

**SECTION G
PERSONNEL**

GBA	EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT
GBD	SCHOOL COMMITTEE-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS
GBE	STAFF HEALTH AND SAFETY
GBEA	STAFF ETHICS/CONFLICT OF INTEREST
GBEB	EMPLOYEE CONDUCT
GBEBC	GIFTS TO AND SOLICITATIONS BY STAFF
GBEBD	ONLINE FUNDRAISING AND SOLICITATIONS- CROWDFUNDING
GBEC	DRUG FREE WORKPLACE POLICY
GBED	TOBACCO USE ON SCHOOL PROPERTY BY STAFF MEMBERS
GBG	STAFF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES
GBJ	PERSONNEL RECORDS
GBK	STAFF COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES
GCBA	PROFESSIONAL STAFF SALARY SCHEDULES
GCCC	FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE
GCCD	DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE POLICY
GCRD	TUTORING FOR PAY

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The School Committee subscribes to the fullest extent to the principle of the dignity of all people and of their labors and will take action to ensure that any individual within the District who is responsible for hiring and/or personnel supervision understands that applicants are employed, assigned, and promoted without regard to their race, creed, color, age, sex, national origin, gender identity, military status, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions. Every available opportunity will be taken in order to assure that each applicant for a position is selected on the basis of qualifications, merit and ability.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:08

CROSS REF.: AC, Nondiscrimination

Revised: June 11, 2018

SCHOOL COMMITTEE-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

The School Committee wishes to maintain open channels of communication between itself and the staff. The basic line of communication will, however, be through the Superintendent.

Staff Communications to the School Committee

All communications or reports to the Committee or any of its subcommittees from Principals, supervisors, teachers, or other staff members will be submitted through the Superintendent. This procedure does not deny the right of any employee to appeal to the Committee for administrative decisions on important matters, except those matters that are outside of the Committee's legal authority, provided the Superintendent has been notified of the forthcoming appeal and that it is processed in accordance with the Committee's policy on complaints and grievances. Staff members are also reminded that Committee meetings are public meetings. As such, they provide an excellent opportunity to observe first hand the Committee's deliberations on problems of staff concern.

School Committee Communications to Staff

All official communications, policies, and directives of staff interest and concern will be communicated to staff members through the Superintendent. The Superintendent will develop appropriate methods to keep staff fully informed of the Committee's problems, concerns and actions.

Visits to Schools

Individual School Committee members interested in visiting schools or classrooms will make arrangements for visitations through the Superintendent of the various schools. Such visits will be regarded as unofficial and informal expressions of interest in school affairs and not as "inspections" or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes. Official visits by Committee members will be carried on only under Committee authorization.

STAFF HEALTH AND SAFETY

Through its overall safety program and various policies pertaining to school personnel, the School Committee shall seek to assure the safety of employees during their working hours and assist them in the maintenance of good health.

Pre-employment physical examinations may be required for bus drivers and food handlers as law or state regulations require.

The superintendent may require a physical examination by the school physician whenever an employee's health appears to be a hazard to children or others in the school system, or when a doctor's certificate is needed to verify need for sick leave.

LEGAL REFS.: 71:54, 71:55B; 71:55C

STAFF ETHICS / CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The School Committee expects members of its professional staff to be familiar with the code of ethics that applies to their profession and to adhere to it in their relationships with students, parents, coworkers, and officials of the school system.

No employee of the District will engage in or have a financial interest in, directly or indirectly, any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with his duties and responsibilities in the school system. Nor will any staff member engage in any type of private business during school time or on school property.

Employees will not engage in work of any type where information concerning customer, client, or employer originates from any information available to them through school sources.

Moreover, as there should be no conflict of interest in the supervision and evaluation of employees, at no time may any administrator responsible for the supervision and/or evaluation of an employee be directly related to him.

