home and school. 2. Open houses in district schools to provide parents/guardians the opportunity to see the school facilities, meet the faculty, and witness school programs. 3. Meetings of parents/guardians and staff members to explain and discuss matters of general interest. 4. Meetings of staff members and groups of parents/guardians of students having special abilities, disabilities, needs, or problems.

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT
RELATIONS

ADOPTED: December 6, 2004

REVISED:

909. MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS	
1. Purpose	It is the policy of the Board that school district officials and municipal officials maintain a close and harmonious association. Such liaison is requisite for dealing with school/community concerns and issues in a satisfactory manner while assuring prudent expenditure of tax dollars.
2. Authority PA Const. Art. III Sec. 14	The Board recognizes that its authority derives directly from the General Assembly, but it also is aware that the municipality and the school district must work together for the welfare of the residents.
SC 502, 521, 706, 775, 790	The Board advocates joint expenditures of district and municipal or county funds to provide facilities from which the entire community may derive benefits.
School Code 502, 521, 706, 775, 790	
PA Constitution Art. III Sec. 14	

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: COMMUNITY RELATIONS

ADOPTED: December 6, 2004

REVISED:

910. COMMUNITY RELATIONS	
1. Purpose	<p>The Board feels it is imperative that communication be maintained in both directions between district schools and local institutions, organizations and groups, such as industry, business, labor, charity and others that comprise the structure of the community.</p>
2. Authority Pol. 115, 118	<p>The Board has authority over the students in its care but shares that authority to a limited extent through the cooperative programs that take students into the community during part of their educational career. To make those experiences meaningful, the Board feels cooperation with the community is essential.</p> <p>Any programs that develop from community cooperative efforts require Board approval prior to implementation.</p>
3. Delegation of Responsibility	<p>The Superintendent or designee shall make presentations about the district to various community and civic groups.</p> <p>In reviewing cooperative programs, the administration shall keep in mind that the schools shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain an impartiality among all constituents who promote worthy causes. 2. Not be used to promote private or commercial interests. 3. Not be used for direct sales promotion of goods or services. 4. Not assign students to outside tasks that do not primarily benefit the students.
4. Guidelines	<p><u>Resource Persons/Speakers</u></p> <p>The Board welcomes talented individuals with skills, knowledge and experiences to share for the benefit of students.</p>

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: NEWS MEDIA RELATIONS

ADOPTED: December 6, 2004

REVISED:

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

911. NEWS MEDIA RELATIONS	
1. Purpose	Representatives of the local press, radio and TV are an important link in communications between school and community. Maintenance of good working relationships with media representatives is essential to meeting the objectives of the school-community relations program.
2. Authority	<p>The Board shall have final approval for all basic procedures regarding relations between the news media and the district.</p> <p>The Board reserves the right to negotiate for radio broadcasting, televising, filming, or sound recording of any school event by an outside agency. These rights, if sold, shall be contracted under conditions that bring the most favorable terms to the school district.</p>
3. Delegation of Responsibility	<p>The communications representative for the Board shall be the Superintendent or designee.</p> <p>The communications representative shall be responsible to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be readily available to media representatives. 2. Keep media representatives informed of all aspects of the school district so that reporting will be done on the basis of a complete and valid overview. 3. Submit and suggest feature stories or articles of interest or relevance. 4. Assist various school related groups in their relations with the news media. 5. Assist the Board in preparing regular and special publications for the public.
4. Guidelines	Staff members shall not give school information or interviews requested by news media representatives without prior approval of the district's communications representative.

