

DONATIONS TO THE SCHOOLS

A. Introduction

The Whitman-Hanson Regional School Committee (the “School Committee”) recognizes and appreciates the benefits to the school of donations of time, talent, and money in support of the educational goals of the Whitman-Hanson Regional School District (the “District”). Many school support organizations provide valuable resources to the school system. The Committee believes that public education is a common good that should be adequately supported by federal, state, and local governments. School-age children in Whitman and Hanson are entitled to a free and appropriate education under applicable law. In general, private donations should not be used to pay for core curriculum or other programs that fall within the obligations of the District.

The School Committee may accept donations to assist the District in furtherance of its educational goals and 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.

B. Ownership of Donations

Any donations to the District, whether in cash or in kind, that are accepted in accordance with this Policy, automatically become the property of the District.

All proposals to the School Committee for donations from staff and the general public require relevant departmental and administrative approval prior to being presented. District employees, applying for grants and/or seeking donations or outside funding for educational services, professional development, and/or materials, must receive prior approval from the Superintendent/Designee before submitting applications for funding. Donations may not be spent or used in the school unless and until they have been accepted on behalf of the District by a vote of the School Committee, subject to the exceptions stated below. Donations that are accepted by the School Committee will ordinarily be accepted without condition or restriction, unless the School 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 District to be used as the Whitman-Hanson Regional 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. Donations of capital in excess of the greater of \$35,000 or the applicable statutory threshold at the time of the proposal will require an analysis as to whether compliance with applicable public bidding and/or purchasing laws is required. The District will comply with all such laws where applicable, including the conduct of any required processes to request proposals in advance of final approval.

Approved booster and support organizations and recognized 501(c)3 registered charitable organizations may make donations of capital equipment to the District. All organizations agree that capital equipment will only be purchased with the prior notification to the Superintendent and approval of the School Committee upon the recommendation of, as appropriate, the Athletics Director, Director of Facilities, Director of Technology, or Director

of Business Services, and/or other relevant personnel. The preferred method for the acquisition of such capital equipment is for organizations to donate the funds to the district for purchase of such items. The District will then follow the appropriate purchasing laws, regulations and procedures in procuring the equipment. If approved and if equipment is acquired by the organization and donated directly, such equipment shall become the property of the District. The District will not accept any donations to avoid applicable public bidding, purchasing and/or construction requirements laws.

C. School Committee Approval

Donations may not be spent or used in the District 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/Principal is authorized to accept grants on behalf of the Committee from the federal, state, county, or local governmental agencies, private foundations, corporations, or private organizations when the District or a staff member has applied for the grant with the prior approval of the Superintendent/ Designee.
2. In-kind contributions may be accepted by the District only upon the advance approval of the School Committee. In determining whether to grant such approval, the School Committee will consider such factors as it deems relevant, including any safety considerations and any costs of installing or maintaining the property and its usefulness to the educational program. The School Committee may condition its acceptance of a contribution in kind on the agreement of the donor to bear the costs of installing or maintaining the property to be offered in kind, or may condition its acceptance upon any other condition that the School Committee determines to impose.
3. Donations of time and personal services by parents and other Whitman and Hanson 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.

Donations of cash may be accepted for the purpose(s) specified by the donor, upon approval by the School Committee. Donations in-kind that are subject to conditions or restrictions imposed by the donor will not be accepted by the School Committee or the Superintendent/Principal or any other District official, as the case may be. However, the School Committee will consider donor requests for the use and assignment of donated property before accepting contributions in kind.

D. Conditions for Acceptance of Donations or Fundraising Proceeds

The School Committee reserves the right to reject any donation or proceeds from fundraising if it finds that the donation would not serve the interests of the District. The School Committee will normally accept only those gifts that benefit the District as a whole or all the same classes in a subject or grade level within the school (e.g., those that strengthen the scope and sequence of the curriculum or the many co-curricular and support programs), subject to the limited exceptions listed below. The School Committee will consider the overall interests of the District in reviewing each circumstance, but generally will not accept donations or

proceeds from fundraising under the following circumstances:

1. The targeted purpose is incompatible with existing or planned curriculum, programs, or educational goals of the District.
2. The donation or fundraised proceeds would result in an unreasonable inequity among classes or groups of students within the District that are protected by applicable anti-discrimination laws (e.g., gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability).
3. The donation or purpose for fundraising would constitute an operating expense and 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). Funding for ongoing maintenance must accompany any donation of capital or capital purchased through fundraising.
4. The donation or purpose for fundraising may require special supplies, maintenance, or installation, or entail other significant costs not covered by the donation or funds raised.
5. The donation or purpose for fundraising would involve unreasonable advertising or promotion of a commercial interest.
6. The donation or purpose for fundraising would support a program that has been discontinued or any program, equipment or materials, or a capital item that was proposed but not funded through the District's budget.

The Committee recognizes that any policy statement on this topic will not be comprehensive in its resolution of all questions and situations. The Committee expects, from time to time, to render specific decisions, including policy exceptions, when it deems circumstances so warrant. Moreover, the Committee may amend this Policy from time to time at its sole discretion.

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

Revised by the Whitman-Hanson Regional School Committee: October 14, 2015