In order to avoid the appearance of any possible conflict, it is the policy of the School Committee that when an immediate family member, as defined in the Conflict of Interest statute, of a School Committee member or district administrator is to be hired into or promoted within the School District, the Superintendent shall file public notice with the School Committee and the City Clerk at least two weeks prior to executing the hiring in accordance with the law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:52; 268A:1 et seq.

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

All employees of the New Bedford Public Schools have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with and abide by the laws and regulations of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and federal government as these affect their work, the policies of the New Bedford School Committee (“Committee”), and the regulations designed to implement them.

In the area of personal conduct, the Committee expects that teachers and other employees will conduct themselves in a manner that not only reflects credit to the school system but also sets forth a model worthy of emulation by students. All employees are expected to treat others with respect and civility at all times and are expected to carry out their responsibilities with conscientious concern.

Essential to the success of ongoing school operations and the instructional program are the following specific responsibilities, which will be required of all employees:

1. Professional conduct at all times and treating students, other employees and community members in our school buildings, events, grounds and buses with respect and civility and refrain from any inappropriate workplace conduct. Inappropriate workplace conduct can take multiple forms, including but not limited to the use of profanity, slurs, epithets, inappropriate gestures or making offensive or demeaning jokes.
2. Support and enforcement of policies of the Committee and their implementing regulations and school rules in regard to students, other employees and the community. This includes compliance with Committee policies AC, ACA, ACAB, ACE and JICFB.
3. Concern for and attention to their own and the school system’s legal responsibility for the safety and welfare of students, including the need to ensure that students are under supervision at all times.
4. Faithfulness and promptness in attendance at work. Employees must follow all District procedures when unable to report to their assignment.
5. Diligence in submitting required reports promptly at the times specified.
6. Care and protection of school property.

Please note that while this policy sets forth the District’s goals of promoting a positive and professional work environment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit the District’s authority to discipline or take remedial action for workplace conduct which is deemed unacceptable.

Because the Committee takes allegations of violations of this policy and retaliation seriously, it will respond promptly to complaints and where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, it will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

HOW TO FILE A COMPLAINT

The District takes allegation of a violation of District policy seriously and will take appropriate action. If an employee believes that another employee is in violation of this policy and/or the employee believes that the employee has been subjected to inappropriate workplace conduct the employee may immediately report it to a building administrator and/or Principal. If the employee in violation of the policy is a building administrator and/or Principal, a report may be made directly to the Office of Human Capital Services.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37H; 264:11

AMENDED: January 13, 2020

GIFTS TO AND SOLICITATIONS BY STAFF

Gifts

The acceptance of gifts worth \$50 or more by school personnel in a calendar year when the gift is given because of the position they hold, or because of some action the recipient could take or has taken in his or her public role, violates the conflict of interest law. Acceptance of gifts worth less than \$50, while not prohibited by the conflict of interest law, may require a written public disclosure to be made.

In keeping with this policy, no employee of the school district will accept a gift worth \$50 or more that is given because of the employee's public position, or anything that the employee could do or has done in his or her public position. Gifts worth less than \$50 may be accepted, but a written disclosure to the employee's appointing authority must be made if the gift and the circumstances in which it was given could cause a reasonable person to think that the employee could be improperly influenced. The value of personal gifts accepted is aggregated over a calendar year (4 gifts of \$20 value is the same as 1 gift of \$80 if given in the same calendar year).

In general, homemade gifts without retail value are permissible because a reasonable person would not expect an employee would unduly show favor to the giver, so no disclosure is required. Such gifts could include homemade food items (cookies, candy, etc), handpicked flowers, and handmade gifts worth less than \$10 (ten) dollars.

Class Gifts

There is a specific exception to the prohibition against accepting gifts worth \$50 or more, when the teacher knows only that the gift is from the class, not from specific donors. A single class gift per calendar year valued up to \$150 or several class gifts in a single year with a total value up to \$150 from parents and students in a class may be accepted provided the gift is identified only as being from the class and the names of the givers and the amounts given are not identified to the recipient. The recipient may not accept an individual gift from someone who contributed to the class gift. It is the responsibility of the employee to confirm that the individual offering such gift did not contribute to the class gift.

