

SECTION K  
COMMUNITY RELATIONS

KBA	SCHOOL-PARENT/GUARDIAN RELATIONS GOALS (MASC)
KBBA	NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS' RIGHTS (MASC)
KBE	RELATIONS WITH PARENT/GUARDIAN BOOSTER ORGANIZATIONS (MASC)
KDB	PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW (MASC)
KDD	NEWS MEDIA RELATIONS/NEWS RELEASES (H with MASC updates)
KE	ADDRESSING CONCERNS IN THE HANOVER SCHOOLS (H)
KE-E	PUBLIC COMPLAINTS – EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY (H)
KF-R	COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES (MASC)
KHB	ADVERTISING IN THE SCHOOLS (MASC)
KHC	COMMERCIAL AND PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES (H)
KI	VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS (MASC)
KLG	RELATIONS WITH POLICE AUTHORITIES (MASC)
KLJ	RELATIONS WITH PLANNING AUTHORITIES (MASC)
CLK	RELATIONS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES (MASC)

## **SCHOOL-PARENT/GUARDIAN RELATIONS GOALS**

It is the general goal of the District to foster relationships with parents/guardians, which encourage cooperation between the home and school in establishing and achieving common educational goals for students.

While parents/guardians are individually responsible for their children, the District provides direct services of education and indirect services of childcare for students during the time when they are within the supervision of school personnel. Consistent with these shared responsibilities and as appropriate to the maturity of the student, members of the school staff will consult with parents/guardians regarding student progress and achievement, methods to enhance student development, and matters of student conduct.

Additionally, involvement of parents/guardians in the schools is encouraged through regular communication with the school Principal and staff, the parent/teacher organizations, the school volunteer program, and other opportunities for participation in school activities and District programs.

SOURCE: MASC – Updated 2022

## NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS' RIGHTS

As required by Massachusetts General Law, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with law and Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education Regulations. The school district will follow the law and the regulations developed by the Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education to standardize the process by which public schools provide student records to parents who do not have physical custody of their children ("non-custodial parents"). The implementation of this policy will hopefully encourage parents to be involved in and informed about the education of their children, while protecting the rights and safety of all parties. A form for Implementing General Laws Chapter 71, Sec. 3H is available from the building principal.

As required by law, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with the following provisions.

- (a) A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless the school or district has been given documentation that:
  - 1. The parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
  - 2. The parent has been denied visitation, or
  - 3. The parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or
  - 4. There is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.
- (b) The school shall place in the student's record documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted pursuant to regulation.
- (c) To obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal.
- (d) Upon receipt of the request the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first-class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in regulation.
- (e) The school must delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.
- (f) Upon receipt of a court order which prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to law, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:34D; 71:34H  
603 CMR 23.07 (5) Access Procedures for Non-Custodial Parents  
20 U.S.C. §1232g Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

SOURCE: MASC - Reviewed 2022

## **RELATIONS WITH PARENT/GUARDIAN BOOSTER ORGANIZATIONS**

To enhance communications between parents/guardians and school officials, the Committee encourages the maintenance of formal parent/guardian organizations, including booster organizations, at each school building. For this purpose, the Committee will officially recognize parent/guardian organizations. These procedures will be observed:

1. Organizations seeking to be officially recognized shall petition to the School Committee by filing a copy of the organizational papers with the Superintendent who will refer the request to the School Committee for deliberation and a vote in a public meeting.
2. All recognized parent/guardian organizations shall obtain 501C3 status and file appropriate paperwork with state authorities and make proof of such status available to school district administration.
3. All parent/guardian organizations need to recognize that spending on student activities must comply with federal law relating to equity among student genders.

LEGAL REFS: Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972

CROSS REFS: ACA – Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex

SOURCE: MASC - Updated 2022

## **PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW**

The School Committee is a public servant, and its meetings and records will be a matter of public information except as such meetings and records pertain to individual personnel and other legally confidential matters.

The School Committee supports the right of the people to know about the programs and services of their schools and will make every effort to disseminate information. All requests for information will be acted on fairly, completely and expeditiously.

