

**Policy**

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CORPORATE SPONSORS

The Somerville Board of Education desires to provide optimal financial support for the essential needs of its schools. Therefore, the Somerville Board of Education shall consider proposals from corporate sponsors for financial and material support for district programs. A corporate sponsor shall mean a nonschool sponsored person and/or organization that provides support to the school district through financial or material means in exchange for recognition and/or acknowledgement.

School-business relationships based on sound principles and community input can contribute to high quality education. However, compulsory attendance creates an obligation for the school district to protect the welfare of students and the integrity of the learning environment. Therefore, when working together, schools and businesses must ensure that educational values are not distorted in the process. Positive school-business relationships should be ethical and structured in accordance with the following principles:

A. Consistency with district academic standards and goals

All corporate support or activity shall be consistent with State, district, and school academic standards and goals. Commercial involvement must also be structured to meet identified educational needs, not commercial motives.

B. Consistency with board nondiscrimination policies (2224, 4111.1/4211.1, 6121) and age-appropriateness

All corporate support or activities must be consistent with Somerville School District policies prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, domestic partnership status, familial status, pregnancy, pregnancy related disability, liability for service in the Armed Forces of the United States, nationality, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait of any individual, genetic information, or refusal to submit to a genetic test or make the results of a genetic test known, in employment or in educational opportunities. Further state and federal protection is extended on account of disabilities, social or economic status, pregnancy, childbirth, pregnancy-related disabilities, actual or potential parenthood, or family status. All corporate support or activities shall be age-appropriate for the students involved.

C. Certain corporate support or activity prohibited

No corporate support or activity will be permitted in the district or in the schools that:

1. Promotes the use of illicit drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or firearms;
2. Promotes hostility, disorder, or violence;
3. Attacks or demeans any ethnic, racial, or religious group;
4. Is libelous;
5. Promotes any specific religion;
6. Promotes or opposes any political candidate or ballot proposition;
7. Inhibits the functioning of any school.

D. The district must control the curriculum

District personnel must retain the discretion on how or whether to integrate commercially sponsored or provided material or programs into the curriculum. Also, school activities shall not be about a commercial sponsor, e.g., students shall not be required to make art projects or write essays primarily about sponsors.

CORPORATE SPONSORS (continued)

## E. Parents shall be consulted

Parents and community members shall be consulted in the decision-making process, and be well-informed about the nature and extent of commercial activity in the schools. Information can be via letter and public announcements in newspapers, school and PTA newsletters, school websites, etc.

Definitions

## A. Advertising

Advertising is an oral, written or graphic statement made by the producer, manufacturer, or seller of products, equipment, or services which calls for the public's attention to arouse a desire to buy, use, or patronize the product, equipment, or services. This includes the visible promotion of product logos for other than identification purposes. Brand names, trademarks, logos or tags for product or service identification purposes are not considered advertising. Also, nothing in this policy or procedure is intended to limit announcements, information, or logos of school-related non-profit corporations, such as the parent teacher association, other parent teacher organizations, or the education foundation.

## B. Sponsorship

Sponsorship is an agreement between a school district, or a site based or parent based group with an individual group, company or community-based organization in which the sponsor provides financial or resource support in exchange for recognition.

## C. Partnership

A partnership is an agreement between the school district and a private entity, wherein the basis and the terms of the relationship are set by the school district, and agreed upon by the private entity, or reached mutually. Frequently a partnership is less formal than a contractual relationship. The school district should not be required by the partnership to sell products to students, expose students to advertisements during school time, or place advertising on school property. Partnerships should be of a non-exclusive nature, and should not adversely affect or distract from the instructional mission of the school.

## D. Sponsored Educational Materials

Sponsored educational materials, are educational materials and programs developed and/or funded by commercial enterprises, trade organizations, or non-profit organizations with significant corporate backing. These materials are intended for use or distribution at schools, and can be intended for use as either primary or supplemental curriculum.

## E. Electronic Media

Electronic media is any type of instruction that happens during school time, or any program shown during school time that requires the use of electronic equipment, such as televisions, video equipment, computers, movie projectors, etc.

Specific Limitations on District and School Based Advertising

## A. Students shall not be required to view advertising

Students shall not be required to observe, listen to or read commercial advertising in the school-building except as follows:

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1. Advertising is permitted in connection with courses of study which have specific lessons related to advertising. It will be up to each school to decide whether the lessons related to advertising are appropriate;
2. Advertising is permitted in yearbooks, school newspapers, and event programs;
3. Advertising is permitted in such supplementary classroom and library materials as newspapers, magazines, television, the internet, and similar media where they are used in a class such as current events, or where they serve as an appropriate research tool;
4. Information concerning educational activities or opportunities of interest to students and others in the school community, such as flyers and brochures regarding such things as sports camps, music lessons, and tutors, shall be permitted, provided that the principal or designee reviews the material in advance.

## B. Limits on promotional information in curriculum materials

The district shall not purchase or use any sponsored educational materials that contain promotional information about a product, service, company, or industry that is inappropriate to the lesson being taught in the content of the curriculum.