Gifts for School Use

Gifts given to a teacher solely for classroom use or to purchase classroom supplies are not considered gifts to an individual employee and are not subject to the \$50 limit. However, an employee who accepts such gifts must keep receipts documenting that money or gift cards were used for classroom supplies.

Solicitations

In spirit, the School Committee supports the many worthwhile charitable drives that take place in the community and is gratified when school employees give them their support. However, the solicitation of funds from staff members through the use of school personnel and school time is prohibited by the conflict of interest law. Therefore, no solicitations of funds for charitable purposes should be made among staff members. Staff members of course remain free to support charitable causes of their own selection.

Legal Ref: M.G.L. 268A:3; 268A:23; 930 CMR 5.00

CROSS REFS.: KHA, Public Solicitations in the Schools
JP, Student Donations and Gifts

ONLINE FUNDRAISING AND SOLICITATIONS - CROWDFUNDING

School District employees shall comply with all of the following provisions relating to online solicitations and the use of crowdfunding services for school-related purposes as well as all applicable laws, regulations and district policies. No online fundraising may occur except as provided below.

The Superintendent shall have final authority to approve any online fundraising activities by school district employees and shall determine and communicate to Principals the circumstances under which online fundraising proposals shall require Superintendent or School Committee approval in accordance with law and school district policy ([KCD](#)). The Principal of each school shall approve all online fundraising activities within their buildings prior to any employee posting any such fundraising solicitation.

Any solicitation shall be for educational purposes only (field trips, supplies, supplemental materials, books, etc.). The solicitation of personal items (coats, nutritional snacks, etc.) shall only be to benefit students directly. To the extent an employee solicits any technology or software, the employee shall secure the prior written approval of the Director of Technology or designee prior to any such solicitation. Any employee seeking to display or post a photograph of a student in conjunction with a fundraising solicitation must first secure the written consent of the student's parent or guardian.

Employees shall not use a crowdfunding source, or set up their appeal in such a way, that they are asking for donations directly from people over whom the employee making the request has authority, or with whom the public employee is having official dealings (such as parents of student's in a teacher's classroom - the solicitation can say "Classroom X needs tissues and crayons," but it shouldn't be directed to parents who have shared email addresses with the teacher for purposes of communicating about their student).

Employees using crowdfunding services shall periodically disclose in writing to the Superintendent the names of all individuals whom the employee has directly solicited in any manner including but not limited to oral, written, or electronic solicitation. The Superintendent shall maintain these disclosures as public records available for public review.

Employees may only use crowdfunding services that send the items or proceeds solicited by the employee directly to the employee's school or to the school district. Employees must verify under the crowdfunding service's terms and conditions that they meet all requirements for such solicitation. Items or proceeds directly sent to employees are considered gifts to the employee and may result in violation of state ethics laws.

If an employee's proposal is approved by the crowdfunding service, the employee agrees to use the donated materials solely as stated in the employee's proposal.

If a solicitation is not fully funded within the time period required by the crowdfunding service, or the solicitation cannot be concluded for any reason, every attempt will be made to return donations to the donors. Donations unable to be returned shall only be used as account credits for future solicitations.

Unless otherwise approved by the Superintendent in writing, all goods and/or proceeds solicited and received through any online solicitation shall become the property of the School Committee, and not of the individual employee who solicited the item(s) or funds. The employee is prohibited from taking any such item(s) or funds to another school or location, without the Superintendent's written approval.