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: RELATIONS WITH
INTERMEDIATE UNIT

ADOPTED: December 6, 2004

REVISED:

914. RELATIONS WITH INTERMEDIATE UNIT	
1. Purpose	Each school district has an opportunity to participate in the services and programs offered by the assigned intermediate unit.
2. Authority SC 951, 952	It is the policy of this Board that cooperation and communication be maintained with Allegheny Intermediate Unit Number 3 to ensure maximum effectiveness of programs and services.
SC 970	The Board shall annually review district programs that involve intermediate unit services and make whatever determinations such a review suggests. This review will normally take place prior to the district's approval of the proposed I.U. budget.
SC 960	In order to maintain a constructive relationship with the intermediate unit, the Board member elected by the Board is designated as the official liaison between the district and Allegheny I.U. Number 3.
3. Delegation of Responsibility	The duties of the Board representative are to ensure that the Board receives necessary information and data that will lead to sound and valid judgments regarding decisions that involve participation by the district in the various programs and services offered by the intermediate unit.
School Code 951, 952	

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: PARENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

ADOPTED: December 6, 2004

REVISED:

915. PARENTAL ORGANIZATIONS	
1. Authority	The Board recognizes voluntary organizations which exist solely to advance the welfare of children and youth in the home, school and community.
2. Guidelines	<p>For organizations to become officially recognized by the Highlands School District, the following guidelines shall be met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The organization shall have an established constitution and/or bylaws.2. An annual budget shall be submitted.3. The organization should strongly consider that its officers be bonded.4. A list of the officers shall be submitted each year.5. Each organization is limited to one (1) fundraising activity per year, unless otherwise approved by the district's administration.6. In the event an organization is disbanded, the Board must be notified in writing, including the organization's plan for the disbursement of funds.7. The school district does not supervise or establish by-laws for individual organizations.8. The school district will not be held responsible for the actions of each organization.9. The school district is not responsible for loss of funds for any organization.10. The school district recognizes that all organizations are founded for the benefit of students, but the district has no authority over the actions of said organizations.

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: SCHOOL VOLUNTEER

ADOPTED: February 14, 2006

REVISED:

916. SCHOOL VOLUNTEER	
1. Purpose	The Board recognizes that community volunteers can make valuable contributions to the educational program. The use of community volunteers is endorsed by the Board, subject to legal requirements and administrative procedures.
2. Definition	Volunteer - one who voluntarily offers a service to the school district without compensation.
3. Authority	<p>The Board authorizes the selection and use of parents/guardians, community members and others as volunteers to assist and supplement regular district staff.</p> <p>Building and organization volunteers shall be approved by the appropriate administrator. Athletic volunteers shall be approved by the Board.</p> <p>Volunteers shall be required to have an Act 34 criminal history report and an Act 151 clearance statement on file in the administrator's office.</p>
4. Guidelines	<p>The basic requirements of volunteer service are an interest in the Highlands educational program, enjoyment in helping children, and a sincere belief that volunteering makes a positive contribution to the learning process.</p> <p>Volunteers shall not be asked to assume professional staff responsibilities. Volunteers may provide supportive assistance under the direction of staff members.</p> <p>Any school volunteer program that will require financial support from the district budget shall require a formal recommendation for approval by the Superintendent to the Board, and approval by the Board, prior to implementation.</p> <p>Under no circumstances shall a volunteer be considered an employee of the district. A volunteer shall receive neither wages, nor any other valuable considerations for the performance of volunteer services. A volunteer position is not a right, but rather a privilege. As such, any volunteer position may be eliminated at any time. Also, any volunteer may be removed from a volunteer position for any reason or no reason.</p>

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: PARENTAL/FAMILY
INVOLVEMENT

ADOPTED: December 6, 2004

REVISED:

917. PARENTAL/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT	
1. Purpose	The Board recognizes the vital role parents/guardians and family play in the education, welfare and values of their children. The district is committed to the belief that all students can learn and acknowledges that schools and families share a commitment to the educational success of students.
2. Definition	Parental and family involvement shall be defined as an ongoing process that assists parents/guardians and families to meet their basic obligation as a child's first educator, promotes clear two-way dialogue between home and school, and supports parents/guardians as leaders and decision-makers concerning the education of their children at all levels.
3. Authority	The Board recognizes that the responsibility for each student's education is shared by the school and the family and acknowledges that schools and families must work as knowledgeable, cooperative partners to effectively educate all students. To this end, the Board shall support the development, implementation, and continuing evaluation of a parent and family involvement program that will involve parents/guardians at all grade levels in a variety of roles.
4. Guidelines	<p>Because parents/guardians are familiar with the needs, problems and abilities of their children, staff should communicate with and seek their input throughout the school year.</p> <p>The parental and family involvement program may include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support for parents/guardians as school leaders and decision-makers, in addition to serving in advisory roles. 2. Promotion of clear two-way communication between the school and the family about school programs and student progress.