## C. Students shall not be required to advertise

No corporate relationship shall be permitted which requires students to advertise a product, service, company, or industry. This prohibition on student advertising includes athletic uniforms and equipment, although uniforms and equipment may display the name or logo of the uniform and equipment manufacturer or supplier. Specific limitations on the use of logos are set forth below.

## D. Limits on collecting personal information

Neither the district nor any school shall require students to complete surveys to provide marketing information to vendors, or distribute to vendors any personal information of students, including, but not limited to names, addresses, and telephone numbers, except as may be required by law. In addition, neither the district nor any school shall enter into any contract for products or services, including electronic media services, where personal information will be collected from the students by the providers of the services in question. Personal information includes, but is not limited to, the student's name, telephone number and home address.

Logos and Sponsorship

- A. Advertising may be permitted on scoreboards, reader-boards, building facades, walls, or floors, or district athletic fields only with board approval and according to board policy.

## B. Logos for identification only

All company logos appearing on district property, including logos on materials, supplies, or equipment purchased, rented, or leased by or donated to the district, shall be for product or sponsor identification purposes only. Logos for sponsor identification purposes shall not be permitted on district property, materials, supplies, or equipment for the purpose of advertising to students. School-based personnel shall be the primary decision-makers in the schools regarding whether a sponsor identification logo is for identification or advertising purposes. In determining whether the logo is for identification or advertising, the following criteria should be used: the size and location of the logo, the attention drawn to the logo compared with the intended use of the material, and the age of the students who will view it.

Vending machine facades shall not be used for advertising. The name and logo of product manufacturers, such as the soft drink makers, can appear if they are for identification purposes only.

CORPORATE SPONSORS (continued)**C. Sponsor recognition**

It is appropriate that corporate sponsors and donors receive recognition for their support. Such recognition can be in the form of the corporate name or a logo for identification purposes on the product or materials provided, or a written acknowledgment in an appropriate school publication. In unique cases and with board approval, the corporate name can attach to a program. Corporate recognition in the form of name plates or donor walls shall be board approved.

Implementation

Proposals for school-business partnerships shall be submitted in writing and reviewed by the superintendent and only those proposals that are consistent with the standards set forth in this policy shall be brought before the board for review and approval. All school-corporate partnerships shall be approved by the board.

In the event there are competing proposals for the same or similar sponsorship, the board will review the superintendent's recommendation to the board. All corporate sponsorship proposals recommended by the superintendent will be discussed at a public board meeting with the proposal being included on the board meeting agenda.

A corporate sponsorship shall not exceed one year in duration and will not be approved by the board in excess of the one year period. At the conclusion of this approved period, and if the sponsor desires to continue the sponsorship, an updated sponsorship proposal must be prepared by the sponsor and submitted to the superintendent for approval by the board for another year. There shall be no expectation a corporate sponsorship will be renewed beyond the board approval dates. There shall be no limit to the number of times the board approves the updated sponsorship proposal.

The school district will appropriately acknowledge the organization's contribution to the school district. The acknowledgment may include a public address announcement at an activity, signage at the activity or on school grounds, or through other reasonable means, posting of signs identifying the sponsor shall not be considered the district's endorsement of the product or service of a company.

Acceptance of Corporate Sponsorships

Any sponsored or donated material, equipment, personal property or other benefit derived by the district through corporate sponsorships will be held to the same standards used for district purchases. Corporate sponsorship proposals that provide gifts, grants, and donations to the school district shall be accepted in accordance with board policy 3280 Gifts, Grants and Donations.

All corporate sponsorship proposals presented and approved by the board shall be consistent with all district collective bargaining agreements, competitive bidding and purchasing laws, district policy and regulations, and all applicable federal and State laws, administrative codes, rules, and regulations.

Adopted: October 21, 2008  
 NJSBA Review/Update: February 2017  
 Readopted

Key Words

Special Interest Groups, Corporate Sponsors, Advertise, Advertiser, Advertisement, Promotional

<b><u>Legal References:</u></b> N.J.S.A. 18A:11-1	General mandatory powers and duties
N.J.S.A. 18A:20-34	Use of schoolhouse and grounds for various purposes
N.J.S.A. 18A:36-34	Written approval required prior to acquisition of certain survey information from students

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<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:42-4	Distribution of literature as to candidacy, bond issues or public question to be submitted at election; prohibited
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 19:34-6	Prohibited actions in polling place on election day, exception for simulated voting
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 19:34-15	Electioneering within or about polling place; disorderly persons offense
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 19:44A-19.1	Solicitation on state owned property prohibited; certain circumstances
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 26:3D-55 <u>et seq.</u>	<u>New Jersey Smoke-Free Air Act</u>
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:54-20	Powers of board (county vocational schools)
<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:26-12.2(a)4	Policies and procedures for school facility operation

20 U.S.C.A. 4071 – 4074 – Equal Access Act

34 CFR 98.1 - Pupil Protection Rights Amendment

**Possible**

<b><u>Cross References:</u></b>	*1100	Communication with the public
	*1140	Distribution of materials to students and staff
	*1230	School-connected organizations
	*1314	Solicitation
	*1315	Distribution of materials to students and staff
	*1330	Use of school facilities
	*3280	Gifts Grants and Bequests
	5136	Fund-raising activities
	*6142.10	Internet safety and technology

\*Indicates policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual.