

PROCEDURE
Essex Westford Educational Community Unified Union School District
Flagpole and Government Speech
Revised and Approved on 07/07/2020

There is a distinction between government speech and private speech. District flagpoles are a form of government speech, under the control and management of the District. It is impermissible to fly any flag without the approval of the school board.

The following guidelines outline the procedure for bringing a request to the EWSD Board of School Directors.

Guidelines:

- 1. The school board will consider requests from students and EWSD stakeholders when there is sufficient reason to believe that such messaging via the flag pole will promote student well-being.**
- 2. The board reserves the right to approve flags requested for an indeterminate time frame as long as they are aligned with the EWSD vision and values.**
- 3. Evidence of student support must be submitted. Previously approved flag requests may be renewed by the board in subsequent years without new evidence of student support.**
- 4. Flag requests need to be approved only once per calendar year. Approved flags may then be flown at all district schools.**
- 5. The board cannot approve requests to fly flags with symbols that are prohibited from government speech, including religious symbols.**

The Superintendent will submit the request to the board chair. The request will be presented to the school board in open session at a future board meeting.

The EWSD Board of School Directors has the right to evaluate whether the flag is offensive or is contrary to the values of EWSD.

July 7, 2020