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: TITLE I PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

ADOPTED: December 6, 2004

REVISED: June 20, 2006

	<p style="text-align: center;">918. TITLE I PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT</p> <p>1. Purpose The Board recognizes that parental involvement contributes to the achievement of academic standards by students participating in Title I programs. The Board views the education of students as a cooperative effort among the school, parents/guardians and community.</p> <p>2. Authority 20 U.S.C. Sec. 6318 In compliance with federal law, the district and parents/guardians of students participating in Title I programs shall jointly develop and agree upon a written parental involvement policy. When developing and implementing this policy, the district shall ensure the policy describes how the district will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Involve parents/guardians in the joint development of the district's overall Title I plan and the process of school review and improvement by conducting monthly building and/or district PAC meetings attended by parents/guardians, teachers, administrators and Board members. 2. Provide the coordination, technical assistance and other support necessary to assist participating schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance, including assistance in understanding state academic content and performance standards, state and local assessments, and requirements of Title I. 3. Develop activities that promote the schools' and parents'/guardians' capacity for strong parental involvement by promoting an atmosphere of open communication and cooperation. 4. Coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies with appropriate programs, as provided by law, including information on how to work with business partners and other community organizations to learn about Title I and to encourage school/family/community partnerships. 5. Involve parents/guardians in an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the policy in improving the academic quality of schools served under Title I through explanation and discussion of policy details.
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HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: DISTRICT/SCHOOL
REPORT CARDS

ADOPTED: December 6, 2004

REVISED:

919. DISTRICT/SCHOOL REPORT CARDS	
<p>1. Authority 20 U.S.C. Sec. 6311 SC 220 Title 22 Sec. 4.61</p>	<p>To provide pertinent information regarding the academic performance of the district and its schools, the Board shall annually develop and publicly disseminate a district report card and report cards for the individual schools, in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations.</p> <p>The Board, at its discretion, may include additional information not required by law on the district report card.</p>
<p>2. Guidelines 20 U.S.C. Sec. 6311</p>	<p><u>District Report Cards</u></p> <p>District report cards shall contain the following information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Aggregate data on student achievement at each proficiency level on state academic assessments and disaggregated data reflecting race, ethnicity, gender, disability, migrant status, English proficiency and status as economically disadvantaged. 2. Comparison of above student groups regarding achievement levels on state assessments. 3. Percentage of students not tested, disaggregated by student groups. 4. Most recent two-year trend data in achievement by subject area and grade level in areas where assessments are required. 5. Aggregate data on state indicators to determine Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), such as attendance rates for elementary schools. 6. Graduation rates for secondary schools, disaggregated by student groups.

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICY MANUAL

This Index is designed to direct the reader to the individual Section(s) dealing with a specific topic. The terminology used in the Policy Manual has been included here, including a listing of all Sections covered under each topic heading.

In addition, popular synonyms have also been utilized where necessary to guide the reader. Cross-referencing has been employed to provide all of the major Sections dealing with certain important topics.

Example: Employment Contract includes Administrative, Professional and Classified Employees

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BOARD POLICY MANUAL

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SC 510, 1318	=	Pennsylvania School Code of 1949
Title 22 Sec. 4.4, 11.1	=	State Board of Education Regulations
Art. III Sec. 14	=	Pennsylvania Constitution
35 P.S. 11301	=	Purdons Pennsylvania Statutes
P.L. 93-380	=	Federal Statutes
45 CFR 99	=	Code of Federal Regulations
C.S.A.	=	PA Consolidated Statutes Annotated
Pol. 116	=	Board Policy Reference