All commonly available public record documents of the School District shall be posted on the district's website. The length of time such records shall remain posted on the district website shall be in accordance with the Municipal Record Retention Manual. In addition, the official minutes of the Committee, its written policies and regulations, and its financial records will be open for inspection at the office of the Superintendent by any citizen desiring to examine them during hours when the office is open. No records pertaining to individual students or staff members will be released for inspection by the public or any unauthorized persons by the Superintendent or other persons responsible for the custody of confidential files. The exception to this will be information about an individual employee (or student) that has been authorized in writing for release by the employee (or student, or student's parent/guardian).

Each building administrator is authorized to use all means available to keep parents/guardians and others in the school's community informed about the school's program and activities.

SOURCE: MASC - Updated 2022

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 4:7; 66:10; 30A:18-25

CROSS REFS.: BEDG, Minutes  
GBJ, Personnel Records  
JRA, Student Records

## **NEWS MEDIA RELATIONS/NEWS RELEASES**

Every effort will be made to assist the press and other communications media to obtain complete and adequate coverage of the successes, challenges, planning, and activities of the school system.

All representatives of the media will be given equal access to information about the schools. General releases of interest to the entire community will be made available to all the local media simultaneously. There will be no exclusive releases except as media representatives request information on programs, plans or problems.

In order that school system publicity is given wide coverage and is coordinated into a common effort and purpose, the following procedures will be followed in giving official information to the news media:

1. The School Committee Chairperson will be the official spokesman for the Committee, except as this duty is delegated to the Superintendent.
2. News releases that are of a system-wide or a sensitive nature or pertain to established Committee policy are the responsibility of the Superintendent.
3. News releases that are of concern to only one school, or to an organization of one school, are the responsibility of the Principal of that particular school. All statements made to the press by other staff members of the particular school must be cleared with the Principal.

While it is impossible to know how news releases will be treated by the press, every possible effort should be made to obtain coverage of school activities that will create and maintain a dignified and professionally responsible image for the school system.

CROSS REF.: BBAA, School Committee Member Authority and Duties

SOURCE: Hanover

## **ADDRESSING CONCERNS IN THE HANOVER SCHOOLS**

When a member of the school community determines that there is a school-related concern that needs to be addressed with school officials, the sequential steps outlined below should be followed. Hanover Schools seeks to work collaboratively with members of the school community to find the fastest resolution to any problem.

1. The member of the school community should address the concern with the staff member most directly involved, (i.e., a question regarding the content of instructional materials or homework assignments should be shared with the classroom teacher).
2. If the matter is not resolved at this level, the member of the school community may bring the concern to the attention of the Principal.
3. If the matter continues to remain unresolved, the member of the school community may bring the concern to the attention of the Superintendent.
4. If the matter remains unresolved, the member of the school community may bring the concern to the attention of the school committee by directly contacting the School Committee Chairperson and requesting appropriate action.
5. Anonymous complaints will be disregarded.

The following are examples of issues that should be addressed at the level indicated. If a member of the school community has a concern that is not listed here, they may call their child's Principal for direction to the most appropriate person.

- 1. Teachers and Specialists (Art, Music, Computers and Technology, Library, Health, and PE)**
  - Student homework, assignments, quizzes, test, and grading
  - Course instructional materials, practices, academic progress, and extra help
  - Issues related to classroom discipline, interactions with other pupils and teachers
- 2. Athletic Instructors and Coaches**
  - Concerns regarding athletic activities
  - At the High School concerns may also be directed to the Athletic Director
- 3. Guidance and Adjustment Counselors**
  - Concerns between school and home, teacher and pupil, pupil and other pupils
  - Personal matters relating to student development, behavior, or interaction with others
  - Course selection and student schedules
  - Scheduling of grade/team level meetings at the Middle School
  - Course placement or career information
  - Middle and High School academic records
  - Accommodations Plans



- Student placement issues (in a class, program or instructional level)
- 1 of 2

File: KE

#### **4. Principals and/or Assistant Principals**

- Co-curricular program issues (athletics, music, drama, etc.)
- Matters related to the physical plant
- Concerns regarding school personnel
- Student records, school-wide student expectations, discipline issues, or bus conduct
- Requests that specific courses and programs be included in the program of studies
- Policy, procedure, and protocol concerns

