

POLICY STATEMENTS

The School Board will comply with these three required policies: Applicable sections of the Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5), relevant case law including Plyler v. Doe 457 U.S. 202 102 S. Ct. 2382 (1982), and 23 ILL. Admin Code Part 425.

Declaration of Rights Policy

The Mulberry School is an alternative school that stresses the growth of the whole, individual child. We cherish our differences and our uniqueness as individuals, but we are also a community. The children's understanding of the concept of community and their responsibilities as individuals within a community are an important part of their education and growth. Adults have a special responsibility to help children with these group expectations. Any adult who works in the school has a right to object and to control behavior, which is not in the best interests of the community. It takes time to form relationships of trust and leadership with children. We assume that the child is reasonable and will exert self-control if she or he understands what is expected, and the reason why these expectations exist.

All individuals in the Mulberry community have the right to:

1. work without disruption.
2. express oneself without interruption.
3. work cooperatively within a group.
4. play quietly.
5. live safely.
6. be different and/or unique without fear or humiliation or censure.
7. have one's work and property respected.

Behavior must preserve these rights. Examples of specific behavior that deprive other members of the community of their rights include but are not limited to:

1. demeaning or profane language directed at another person.
2. threatening, menacing or intimidating behavior.
3. destruction of another person's work or property.
4. destruction of community property.
5. disruptive or noisy behavior that infringes on another's right to concentrate and work.

Parent Participation Policy

Each Mulberry School family is required to contribute a minimum of 35 hours of volunteer time to the school. The time contributed is a necessity to facilitate the proper operation of the Mulberry School. Families may only be exempt from the Parent Participation policy by contractually agreeing to pay an annual fee to be paid in addition to the contracted tuition payment. Families who fail to achieve the participation hour minimum requirement by May 1st of the academic year will be assessed a fee equivalent to \$40.00 per hour for each hour less than the required hours. Failure to complete the hours or pay the fee is a breach of contract. Attendance at parent and/or board meetings may be counted towards parent hours by only one family member. Any hours completed beyond the contracted hours will be considered a donation to the school and will not be eligible for reimbursement.

Due to the emphasis and priority of parent participation projects, all families will be encouraged to contribute time to at least one of the following projects: Gala planning, Gala business contacts, Gala mailing lists, Gala cleanup, field trip supervision, holiday party supervision, yardwork, school repairs and maintenance, school clean up and playground supervision.

Admissions Policy

Admission priority will be given to all students in the following manner, contingent on the capacity of the Mulberry School.

1. Currently enrolled students in good standing.
2. Siblings of currently enrolled students.
3. Siblings or children of formerly enrolled students.
4. New students on a first-come, first-contracted basis.

The Mulberry School does not exclude children with severe physical, mental, emotional, or behavioral disabilities unless these disabilities prevent their complete and unimpeded participation in the school program. Enrollment of children with special needs will be conducted with consideration by the Academic Director and the teaching staff.

Children must be three (3) by September 1st of the academic school year in order to apply for the preschool program; four (4) by September 1st of the academic school year in order to apply for the 4K program; and five (5) by September 1st of the academic school year in order to apply for the Kindergarten program. Children must be potty trained in order to be considered for enrollment.

Notice of Nondiscrimination: The Mulberry School does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by law in the administration of its student admission process, financial aid awards, educational policies, rights, privileges, programs, and activities, or employee hiring. The President of the Board of Directors will be responsible for ensuring Mulberry School's compliance with this Notice.

Holiday Policy

Mulberry School is made up of children from a wide variety of cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. Mulberry School teachers attempt to portray all cultural, ethnic, and religious groups with self-worth, dignity, and value. A portion of this portrayal may involve description or enactment of a variety of religious or cultural festivals. In particular, major Cultural Holidays, practiced by a large number of Americans, will be recognized and special activities may be organized (for example, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, and Christmas). These festivities will be presented objectively, (no indication that people who participate are inferior or superior to others) as part of the "Common American Culture". (effective in 1995).

These events will be noted on the school calendar and parents will be notified prior to their child's participation. Any parent who does not wish their child to participate may send a note to the child's teacher and alternative activities will be found. In addition, any parent wishing to present information on cultural, ethnic, or religious activities not covered by the school, is welcome to work with the teacher to set up an appropriate presentation.

Political Statement Policy

The Mulberry School will neither advocate nor condone "Political Statements", such as boycotts, picketing, marches, solicitations, or rallies. The Mulberry School will not participate in these events as an organization. (Effective 1996)

Justification for policy:

1. The goal of the school is to educate our children. To achieve this goal requires cooperation and support of all parents. Political statements by an organization are divisive. Because the statements do not reflect the feelings of all members, the individuals that do not support the statement may feel like outcasts.
2. Mulberry School already has a very diverse set of families. The only thing they may have in common is the school. If we start politicizing the school, parents are more likely to drop out or not participate in school activities.
3. The Board would be forced to act as referee. The Board would have to ensure that both sides of the issue would be presented, and then the Board would have to determine which issues to act on. Serving on the Board takes enough time and

the members do not need the extra burden of this type of political decision.

Field Trip Driver Policy

Each Mulberry classroom takes multiple field trips throughout the school year. These field trips rely upon parent volunteers for transportation to and from the destinations. Any parent wishing to drive students on field trips must have on file at the school, copies of proof of current insurance card and a current driver's license. These are to be given to the administrative assistant to keep on file.

Business Policy

The conducting of all business of the corporation shall be done according to the policies established by the Board. The policies are the articles contained in the bylaws and the statements approved as policy and reported in the minutes of the corporation. Such policies shall be added to the Handbook. In the absence of a policy covering a matter of concern, the membership as a whole can function to reach a resolution of the matter. Any action of the corporation not covered by policies requires membership approval.

Building Use Policy

In an effort to protect the Mulberry School property and its contents, the following policy regarding use of the physical building for non-school related functions has been established.

If an interested party would like to request use of the physical building for a non-Mulberry school purpose, the following steps must be taken:

1. A written proposal must be submitted to the Chairman of the Board of Directors so that it can be placed on the agenda for the upcoming Board meeting.
2. The person proposing use of the building will appear in person in front of the board to make the proposal to the board members present and to allow for discussion among the party making the request and the board members.
3. Discussion among the board members will be allowed
4. It is recommended that the board give a timely response to the interested party making the request.
5. Simple majority vote will prevail in decisions regarding building use.
6. Regardless of the proposal for building use, the following contracted stipulations must be met:
 - a. Independent insurance coverage (when warranted) by the responsible party for the intended use.
 - b. Payment to Mulberry School will be \$50.00 per hour (for for-profit organizations) and \$25.00 per hour (for non-profit organizations) for the use of the building. Payment for building use must be received at least

one week before building is used.

- c. The interested party is responsible for maintaining the cleanliness and security of the building immediately before, during and after the approved use.

Building use is at the sole discretion of the board and requires a majority vote for approval.