

STUDENT GIFTS AND SOLICITATIONS

Only those organizations granted approval by the Board of Education shall have permission to solicit donations and contributions from students. All fundraising activities must be voluntary and in accord with the rules of the Regents and the State Education Department's "Guidelines Relating to Solicitation of Charitable Donations from School Children". No direct solicitation of students is permitted during school hours.

Students are discouraged from presenting school staff with elaborate gifts. Spontaneous inexpensive gifts will be allowed, when reasonable, to express gratitude. Letters of appreciation are always welcome.

Approved: October 18, 1994

STUDENT GIFTS AND SOLICITATIONS REGULATION

No organization may directly solicit funds from students during school hours for any purpose. This does not, however, prohibit sale of tickets to musicals or athletic events, nor does it prohibit the Board from designating organizations to voluntarily solicit students' time or money.

Boards may permit staff to accept gifts from students provided such gifts are insignificant in value.

Effective January, 1994 the Board of Regents has prohibited the direct solicitation of funds from students during the school day (including lunch hours) for any purpose. This ban applies to students and school-related groups as well as to outside charitable organizations. The intent is to guarantee students a learning environment free from the pressure of peers or adults to make charitable donations to selected organizations.

The Board may elect to prohibit solicitation of any kind. Alternatively, the Board may decide which organizations or groups it wishes to permit to solicit charitable donations, as long as the activities otherwise comply with the Regents' rule.

The focus of the Regents' Rule is no longer on the type of organizations which may solicit funds but rather on the manner of fund raising. Although students may not be directly asked for contributions during school hours, indirect forms of solicitation, such as the following, may be permitted:

1. The sale of tickets to a social, musical, or athletic event where a portion of the funds go to a charitable purpose.
2. The recruitment of students during school hours to participate in fundraising activities to be conducted off school premises and/or when school is not in session. School personnel may put up posters or distribute flyers, notifying students of these activities. However, school personnel may not act as a conduit and collect funds from students on behalf of a charity for which they recruited.
3. The placement of a bin or collection box in a hallway or other common area for the voluntary donation of food, clothing or money.

Gifts

Students and their parents should be discouraged from the routine presentation of gifts to school district employees. In most cases, the writing of letters to staff members expressing gratitude or appreciation is more welcome and appropriate. On occasions, such as Christmas or Hanukkah, exchanging gifts is part of the holiday tradition and gifts freely given may be more meaningful to the giver than to the recipient. Where a student feels a spontaneous desire to present a gift to a staff member, the gift may be accepted in the spirit in which it is given. Gifts from children should be principally sentimental in nature and of insignificant financial value, neither elaborate nor unduly expensive. Discretion must be used to ensure that gifts of value are not accepted by staff.

Reference: NYS Constitution, Article 8.1
Matter of Schanbarger, 11 EDR 70
Education Law § 414
Rules of the Board of Regents 19.6
Guidelines Relating to Solicitation of Charitable Donations from School Children,
State Education Department, January, 1994

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