

# **Mounds View Public Schools Ends and Goals Regulation**

## **EG-3100                      Learning Environment and Climate**

The following regulations are written to support Policy EG-3100.

### **LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE**

1. The employer recognizes that the number of students in a teacher's classroom affects the teacher's workload, student achievement and the learning environment of the school and classroom.
2. It is understood that many factors affect the performance of teachers and students in the classroom. The Board recognizes that class load is one of these factors and further recognizes that excessive class load is a factor adversely affecting the learning climate in the classroom.
3. In the interest of student achievement, every reasonable effort will be made to maintain small classes consistent with the financial resources of the District.

Footnote:

The wording of this policy is the result of a negotiated agreement between Independent School District 621 and the Mounds View Education Association for the 1981-83 school years dated November 16, 1981.

### **PATRIOTIC OBSERVANCES**

The following regulation has been developed in support of a respectful and safe learning environment for students.

Students and staff of Mounds View Schools possess very personal thoughts regarding patriotic observances and the opportunities afforded to citizens of the United States.

Observances of patriotism as an expression of these thoughts must comply with the following guidelines:

1. The decision to undertake patriotic observances will be made at the school site with the approval of the principal.
2. Observances must be secular and voluntary in nature. Any student or staff member will have the right not to participate.
3. While the Pledge of Allegiance mentions the phrase "one Nation under God," it has been determined to be secular by the United States Supreme Court.

### **RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE**

It is important that all teachers:

- A. Be sensitive to the beliefs of all religions with programs that feature the traditions of many cultures.

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- B. Recognize that any observance of the various religious holidays must be educational and cultural rather than religious in nature. (Religious holidays, for the purpose of this regulation, are designated in the school calendar.) A balanced, year-round study of various holidays of diverse religious groups is appropriate.
- C. Take great care that religious symbols in the classroom are used for educational purposes. Religious symbols (e.g. Star of David, Cross or Buddha) should not be used in a classroom without explicit instruction as to their meaning.
- D. Take great care that religious holiday symbols are used primarily for educational purposes. Religious holiday symbols may also be used for decoration. It is inappropriate to have religious or religious holiday symbols in the school for extended periods of time.
- E. Take the students' level of maturity into account when making explanations, answering questions, and presenting the program.
- F. Review areas of concern or uncertainty with the building principal.

It is important that:

- A. Art and writing projects, not part of teaching about religion, should involve a variety of alternatives and should not focus on activities associated with specific religions or religious holidays and celebrations. Projects based on such activities may well be one of the several alternatives suggested.
- B. Parties for religious holidays should not be held during school time as this implies celebration of a religious event. Parties may be held at any time of the year if they are used to celebrate special non-religious seasonal events or the beginning of vacations.
- C. Teacher organized/directed gift exchanges (in connection with religious holidays) among students, as well as students and teachers, should not be conducted. Gift giving between teacher and student is permissible but should not be encouraged. Approved general collections and distributions for charity may be permitted.
- D. Holiday gift sales shall not be conducted during the school day.
- E. Sacred music of any religion or music pertaining to any religious holiday should not dominated individual concerts or the music program as a whole.
- F. Scheduling of tests and special events on religious holidays should be avoided where feasible.

## RELEASED TIME FOR RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

- A. Pursuant to M.S. 120.101, Subd.9, Independent School District No. 621 will excuse students from school, upon written application of the student's parent(s) or guardian; or of the student, if he/she is 18 years of age, to attend a school for religious instruction conducted and maintained by some church, synagogue, or association of churches, such instruction to be conducted outside the school

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building for a period not to exceed three hours per week at a uniform time approved by the building principal and the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.

- B. If a request is made for block released time for religious education by a church, synagogue, or association of churches, the parent, guardian, or student, if he/she is 18 years of age, shall furnish written requests on Form EG-4107 to the building principal for such released time for religious instruction. Such request shall require approval by the principal and the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee. Independent School District No. 621 will allow block released time; however, such time shall not exceed four full days within a given school year, under the following provisions:
- 1) that the church, synagogue, or association of churches, be asked to consider the school calendar and activities calendar in scheduling said released time for a student;
  - 2) that, as far as possible, such released time be scheduled for days when the student does not have school, and is not participating in extra-curricular school activities.
- C. General Procedures - dismissal for religious instruction shall be uniform for all students in each school. The school principal shall contact any religious organization which has requested released time and cooperatively arrange the dismissal schedule, and subsequent attendance reporting by the organization to the student's school.

The principal shall secure and file a signed released time request for each pupil excused, and shall supply the religious organization with an attendance form for completion and return to the student's school at intervals mutually agreed upon.

