

ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION

The Ledyard Board of Education recognizes its obligation to carefully control the way in which students are exposed to the advertising of products and events, other than those directly related to school sponsored programs and activities. Although Ledyard Public Schools is a public institution supported by public taxes, the Board has a clear responsibility to protect students and their families from possible exploitation through advertising or promoting the interests of non-school-related agencies, organizations or commercial entities. There are situations, however, when it is appropriate to make students aware of community activities and other events or opportunities that have educational value in line with the mission and goals of the District.

It is the policy of the Board that the students, staff or facilities and grounds of Ledyard Public Schools shall not be used to advertise or promote the interests or activities of commercial entities or other non-school-related organizations except that District schools may:

1. Utilize instructional aids furnished by private sources when, in the judgment of the Superintendent, the advertising content is reasonable.
2. Cooperate, through posted announcements and distribution of program materials, with a federal, State or Town agency or non-profit community organization that benefits students and their families, when such cooperation will not interfere with the school program.
3. Allow advertisement for and permit students the option of participating in essay, art, science and similar contests sponsored by outside interests when such activities are in line with the educational mission and goals of the District.
4. Accept limited advertising on extra-curricular activity schedules, programs and school-based publications; the funds from such advertising are to be directly used in support of the associated school program or activity.
5. Use films or other media materials that include commercial messages provided the use of such materials can be justified on the basis of their educational value to the curriculum; the use of any such materials must be approved in accordance with Board policy.
6. Allow temporary displays or advertising by organizations approved to use school facilities when such advertising is directly related to an event for which the facility usage was authorized.
7. Allow advertising for the purchase of photographic services in connection with class pictures and for other goods and services as deemed necessary by the principal for the normal operation of the school.
8. Permit other exceptions when, in the judgment of the Superintendent, there is significant benefit to students and/or their families.

The school principal at her/his discretion can approve advertising as authorized by this policy within their school. When in doubt as to the suitability of the content of the advertisement or associated event or organization, the principal should refer the matter to the Superintendent.

The Superintendent, at his/her discretion, may approve advertising for a specific event or activity hosted by a community-based religious organization if the advertisement itself does not specifically promote a particular religion or point of view and the activity or event could be of reasonable benefit to students and their families.

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All donations containing advertising must also be approved in accordance with Board Policy 3280, *Donations and Bequests*.

Commercial advertising in school facilities or on school property that is relatively permanent in nature requires prior approval by the Board.

Assessing Suitability of Commercial Advertising

The following should be considered in determining whether commercial advertising is appropriate for the school setting:

- Will the benefit to students exceed the gain derived by the benefactor or donor through sponsorship?
- Does the product or service identified with the sponsor/donor contribute positively to our community or to the broader society? Does it have a positive public image?
- Does the proposed message or medium of advertising communicate, signify, or otherwise suggest a message that is positive and productive? Is it something widely considered wholesome and supportive of generally accepted community values?
- Does the product or service offered by the sponsor/donor conflict in any way with an element of the mission, goals, policies or rules of the District? Would approval suggest endorsement of student behaviors that are in opposition to acceptable standards?

Restrictions on Advertising

The following restrictions will apply to all advertising. Advertising shall not:

1. Violate or contradict the standards, values or educational goals of the District or community;
2. Promote hostility, disorder or violence;
3. Attack or defame ethnic, racial or religious groups;
4. Discriminate, demean or harass any person or group based on gender or sexual orientation;
5. Inhibit the functioning of the District;
6. Override the school or District identity;
7. Involve any political promotion or endorsement;
8. Be obscene or violate prevailing community standards;
9. Promote any religious organization; or
10. Use any District or school logo without prior approval.

Disclaimer: The approval and sale of advertising within Ledyard Public Schools in accordance with this policy does not constitute endorsement of any product, company or organization.

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes:

- 10-221. Boards of education to prescribe rules, policies and procedures.
- 10-237. School activity funds.
- 10-239. Use of school facilities for other purposes.

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