

Community Relations

MOUNT PLEASANT COTTAGE SCHOOL UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT**SUBJECT: SOLICITATION OF CHARITABLE DONATIONS FROM SCHOOL CHILDREN**

In accordance with Section 19.6 of the Rules of the Board of Regents and Mount Pleasant Cottage School Union Free School District policy, the direct solicitation of charitable donations from public school students on school property during school hours in which they are compelled to be in attendance is strictly prohibited.

To implement the terms of District policy and the Rules of the Board of Regents, the following regulations shall apply:

- 1) School children may be recruited to participate as fund raisers for the benefit of a charity on a voluntary basis when such fund raising is to be conducted off school premises and/or when school is not in session. School personnel may distribute flyers or other literature, put up posters or otherwise notify students of out-of-school fund raising activities. However, school personnel may not act as a conduit and collect funds from students on behalf of a charity for which they recruited, even though the funds were raised by students off school property and not during school hours.
- 2) The prohibition against solicitation of charitable donations "during school hours" extends to homerooms and lunch periods. School hours end when students are released from compulsory attendance, which means that the Rules of the Board of Regents and District policy prohibiting such solicitation of charitable donations from students does not apply to before-school or after-school extracurricular periods.
- 3) The District will allow school children to participate in fund raising athletic events, such as walk-a-thons in which the school children perform and receive pledges from parents/guardians and members of the community at large, as long as the school itself is not used as a conduit to collect the money earned on behalf of the organization.
- 4) The District may allow students to participate during the school day in a food drive or clothing drive or similar activity involving the donation of goods for the needy only where the food, clothing, other goods or funds are collected in a non-coercive and passive fashion, such as through a bin or receptacle placed in a hallway or other common area, so that the identities of students making and not making donations are not revealed. Collection of charitable contributions of food, clothing, other goods or funds from students in the classroom or homeroom is prohibited.
- 5) Student participation in fund raising activities off school premises which occurs as part of a community service program in which students receive high school credit for providing services to a charitable organization shall not be prohibited, provided that there is no solicitation of donations from students while they are attending school.

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- 6) Student organizations, such as a key club, may engage in fund raising for charitable purposes as an extracurricular activity provided that the student organization does not solicit funds directly from students during school hours.
- 7) The sale of tickets to students for a social, musical, theatrical or athletic event where a portion of the proceeds go to a charitable purpose shall not be prohibited. For example, the purchase of a ticket to a dance to raise money for a student trip or scholarship fund or for a ticket to a concert or play or charity basketball game or similar event where a portion of the proceeds go to charity shall not be prohibited by District policy. In such a situation, the student is receiving consideration for the purchase of the ticket and the risk of coercion of economically disadvantaged students is diminished, since there are many reasons for declining to attend an event. However, in accordance with District policy and the Rules of the Board of Regents, the sale on school grounds during school hours of lottery tickets or tickets for chance would be prohibited because there is no benefit received by the purchaser in consideration of his/her purchase. Furthermore, the conduct of a lottery or other game of chance that is not specifically authorized by law constitutes a gambling offense proscribed by Article 225 of the Penal Law.
- 8) The direct solicitation of charitable donations from students is prohibited where the object is to raise money to defray medical expenses for another student or other member of the school community who is ill or to raise money for a scholarship fund in memory of a deceased member of the school community. However, such prohibition will not apply to the distribution of flyers requesting that students make contributions outside of school to a fund established for such purposes. Alternatively, funds could be collected for this purpose on school property through the establishment of a collection box or receptacle in a hallway or common area.
- 9) In accordance with District policy and the Rules of the Board of Regents, the prohibition against the solicitation of charitable donations during school hours does not contain any exceptions for charitable fund raising by students or for school related organizations, such as parent-teacher associations. Direct solicitation of students during school hours is prohibited regardless of the nature of the person or organization soliciting donations.
- 10) There is no prohibition against the kinds of organizations that can engage in fund raising activities. Rather, it is the final determination of the Board of Education as to which organizations, groups, etc. can solicit charitable donations and for what purposes, as long as the activities otherwise comply with District policy and regulations and the Rules of the Board of Regents.