LEGAL REFS: MGL [44:53A](#); [71:37A](#); [268A:3](#); [268A:23](#); Ethics Commission Advisory Opinion EC-COI-12-1;

CROSS REFS: [GBEA](#), Staff Ethics/Conflict of Interest;

[GBEBC](#), Gifts To and Solicitations by Staff;

[KCD](#), Public Gifts to Schools

SOURCE: MASC February 2018

NOTE: Crowdfunding services are defined as any online service used for the solicitation of goods, services, or money from a large number of people via the internet or other electronic network. Examples include GoFundme, Kickstarter, Indiegogo, YouCaring, and DonorsChoose.

Adopted: 7/16/2018

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

The School District will provide a drug-free workplace and certifies that it will:

1. Notify all employees in writing that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance, is prohibited in the District's workplace, and specify the actions that will be taken against employees for violation of such prohibitions.
2. Establish a drug-free awareness program to inform employees about the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace; the District's policy of maintaining a drug-free work-place; and available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and the penalty that may be imposed on employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace.
3. Make it a requirement that each employee whose employment is funded by a federal grant be given a copy of the statement as required.
4. Notify the employee in the required statement that as a condition of employment under the grant, the employee will abide by the terms of the statement, and will notify the District of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five days after such conviction.
5. Notify the federal agency within ten days after receiving notice from an employee or otherwise receiving notice of such conviction.
6. Take one of the following actions within 30 days of receiving notice with respect to any employee who is so convicted; take appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination; or require such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a federal, state or local health law enforcement, or other appropriate agency.
7. Make a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of all the provisions of this policy.

LEGAL REFS.: The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988

CROSS REFS.: JICH, Drug and Alcohol Use by Students

TOBACCO USE ON SCHOOL PROPERTY BY STAFF MEMBERS PROHIBITED

Smoking or the use of tobacco, including e-cigarettes and vapor devices, within school buildings, the school facilities or on school property or buses by any individual, including school personnel, is prohibited.

Staff members who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37H

STAFF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

The School Committee recognizes that employees of the district have the same fundamental civic responsibilities and privileges as other citizens. Among these are campaigning for an elective public office and holding an elective or appointive office.

In connection with his campaigning, no employee shall use school system facilities, equipment, or supplies; nor shall the employee discuss his campaign with school personnel during the working day; nor shall he use any time during the working day for campaigning purposes.

LEGAL REF.: 71:44

PERSONNEL RECORDS

Information about staff members is required for the daily administration of the school system, for implementing salary and other personnel policies, for budget and financial planning, for responding to appropriate inquiries about employees, and for meeting the School Committee's education reporting requirements. To meet these needs, the Superintendent will implement a comprehensive and efficient system of personnel records maintenance and control under the following guidelines:

1. A personnel folder for each present and former employee will be accurately maintained in the central administrative office. In addition to the application for employment and references, the folders will contain records and information relative to compensation, payroll deductions, evaluations, and any other pertinent information.
2. The Superintendent will be the official custodian for personnel files and will have overall responsibility for maintaining and preserving the confidentiality of the files within the provisions of the law.
3. Personnel records are considered confidential under the law and will not be open to public inspection. Access to personnel files will be limited to persons authorized by the Superintendent to use the files for the reasons cited above.
4. Each employee will have the right, upon written request, to review the contents of his own personnel file, in accordance with MGL 149:52C.
5. Employees may make written objections to any information contained in the file. Any written objection must be signed by the staff member and will become part of the employee's personnel file. Further, no negative comment will be placed in a staff member's file unless it is signed by the person making the comment and the staff member is informed of the comment and afforded the opportunity to include his written response in the file.
6. Lists of school system employees' names and home addresses will be released only to governmental agencies as required for official reports or by the laws.

LEGAL REFS.: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Sec. 438, P.L. 90-247
Title IV, as amended
88 Stat. 571-574 (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and regulations
M.G.L. 4:7; 71:42C
Teachers' Agreement

CONTRACT REF.: All Agreements

CROSS REF.: KDB, Public's Right to Know

STAFF COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

The School Committee will encourage the administration to develop effective means of resolving differences that may arise among employees and between employees and administrators; reduce potential areas of grievances; and establish and maintain recognized channels of communication between the staff, administration, and School Committee.

