

Regional School District No. 17
6000 Series

6145.3

Instruction

Student Publications

Student publications are important elements of the instructional program and contribute directly to the accomplishment of the school's goals. The Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education shall encourage the development of school newspapers, annuals, and magazines.

Freedom of speech and of expression in student publications as guaranteed by the First Amendment is to be observed scrupulously by the administration, faculty and students.

(cf. 5145.2 - Freedom of Speech/Expression)

(cf. 6144 - Controversial Issues)

Legal Reference:

Eisner v Stamford Board of Education, 440 F. 2d 803 (2nd Cir 1971)

Trachtman v Anker, 563 F. 2d 512 (2nd Cir. 1977) cert. denied, 435 U.S. 925 (1978)

Policy adopted:
7/95

Regional School District No. 17
6000 Series

6145.3(a)

Instruction

Student Publications

Official Student Newspaper

The purposes of the official student newspaper are:

1. teaching writing and other journalistic skills;
2. providing a forum for opinions of students, school staff, and members of the community;
3. serving the entire school by reporting school activities.

Rights of Student Journalists:

1. To print factual articles dealing with topics of interest to the student writers;
2. To print, on the editorial page, opinions on any topic, whether school related or not, which students feel are of interest to themselves or to the readers.

Responsibilities of Student Journalists:

1. To submit copy that conforms to good journalistic writing style;
2. To rewrite stories, as required by the journalism advisor, to improve journalistic structure, sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and punctuation;
3. To check facts and verify quotes;
4. For editorials on controversial issues, to provide space for rebuttals, in the same issue if possible, but otherwise no later than the following issue;
5. Subject to specific limitations in these guidelines, to determine the contents of official student newspapers.

Material Not Permitted in Official School Newspapers:

1. Material which is libelous or which violates the rights of privacy;
2. Profanity — defined as the language which would not be used in The Hartford Courant or the New York Times;
3. Material which criticizes or demeans any race, religion, sex, or ethnic group;
4. Ads for cigarettes, liquor, or any other product not conducive to good health.

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5. Any material, the publication of which would cause substantial disruption of the school. Substantial disruption is the threat of physical violence in the school or nearby community and/or the disruption of the school's educational program;
6. Endorsements of political candidates or ballot measures, whether such endorsements are made via editorial, articles, letter, or photograph cartoon. The newspaper may, however, publish "fact sheet" on candidates and ballot measures, provided such articles do not endorse any person or position, and provided equal space is given to all candidates for a particular office or to both sides of a ballot measure.

Determination of Appropriateness

The newspaper advisor shall review each article prior to publication to determine if it satisfies conditions of these guidelines. The school Principal, or his/her designated representative other than the newspaper advisor, may also review copy prior to publication. However, such copy must be returned to the student editors within 72 hours after it is submitted for review. No copy may be censored except for reasons specifically listed in these guidelines. Nothing in these guidelines is intended to allow censoring of any article merely because it is controversial or because it criticizes a particular school, a school procedure, or the school system itself.

Resolution of Differences

In the event of disagreement as to whether an article should be printed, each school shall have a publications board, which shall meet within 48 hours to submit its opinion. The publications board shall consist of the Principal, or his/her designated representative; the journalism advisor; the editor-in-chief; and representatives from student government, the PTA/PTO and the advisory council; and other members as mutually agreed upon.

If the publications board cannot solve the dispute, then an appeal shall be made to the Superintendent who shall seek advice from the board's legal counsel in making his/her decision. The Superintendent shall act on the appeal within 48 hours.

(cf. 5145.2 Freedom of Speech/Expression)

(cf. 6144 Controversial Issues)

Legal Reference: *Eisner v Stamford Board of Education*, 440 F. 2d 803 (2nd Cir 1971)

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Regulation approved:

7/95