

FREEDOM OF SPEECH/EXPRESSION**A. Scope and Purpose**

The primary liberties in a student's life have to do with the process of inquiry and learning, of acquiring and imparting knowledge, and of exchanging ideas. The process requires that students have the right to express opinions, to take stands, and to support causes, publicly or privately. There should be no interference in the school with these liberties, or with the students' access to or expression of controversial points of view.

Student freedom of expression shall be limited only as allowed by law in order to maintain an orderly school environment and to protect the rights, health and safety of all members of the school community. Students shall not be disciplined solely on the basis of constitutionally protected speech or other communication.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that due process is followed when resolving disputes regarding student freedom of expression.

B. General

In order to maintain an orderly school environment, the following guidelines apply:

1. **Bulletin Board:** School authorities may restrict the use of certain bulletin boards to school announcements. Ample bulletin board space shall be provided for the use of students and student organizations, including a reasonable area for notices relating to out-of-school activities or matters of general interest to students. The following general limitations on posting may be applied:
 - a) The school shall require that all printed matter and petitions distributed or circulated on school property bear the name and address or contact location of the sponsoring organization or individual.
 - b) Identification including address or contact location shall be officially dated before posting and that such material be removed after a prescribed reasonable time to assure full access to the bulletin boards.

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- c) Printed materials or petitions may be distributed only:
 - i) Before school begins, during lunch time, or after dismissal.
 - ii) In locations that do not obstruct the normal flow of traffic within school or at entrances.
 - iii) Without undue noise.

No student shall use coercion to induce students or any other persons to accept printed matter or to sign petitions. No funds or donations shall be collected for any material distributed.

- 2. Distribution of Printed Materials and Circulation of Petitions: Students shall be free to distribute handbills, leaflets and other printed material and to collect signatures on petitions concerning either school or out-of-school issues, whether such materials are produced within or outside the school.

The following general limitations on distribution may be applied:

- a) The time of such activity shall be limited to periods before school begins, after dismissal and during lunchtime.
 - b) The place of such activity shall be reasonably restricted to permit the normal flow of traffic within the school and at exterior doors.
 - c) The school shall require that all printed matter and petitions distributed or circulated on school property bear the name and address or contact location of the sponsoring organization or individual.
- 3. Buttons and Badges: The wearing of buttons, badges, or armbands bearing slogans or sayings shall be permitted as another form of expression, unless the message thereof falls within the restricted categories. No teacher or administrator shall attempt to interfere with this practice on the ground that the message may be unpopular with students or faculty.

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C. Forms

None

D. Procedures

In imposing limitations on student expression for any reason under any of the foregoing provisions, the school must ensure that its rules are applied on a nondiscriminatory basis and in a manner designated to assure maximum freedom of expression to the students, but which does not endanger health or safety of other students.

Appeals

The following procedures shall be used to address disputes regarding student freedom of expression:

1. The student and faculty member shall first attempt to resolve the problem by themselves.
2. If the student and faculty member are unable to resolve the dispute, the student and/or faculty member may bring the matter to the principal or designee, who shall hear both sides and strive to resolve the dispute as quickly as possible.
3. If the principal or designee is unable to resolve the dispute, the student and/or faculty member may bring the matter to the Superintendent or designee, who shall hear both sides and strive to resolve the dispute as quickly as possible.
4. If the Superintendent or designee is unable to resolve the dispute, the student and/or faculty member may ask for a hearing to determine whether a deprivation of freedom of expression was justified under the above regulations. This hearing shall be held before the Governing Board or impartial person(s) appointed by the Board or Superintendent or designee as soon as possible after it is requested. Both sides shall be given an

Students

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opportunity to demonstrate that Board policy and administrative regulations were properly applied.

E. Records Required

None

F. Records Retained

None

G. Responsible Administration Unit

Educational Services
Student Services
Site Principals

H. Approved By

Assistant Superintendent of Educational Resources