It is the Committee's desire that grievance procedures provide for prompt and equitable adjustment of differences at the lowest possible administrative level, and that each employee be assured opportunity for an orderly presentation and review of complaints and concerns.

Channels established will provide for the following:

1. That teachers and other school employees may appeal a ruling of a Principal or other administrator to the Superintendent.
2. That all school employees may appeal a ruling of the Superintendent to the Committee, **except in those areas where the law has specifically assigned authority to the Principal and/or the Superintendent and Committee action would be in conflict with that law.**
3. That all hearings of complaints before the Superintendent or Committee be conducted in the presence of the administrator who made the ruling that is the subject of the grievance.

The process established for the resolution of grievances in contracts negotiated with recognized employee bargaining units will apply only to "grievances" as defined in the particular contract.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 150E:5 and 8

CONTRACT REFS.: All Contract Agreements

PROFESSIONAL STAFF SALARY SCHEDULES

Teachers

The School Committee will adopt a salary schedule for regular teaching personnel as part of the contract negotiated with the teachers' bargaining unit. The schedule will be designed to recognize and reward training and experience and encourage additional study for professional advancement.

Principals and Administrators

The School Committee, with the advice of the Superintendent, will establish levels of compensation for each position based on the circumstances, dynamics, and requirements of each position. Consideration may be given to individuals for exceptional performance as a basis for establishing increases for Principals.

The Superintendent may, upon the request of the Committee, survey other school systems to determine salaries being paid for comparable positions in each system. The survey will include the effective date of the specified salary.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:40; 71:43

CONTRACT REF.: Teachers' Agreement

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

The School System shall comply with the mandatory provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. The Superintendent shall issue, and from time to time amend, regulations setting forth the rights and procedures granted by the Act, and shall ensure compliance with those regulations either personally or by delegation, or by some combination of personal oversight and delegation.

LEGAL REFS.: P.L. 103-3, "Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993"

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE POLICY

It shall be the policy of the New Bedford Public Schools to permit an employee to take up to 15 days of unpaid domestic violence leave from work in any 12 month period. In order to be eligible for said leave:

- (i) the employee , or a family member of the employee must be a victim of abusive behavior;
- (ii) the employee must be using the leave from work to seek or obtain medical attention, counseling , victim services or legal assistance; secure housing; obtain a protective order from court; appear before a grand jury; meet with a district attorney or other law enforcement official; or attend child custody proceedings or address other issues directly related to the abusive behavior against the employee or family member of the employee; and
- (iii) the employee must not be the perpetrator of the abusive behavior against such employee's family member.

An employee seeking such leave shall exhaust all annual or vacation leave, personal leave and sick leave available to the employee, prior to requesting or taking domestic violence leave, unless the employer waives this requirement.

Except in cases of imminent danger to the health or safety of an employee, advanced notice of domestic violence leave shall be required. If such imminent danger exists the employee shall notify the employer within 3 workdays that the leave was taken. The notification may be communicated to the employer by the employee, a family member of the employee or the employee's counselor, social worker, health care worker, member of the clergy, shelter worker, legal advocate or other professional who has assisted the employee in addressing the effects of the abusive behavior. If an unscheduled absence occurs, an employer shall not take any negative action against the employee if the employee, within 30 days from the unauthorized absence or within 30 days from the employee's last unauthorized absence in the instance of consecutive days of unauthorized absences, provides any of the documentation found in (1) to (7) below. An employer may require documentation that the employee or employee's family member has been a victim of abusive behavior and that the leave is consistent with clauses (i) to (iii) as above referenced; provided, however, that an employer shall not require an employee to show evidence of an arrest, conviction or other law enforcement documentation for such abusive behavior. The documentation shall be provided to the employer within a reasonable period after the employer requests it.

