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To: "John Migueis" <jm@nj21st.com>
Date: Tue, 20 Jan 2026 10:06:42 -0500
Subject: Re: Request for Information and OPRA Request

Hi John,

I know we have this on our schedule to discuss tomorrow, but I wanted to share my response to your question in advance:

Thank you for raising this. I genuinely appreciate the intent behind these efforts and the desire people have to support students and programs in meaningful ways. That commitment matters and is not in question.

As things are currently structured, donations made directly to students participating in an organized district activity do not require Board of Education approval. While that distinction may be technically correct, it can create the perception that organizations or departments are able to bypass district oversight by collecting funds under the umbrella of a school activity, even though the district may have limited visibility into how those funds are ultimately used.

The bigger concern here is not so much legal liability as it is optics, consistency and good governance. Even when everyone is acting with good intentions, a lack of clarity or uneven practices can reflect poorly on the district and create confusion for families and the community. Clear and proactive communication is key to maintaining trust.

From my perspective, this is also an area where past practice cannot simply apply in today's environment. Expectations around transparency, accountability and communication have evolved and our directives need to reflect the world we are operating in now, not the one we were in years ago.

For that reason, the Policy Committee has been actively working to further address how donations are communicated, solicited,

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accepted, tracked and applied across the district. The goal is not to discourage generosity but to provide clearer guidance and more consistent oversight so everyone understands the parameters.

This is an opportunity to better support students, provide reassurance to families and uphold the standards of transparency our community expects. Let me know if you are interested in continuing the conversation tomorrow.

Thanks!
Jenn

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