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Subject: Gifts to School Personnel Policy

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Please find in this email the language the PTO currently uses for class gifts/teacher gifts for your use in our discussion at tonight's meeting.

I apologize that I have not had the time to fully flush this policy out but do think a conversation regarding what we want this policy to accomplish is warranted - the state requirements are updated occasionally and the school handbook outlines the policy as well.

So we can keep the policy simple referring folks to state guidelines and handbook or dig more into the weeds of the details.

The complexity is that there are different requirements for class gifts versus teachers.... there has also been some issues on the Lincoln side with the aggressive collecting of these funds by the PTO along with the fact there are less and less volunteers to do this work for a classroom. I am not aware of how Hanscom does this work.

Lincoln School PTO Policy on Classroom and Teacher Gifts. (From LPTO Room Parent Handbook) **Classroom Gifts**

In recent years, Classroom and Grade Reps have collected money in the fall for a gift, presented to the teacher before the December Recess, for the benefit of the classroom.

Families interested in making a donation for the benefit of their child(ren)'s classroom may contribute up to \$100 without School Committee review. Donations with a value of more than \$100 (in cash, gift cards, or material) require School Committee authorization.

Personal Gifts to Teachers/Staff

In addition to a classroom gift, some families choose to give a personal gift to their classroom teacher and/or other staff members in recognition of their efforts.

The Lincoln School policy on gifts to teachers reads...

"Students and their parents are discouraged from the routine presentation of gifts to district employees on occasions such as Christmas. Where a student has a spontaneous desire to give a present to an employee, the gift should not be elaborate or expensive. In most circumstances, the writing of letters of appreciation to staff members is considered more appropriate. The provisions herein shall not be interpreted as intended to discourage acts of generosity in unusual situations."

In recognition of the generosity of many Lincoln School families, the Lincoln PTO, together with the Lincoln School Committee and the Superintendent's Office, offers the following guidelines to those families interested in making a donation to the school and/or a gift to its teachers.

When an individual family would like to give a gift to a teacher...

The State Ethics Law for public employees prohibits individual gifts to teachers with a value greater than \$50 and requires that the teachers report all gifts that they receive.

When a group of families would like to give a gift...

The State Ethics Law for public employees prohibits collective gifts to teachers with a value greater than \$150, requires that the teachers report all gifts that they receive, and requires that the gift must be given without any individual families identified.

Alternative Personal Gifts to Teachers

If families do choose to recognize the outstanding work of Lincoln's teachers and staff, we encourage them to consider the following options:

- The Honor-a-Teacher-and-Staff (HATS) program, run by the Lincoln School Foundation, which underwrites teacher and classroom program grants.
- A donation to the Betty Bjork Technology Professional Development Fund, which supports teacher training in the use of technology.
- A donation to the Lincoln School library in the teacher's name.
- A donation to the Learning Company of the New England Mobile Book Fair in the teacher's name so that they may use the funds the following year to purchases books for classroom use.



PRESENTS TO SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Students and their parents are discouraged from the routine presentation of gifts to district employees on occasions such as Christmas. The School Committee expects adherence to the limits on gifts to public employees and the reporting requirements set out by the State Ethics Commission.

Where a student has a spontaneous desire to give a present to an employee, the gift should not be elaborate or expensive. In most circumstances, families should consider alternative avenues for honoring the work of teachers and staff.

Adopted at School Committee Meeting of May 21, 1959
Reaffirmed at School Committee Meeting of October 5, 1981
Revised at School Committee Meeting of March 18, 1985
Revised at School Committee Meeting of November 10, 2011