An employee shall satisfy this documentation requirement by providing anyone of the following documents to the employer:

- (1) a protective order, order of equitable relief or other documentation issued by a court of competent jurisdiction as a result of abusive behavior against the employee or employee's family member;
- (2) a document under the letterhead of the court, provider or public agency which the employee attended for the purposes of acquiring assistance as it relates to the employee or family member;

- (3) A police report or statement of a victim or witness provided to police documenting the abusive behavior;
- (4) documentation that the perpetrator of the abusive behavior has admitted to sufficient facts to support a finding of guilt ; or has been convicted of , or has been adjudicated a juvenile delinquent by reason of any offense constituting abusive behavior;
- (5) medical documentation of treatment as a result of the abusive behavior;
- (6) a sworn statement, signed under the penalties of perjury, provided by a counselor, social worker, health care worker, member of the clergy, , shelter worker, legal advocate or other professional who has assisted the employee in addressing the effects of the abusive behavior;
- (7) a sworn statement, signed under the penalties of perjury, from the employee attesting that the employee has been a victim of or is a family member of a victim of abusive behavior.

All information related to the employee's leave shall be kept confidential and shall not be disclosed, except to the extent that disclosure is:

- (i) requested or consented to, in writing, by the employee;
- (ii) ordered to be released by a court of competent jurisdiction;
- (iii) otherwise required by applicable federal or state law;
- (iv) required in the course of an investigation authorized by law enforcement, including, but not limited to, an investigation by the Attorney General; or
- (v) necessary to protect the safety of the employee or others employed at the workplace.

The Superintendent shall ensure that notice is provided to all employees in the next school year and beyond by appropriately amending the district's employee handbooks, by whatever title they may be known, or by direct notice about the Domestic Violence Law and securing the employees signature acknowledging receipt of the handbook/notice. The Superintendent shall be responsible for notifying all current employees, unless they have been notified through the handbook, of this policy in a manner that he/she deems appropriate.

No employer shall coerce, interfere with, restrain or deny the exercise of, or any attempt to exercise, any rights provided herein or to make leave requested or taken contingent upon whether or not the victim maintains contact with the alleged abuser. No employer shall discharge or in any other manner discriminate against an employee for exercising the employee's rights under law. The taking of domestic violence leave shall not result in the loss of any employment benefit accrued prior to the date of such leave. Upon the employee's return from such leave, he/she shall be entitled to restoration to the employee's original job or to an equivalent position. Definitions of 'abuse', 'abusive behavior', 'domestic violence', 'employees' and 'family members' may be found in the laws referenced below.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 149:52E; Section 10 Chapter 260 of the Acts of 2014

TUTORING FOR PAY

Definition: "Tutoring" means giving private instruction or help to an individual or group for which the teacher receives remuneration other than through the School Committee.

A teacher cannot recommend that one of his or her own students get tutoring, and then be paid to tutor that same student in a second job.

A teacher may not tutor students who are currently in his/her class. Even if the teacher does not recommend that the current student receive private tutoring, the teacher should not tutor current students.

Teachers and other public employees may not approach a student, or the student's parents, seeking private tutoring work. A teacher may provide tutoring when the relationship is initiated by the parents or a student, but, if the student is, or in the future may be, under the teacher's authority, the teacher will need to provide a written disclosure.

A teacher cannot use school resources such as classrooms or materials in connection with a private tutoring business. A public school employee cannot use a school or district website to advertise private tutoring services. Schools cannot send home brochures for a particular tutoring service with the children.

Tutoring is not to be recommended for a student unless the appropriate teacher of the student involved is consulted and agrees that it will be of real help. If tutoring seems advisable, the Principal may give the parents a list of persons who are willing to tutor. This list may include teachers, but not the student's teacher of the subject in which he or she is to be tutored.

Tutoring for pay is not to be done in the school building.

LEGAL REF: M. G. L. 268A Mass. Ethics Commission FAQs for Public School Teachers