

**Lower Merion School District**

Policy No.: 920  
Section: COMMUNITY  
Title: DISTRIBUTION OF PROMOTIONAL INFORMATION  
Date Adopted: 6/16/03  
Date Last Revised: 3/16/2020; 6/22/09

**920 DISTRIBUTION OF PROMOTIONAL INFORMATION**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this Policy is to establish:

- A. the parameters to be placed on school-sponsored dissemination of literature/materials; and
- B. the parameters on the types of organizations which may communicate through District media and the nature of those communications.

**Definitions**

“School-sponsored dissemination of literature/materials” means dissemination of information in printed or electronic form by:

- A. the District;
- B. an approved School Related Organization of Parents/Guardians or Staff; or
- C. by a community group with District approval through any District communication medium.

“School Related Organization of Parents or Staff” means any school-related organization of parents/guardians or staff recognized by the District pursuant to Policy No. 915, including any Home and School Associations recognized pursuant to Policy No. 916.

“Community Group” means any non-profit (must be a 501(c)(3) organization), community-wide educational, cultural, civic, recreational, character development, charitable, or social service agency whose membership includes any person who is not a student in the District. To be considered a community-wide educational, cultural, civic, recreational, character development, charitable, or social service agency, the activities and services of the organization must be available to all District residents without restriction to handicap/disability, race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, ethnicity or national origin. Additionally, the group may not have a charter or admission policy that violates federal or state law. Finally, the group must have a policy or procedures in place to ensure that economically disadvantaged individuals, or those facing an economic hardship, are able to participate in the activities and/or services of the organization notwithstanding an inability to pay a fee or other cost charged by the organization to access the organization’s programs/services.

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**Type of Media**

This Policy applies to information distributed through any District communication medium, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. interschool communications,
2. bulletin boards,
3. District produced cable television,
4. the District website,
5. the District email distribution lists,
6. District internet,
7. District produced publications such as the official student newspapers, or
8. transmissions through students to their homes by the District.

**School-Sponsored Dissemination of Promotional Literature/Materials**

The school day shall be devoted exclusively to the purposes, procedures, and efforts conceived, conducted, and directed by the school staff toward the goal of education of the students.

Only literature and materials directly related to District activities or that contribute significantly to District instructional programs may be disseminated to or through students and staff members.

District schools shall not be used to publish or disseminate literature or survey forms of partisan, sectarian or political organizations of any type in a manner that suggests that the District is endorsing a particular set of viewpoints or beliefs.

Communication to homes through students shall be limited entirely to information about the school system or a particular program that is parallel in nature, function and/or purpose to the philosophy and curricular program of the District.

Permission to distribute literature and/or materials does not signify an endorsement by the District.

In addition to the other limitations set forth elsewhere in this Policy, organizations and other groups covered by this Policy may only be permitted to distribute information that:

1. Does not convey political partisanship or an intent to advocate for a particular candidate or party, except (1) at designated polling places on election day; (2) by Student Organizations recognized pursuant to other policies; or (3) as affirmatively permitted by law or other Board Policy.

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2. Does not promote or denigrate a particular religion or religious practice in a manner that suggests that the District is endorsing a particular set of religious beliefs;
3. Does not incite discrimination against any group or person based upon handicap/disability, race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, ethnicity or national origin;
4. Does not promote or encourage hostility, disorder, violence, or disregard for legal obligations;
5. Does not primarily promote commercial enterprises except in the case of approved advertising in District produced publications;
6. Does not libel an individual or group or interfere with or advocate interference with the rights of any individual or the operation of the schools;
7. Does not promote gambling or the use of tobacco/nicotine products, smoking accessories, electronic smoking products or devices, alcoholic beverages, illegal substances or drug paraphernalia;
8. Does not promote the use of firearms or other weapons;
9. Does not conflict with prevailing standards of decency;
10. Does not promote obscenity or pornography, or use sexual content, sexual overtones, or any material that is otherwise not suitable for children, such as adult publications or videos;
11. Does not advertise, promote or advocate for or against birth control products or programs, or abortion;
12. Does not violate applicable copyrights, trademarks or other protected interests;
13. Does not interfere with the distribution of school-related materials.
14. Does not run counter to the best interests or endanger the health, safety or welfare of the students, staff or schools, in the opinion of the Superintendent or designee,

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upon consultation with the Solicitor or other District legal counsel in order to ensure legality.

**Communications by Community Groups and School Related Organization of Parents/Guardians and Staff**

Distribution of literature by community groups and approved Parent/Guardian and Staff Organizations relevant to community welfare is permitted when prior approval is granted by the Superintendent or designee.

The schools may cooperate in publicizing and promoting the activities of any community group or School Related Organization of Parents/Guardians or Staff, provided the particular activity is parallel in nature, function, and/or purpose to the philosophy and educational program of the District, and further provided that the time involved does not infringe on the school program or diminish the amount of time devoted to the school program.

Contests, drives, informational campaigns, solicitations, and any or all projects initiated by outside organizations shall have place in the school day only insofar as they are sought by school officials on their own initiative and in the belief that such projects have a primary purpose and function in the education of children in the District.

Goods, services, performances, and activities produced or conducted by community groups or School Related Organization of Parents/Guardians or Staff, the names of such groups, and the persons connected with such groups may be brought to the attention of students or parents/guardians, but only when the information would clearly be of interest or value to the students themselves.

**Communications Conducted for Private Gain**

Goods, services, performances, and activities produced or conducted for private gain and the names of organizations and persons connected with such enterprises may be brought to the attention of students when they are directly related to the educational or recreational program, or they appear in instructional material as the simple identification of the sponsoring agency and not as a dominant theme, or they are sponsored by the school or by a school-related organization.

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**Delegation of Responsibility**

The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for developing Administrative Regulations to implement this Policy. These Administrative Regulations shall include:

- A. Procedures for obtaining advanced approval for the dissemination of literature/materials;
- B. Requirements, if necessary, for disclaimers on literature and materials (particularly those transmitted electronically) to be disseminated to avoid confusion to the intended recipients;
- C. Procedures for complying with requirements of other governmental agencies and District contractual obligations, where applicable;
- D. Procedures to ensure conformance with other applicable policies and administrative regulations, including but not limited to fundraising by community groups or approved Parent/Staff Organizations, and
- E. Criteria determining whether and to what extent information from community groups or School Related Organizations of Parents/Guardians or Staff may be linked to the District website or forwarded through the District email distribution lists.

**Cross References:**

LMSD Policy & Administrative Regulation 915 (School Related Organizations)  
LMSD Policy & Administrative Regulation 916 (Booster Clubs and Parent Organizations)  
LMSD Policy & Administrative Regulation 816 (Web Content Development and Hosting)  
LMSD Policy and Administrative Regulation 901 (Public Relations Objectives)  
LMSD Policy & Administrative Regulation 906 (Addressing Complaints and Concerns of the Public)