#### **5. Superintendent**

- Questions regarding school committee policies and administrative procedures
- School Committee meetings and agenda items
- Budgetary matters to also include any issue or item of the Hanover Schools budget that was not processed or appropriated correctly
- Concerns regarding school personnel or services which have not been resolved at the Principal's level
- Suggestions or requests for changes in the curriculum
- Transportation matters

#### **6. School Committee**

- Matters pertaining to district-wide policy, protocol, and procedures
- Concerns regarding the Superintendent
- Issues relating to school committee minutes and agenda items (directed to the Chairperson)
- Long-range planning
- District-wide budget issues
- Any item that should be included in future planning by the Hanover Schools

#### **7. Student Services**

- The parent/guardian should first try to address a concern with the appropriate contact person regarding provision of services and IEP.
- If the concern is not resolved at this level, the parent/guardian may then contact the Special Education Administrator at their child's school.
- If the concern remains unresolved, the parent/guardian may bring the matter to the attention of the building Principal.
- If the concern continues to remain unresolved, the parent/guardian may bring the matter to the attention of the Director of Student Services

SOURCE: Hanover

**PUBLIC COMPLAINTS  
EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY**

Complaint Procedure

1. A parent, guardian, or other person or group who believes that M.G.L. c. 76, s. 5 or 603 CMR 26.00 has been or is being violated, may request a written statement of the reasons therefore from the responsible School Committee through the Superintendent and may submit a copy of such request to the Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity of the Department of Education. If such request is made, a copy of such request shall be sent by the School Committee to the Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity.
2. The School Committee shall respond promptly, but no later than 30 days, in writing to the complaining party. The School Committee shall also send a copy of its response to the Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity.
3. The Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity shall act as the representative of the Board of Education for the purpose of receiving complaints pursuant to 603 CMR 26.00.
4. The Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity shall, pursuant to a complaint received under 603 CMR 26.09 (1) or on its own initiative, conduct reviews to insure compliance with M.G.L. c. 76 s. 5 and 603 CMR 26.00. The School Committee and the specific school(s) involved shall cooperate to the fullest extent with such review.
5. In the event of non-compliance with M.G.L. c. 76 s. 5 or 603 CMR 26.00 the Board of Education may take such action as it sees fit, including, but not limited to, withholding of funds or referral of the matter to the Office of the Attorney General for appropriate legal action.

Private Right of Enforcement

Nothing in 603 CMR 26.00 shall abridge or in any way limit the right of a parent, guardian, or person affected to seek enforcement of St. 1971, c. 622 in any court or administrative agency of competent jurisdiction.

LEGAL REFS.:       M.G.L. 76:5

SOURCE: Hanover

## COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

The use of school buildings, grounds, equipment, and facilities will be authorized by the Superintendent in conformity with the following regulations, which have been approved by the School Committee.

1. Requests for the use of school facilities will be made at the office of the Superintendent at least 14 days prior to the date of use.
2. School facilities may not be used for individual, private, or commercial purposes.
3. Requests for school facilities must be cleared with the building Principal or the Superintendent or both, should the nature of the request so justify.
4. School-related groups will be permitted reasonable use of school facilities without charge.
5. All activities must be under competent adult supervision approved by the Superintendent and the Principal of the building involved. In all cases, an assigned school employee will be present. The group using the facilities will be responsible for any damage to the building or equipment.
6. Groups receiving permission are restricted to the dates and hours approved and to the building area and facilities specified, unless requested changes are approved by the Superintendent.
7. Groups receiving permission are always responsible for the observance of fire and safety requirements.
8. Smoking within the building is not permitted. Permission for the possession and sale of alcoholic beverages may be granted to a nonprofit organization, which is properly licensed, only by the School Committee.
9. Proper liability insurance will be required of all groups given permission to use school facilities.
10. The Committee will approve and periodically review a fee schedule for the use of school facilities.
11. In situations where there is no cost factor to the school district, or in situations where a mutual exchange of facilities is possible between the school district and the organization, rates may be modified or eliminated by the Superintendent. In situations where extended usage for a long period of time is required, rates may be set at a contract price.
12. The School Committee reserves the right to cancel any permission granted.

