

GUEST SPEAKERS IN SCHOOLS

The School Committee encourages school administrators and teachers to invite guest speakers when the speaker's program supports or supplements the curriculum and provides a learning experience appropriate to the grade level(s) of students.

The School Committee believes that it is important for students to have access to information, to appreciate the knowledge, experience and accomplishments of others, to be exposed to issues upon which there may be disagreement, and to learn to discriminate between facts and opinion, analyze and discuss different points of view and draw their own conclusions.

SPEAKERS IN THE CLASSROOM

Because guest speakers may have particular viewpoints and opinions, it is important that teachers have a clear understanding of the speaker's purpose, prepare students for the experience in advance and provide appropriate follow-up activities. Teachers should strive to provide a balance of viewpoints and opinions through discussion or other activities that allow for the presentation of opposing views. This may include, when practicable, the invitation of speakers with different points of view.

Teachers are expected to use professional judgment in determining the appropriateness of an issue to the curriculum and/or the maturity of students. When unsure, the teacher should consult with the building principal.

A staff member who wishes to invite a speaker must obtain the approval of the building principal before doing so. Requests for speakers must be submitted at least one week in advance. A staff member whose request has been denied may appeal to the Superintendent, whose decision shall be final.

The teacher who has invited the speaker remains responsible for the supervision of students and must be present at all times when the speaker is in the classroom.

SPEAKERS AT SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES

Principals may invite or approve speakers for school assemblies when the experience is consistent with the objectives of this policy. Non-routine assemblies should be scheduled in a way that minimizes interruption of the instructional program. Whenever practicable, staff should be given advance notice of such assemblies at least five school days in advance.

SPEAKER GUIDELINES

The Superintendent/designee may develop rules or guidelines for speaker conduct and decorum.

Profanity, vulgarity and the advocacy of violence, violation of the law, School Committee policies or school rules or promotion of use of tobacco, drugs or alcohol or other substances or items that are illegal for minors will not be permitted.

Cross Reference: IMBB – Exemption From Required Instruction

Adopted: May 13, 2013

Reviewed: April 8, 2019

Reviewed: January 9, 2023