

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Policy 806.1-R (previously 1006.1-R)

Educational Twinning

School Twinning is to be distinguished from exchange programs by the fact that twinning constitutes an officially endorsed, long-term relationship between two schools which involves students, staff and administration in a regular program of exchange visits involving home stay as well as other formal contacts.

In order to facilitate district and individual school involvement in Educational Twinning, the Board will support twinning programs according to the following guidelines.

Initiation and Approval of School Twinning Programs

The Board recognizes the educational merit and supports the objectives of school twinning arrangements which promote learning as well as national and international friendship, understanding and cultural appreciation. It is the Board's desire to take an active role in support of such programs.

1. Schools wishing to initiate a formal twinning arrangement with another school shall receive the prior approval of the Board to initiate such negotiations and shall not finalize a twinning arrangement without the approval of the Board. Schools may undertake exchange programs in preparation for a formal twinning arrangement without the explicit approval of the Board but should inform the Board about such arrangements through a specific communication to the Education Committee in addition to complying with the regulations governing extended field experiences.
2. Applications to initiate or to finalize a twinning arrangement should be made to the Education Committee which will forward recommendations to the Board. Applications should include a statement of purpose, the role of the twinning program in supporting overall school goals and a multi-year timeline which details the components of the twinning program, including all student exchanges.
3. Board approval of a school twinning agreement must be given no less than four months in advance of its official signing. The Board must be a signatory to any such agreement involving a Richmond school.

Duration of School Exchanges

The regulations governing extended field experiences apply to student exchange visits. However, student exchanges which are part of a school twinning program which has been formally endorsed by the Board may extend to a maximum of ten school days if necessary.

Schools may apply for extended field experiences up to a maximum of ten school days if such exchanges are a necessary part of the school's program to develop a formal twinning arrangement.

Sister City Twinning

The Board supports the overall objectives of Richmond's Sister City Committee and recognizes the value of the committee's efforts with designated or potential Sister and Friendship cities in enhancing mutual friendship and understanding between the City of Richmond and the designated or potential Sister cities. Board representation on the Sister City Committee shall be governed by Terms of Reference jointly agreed to by the City of Richmond, the School Board and the Sister City Committee.

The Board's or an individual Trustee's participation in an official visit to a sister city organized by the Sister City Committee and involving Council members will be considered and voted on at a meeting of the Board, and will be based on consideration of the following criteria:

- Is this visit of educational benefit to the School District or to an individual school?
- Is this visit of potential financial benefit to the School District?
- Does this visit provide the opportunity for cultural benefits that could not otherwise be attained through other means?
- What are the potential long term overall benefits that will arise from this trip?
- What are the costs and budgetary implications associated with such a visit and can such costs be borne at this time?

The same criteria will be used when considering Trustee participation in Sister City events, receptions or activities that occur when the Committee is hosting a delegation from one of the aforementioned Sister Cities.

At a meeting of the Board, the Board will decide whether to assume transportation costs and other expenses for such Trustees or staff participants.

[See Sister City Terms of Reference](#)