SOURCE: MASC – Reviewed 2022

## **ADVERTISING IN THE SCHOOLS**

The School Committee may grant permission for advertising of commercial products or services in school buildings or on school property under guidelines or regulations it may approve. Otherwise, no advertising of commercial products or services will be permitted in school buildings or on school property. Publications of the school district will not contain any advertising. However, this will not prevent advertising in student publications that are published by student organizations, subject to administration controls, or the use of commercially-sponsored, free teaching aids if the content is approved by the administration.

Solicitation of sales or use of the name of the school district to promote any product will not be permitted by the Committee.

SOURCE: MASC - Reviewed 2022

CROSS REF.: KHA, Public Solicitations in the Schools

## **COMMERCIAL AND PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES**

Distribution of commercial and promotional materials not directly related to school fund-raising activities shall be at the discretion of the Superintendent. In making the decision, the Superintendent shall weigh educational value and consistency with the mission and objectives of the Hanover Schools.

SOURCE: Hanover

## **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS**

The School Committee welcomes parents/guardians and guests to visit classrooms to observe and learn about the instructional programs taking place in our schools. Such visits can prove most beneficial in promotion of greater school-home cooperation and community understanding of how we carry out the school district's mission and goals.

Visits by parents/guardians to several classrooms in each grade for the purposes of comparing teaching styles to provide a basis for a request for student assignment to a particular teacher are strongly discouraged because the School District's policy of assigning a student to a particular class is the sole responsibility of the building Principal in consultation with the staff of that school.

The following guidelines to classroom and school visits should be followed:

1. Request for classroom visitations by parents/guardians will be welcomed if the educational process is not disrupted. To this end we request that such requests be made at least forty-eight hours in advance to allow for proper arrangements to be made.
2. The building Principal has the authority to determine the number, times, and dates of observations by visitors. This will be done in consultation with staff members to give adequate notice to the staff members of the impending visits.
3. For security purposes it is required that all visitors upon entering the building receive a Visitor's Identification badge. Additionally, visitors are asked to sign a guest log showing arrival and departure times. Teachers are encouraged to ask visitors if they have registered in the Principal's office.
4. Under ordinary circumstances classroom observations will be strongly discouraged during the first three weeks of school in September and during the month of June.
5. Any student who wishes to have a guest in school MUST ask the permission of one of the administrative staff 24 HOURS in advance of the proposed visit. If permission is granted, the guest is expected to follow the standards of behavior expected of all students. Upon arrival the guest must register in the office. Any guest who fails to comply with student regulations will be asked to leave the school building and grounds immediately.

CROSS REF.: IHBA, Observations of Special Education Programs

SOURCE: MASC - Reviewed 2022

## **RELATIONS WITH POLICE AUTHORITIES**

Cooperation with law enforcement agencies is essential for the protection of students, for maintaining a safe environment in the District schools, and for safeguarding all school property.

Relationships between the schools and officials of law enforcement agencies in investigative matters concerning pupils will take into consideration the respective roles of the schools and law enforcement agencies in assisting and protecting the interests of the community and ensuring the rights of all concerned.

The School Committee also recognizes the potential enrichment that law enforcement agencies can make in the educational program.

Efforts should be made to develop and maintain a healthy attitude toward law enforcement agencies and personnel to promote better understanding and communication.

SOURCE: MASC – Reviewed 2022

## **RELATIONS WITH PLANNING AUTHORITIES**

The School Committee will participate in local and state planning functions that could directly affect District schools and their immediate environment.

The Superintendent or designee will keep the School Committee informed of planning matters bearing directly on the operation of District schools or school-sponsored programs and will undertake action on behalf of the School Committee to influence matters in the best interests of the students, the schools and the District.

SOURCE: MASC – Reviewed 2022



## **RELATIONS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES**

The School Committee and its administrative officers welcome all who seek to serve the residents of the community and will participate with them in the planning and execution of such projects as will be mutually beneficial for students.

It is School Committee policy that administration inform elected and appointed officials of the local and county government of the desire to work cooperatively for improved services.

SOURCE: MASC – Reviewed 2022