Transportation arrangements for all released time shall be the responsibility of the parent or guardian, or the student, if he/she is 18 years of age.

(Released time request form and attendance record form shall be part of this regulation.)

## LIMITED OPEN FORUM

The following regulations are established by the Superintendent for the administration of the Limited Open Forum for non-curriculum related student groups and will have no application to activities that occur outside of the Limited Open Forum. Non-curriculum related student groups are defined as any student groups not identified in Appendix C – Co-curricular salary schedule of the collective bargaining agreement between the School District and the Mounds View Education Association.

### A. Designated Time for Limited Open Forum

The secondary school principals will set aside thirty (30) minutes before the start of the instructional day and one (1) hour at the end of the instructional day for a Limited Open Forum.

### B. Access to Limited Open Forum

The principal of his/her designee may approve non-curriculum related student groups' use of facilities to conduct a meeting during the limited Open Forum provided that:

1. The meeting will take place during the limited Open Forum.

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2. The meeting is voluntary and student initiated. The principal or his/her designee must be assured that students are the ones promoting such activities and that they are participating of their own volition; an adult supervisor must be present. Staff members who supervise must not participate in the meeting activity. Non-school persons may not assist, control or regularly attend meeting.
3. Non curriculum-related student groups that desire to conduct meetings during the Limited Open Forum will make a request in writing to the building principal 48 hours prior to event. The request will include an estimated number of students in attendance, the time and date and any special equipment.
4. Student groups approved for Limited Open Forum will not use the school name, school mascot name, District name, or any name that might imply school or District sponsorship.
5. Board Policy EG- 3111 requires that no group will be discriminated against or denied access.
6. Student groups will not engage in any activity that is illegal, dangerous or disruptive to other activities. Such activities will be grounds for discipline of an individual student and grounds for a particular group to be denied access.
7. The meeting is open to all students without regard to race, creed, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, color, parental status, marital status, economic status or disability.

### C. Use of Facilities by Students

It is the responsibility of the building principal to:

1. Find a suitable room for the student group to use. The number of students in a particular group will be limited to the safe capacity of the meeting space.
2. Assure proper supervision. This action does not constitute sponsorship by the District of such meetings, and the presence of school authorities is for the purpose of observation only.
3. Assure that the meeting does not in any way interfere with the conduct of regular instructional activities of the school. The principal or his/her designee may deny facilities to students on the basis that such activities or meetings interfere with the instructional program.

### D. Other Stipulations

1. No public funds will be spent for the benefit of non-curriculum-related student groups meeting during the Limited Open Forum beyond the cost of providing space.
2. School authorities or District employees will not promote or lead such meetings.
3. Student meetings are not controlled, conducted or directed by persons or groups not affiliated with the schools. Visitors to the school must obtain the permission of the principal before meeting with non-curriculum-related student groups during the Limited Open Forum.
4. Non-school persons will be denied access to School district property if their behavior is or reasonably threatens to be illegal, dangerous or disruptive to other activities.

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## SERVICE ANIMALS IN THE SCHOOLS

The Mounds View School District will follow all state and federal laws, regulations and rules. Pursuant to the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) service animals, under appropriate circumstances, must be allowed to be used by students or staff in public schools. The following procedures must be followed for access for a service animal in our schools:

1. The parent or staff member will provide the district administration a letter from their health care provider regarding the need for a service animal.
2. The District will receive sufficient notice of a service animal being placed with a student or staff member. Sufficient notice will be not less than three weeks prior to placement of the service animal in order to plan for its placement.
3. The District will be provided a letter indicating that the service animal has been trained and certified by a reputable agency prior to placement in a school building.
4. A plan will be developed with the staff person or parent and will minimally include the following:
  - Identification of who is the certified handler
  - In the case that the certified handler will not be with the service animal at the school, identify who at the school will be trained to give commands to the service animal.
  - Any specific needs and/or issues related to having a service animal in the school and how each will be addressed (e.g. allergies of staff or students, extreme fear by a staff or student, etc.)
  - A communication plan to inform students, parents and others in the school community including an opportunity to identify issues or needs that must be addressed in the implementation plan
  - A plan to introduce the service animal into the school environment including training for staff and student about how to interact with a service animal

### Liability

The staff person or family who own the service animal and who are the certified handlers will provide the District evidence of liability insurance for the service animal. When school staff provide services to the child and, as part of this service, give commands to the child's service animal, these staff are acting as employees and will be covered for liability through the School District.

May 2003

Revised: October 2008