

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The schools exist to provide the opportunities for students to develop their intellectual abilities through the processes of inquiry, discovery, exposition, and the interchange of ideas. Education in a democracy must also contribute toward the evolvement of the art of disciplining oneself so that minimal emphasis on external control will be necessary. This responsibility necessitates the development of a variety of learning activities and opportunities for students to participate as full-fledged citizens in the school environment. An essential concern is the maintenance and encouragement of freedom of expression, association, leadership development, due process and reasonable behavior so that constructive student involvement assures individual educational progress and provides the initial experiences for responsible citizenship.

The guarantees of rights set forth in the Constitution of the United States and the State of Delaware are to be maintained for all students. Decisions concerning due process of law or of abridgement of individual rights may be subject to appeal.

Freedom of Expression and Communication

1. Students shall be free to express views and opinions provided they do not seek to coerce others to follow their mode of expression or interfere with the free expression rights of others, and do not disrupt the orderly administration of education.
2. Students shall be permitted to discuss and express all views relevant to the subject matter in the classroom limited only to the responsibility of the teacher to maintain order, to assure meaningful participation and to respect the contributions of all students.

Students are, however, responsible for learning the content of the subjects as established by the teacher for which they have been scheduled or have themselves elected.

Students are further responsible for meeting the performance standards of the subjects as established by the teachers and school officials. Requirements of class attendance, participation, and the submission of written assignments are important aspects of student responsibilities.

Secondary students shall also be provided the opportunity to participate in discussions and develop recommendations to improve the curriculum through duly elected or appointed representatives.

Evaluation of student performance by the teacher shall be related to the above.

3. Students shall have the right to express themselves through direct and symbolic means as long as such expression;
 - does not mock, demean, harass, bully or ridicule other persons or groups.

- does not interfere with the scheduled activities nor disrupt the educational process within the school.
 - does not reflect obscenity, vulgarity, profanity, and statements likely to disrupt the educational process.
4. Students shall have the rights to publish and distribute materials as long as such action or material;
- does not endanger the health or safety of students.
 - does not reasonably foreseeably threaten to disrupt the educational process.
 - does not reflect a defamatory nature.
 - does not indicate a commercial purpose.
 - does not reflect obscenity, vulgarity, profanity, and statements likely to disrupt the educational process.
5. The right to publish and distribute materials shall be accompanied by the following responsible actions:
- designation of the person or persons who wrote and published the materials.
 - adherence to acceptable standards of journalism.
 - distribution of materials before and after regular school hours.
 - acceptance of the legal consequences for student expressions and publications.
6. Students have the right to hold peaceful assembly involving free discussions, passing of resolutions, and exercising lawful action pertaining to matters which directly concern their educational progress.

The school administration shall require that meetings or assemblages be held at times and places which will not disrupt classes or other scheduled school activities; will not present hazards to persons or property; and will avoid conflicts through reasonable (preferably 24 hours) advance notice of intent to hold meetings.

Freedom of Association

1. Students shall have the right to organize clubs and associations within the school for educational, civic, athletic, and other lawful purposes in accordance with the following guidelines:

Group membership shall not be denied to any student because of any unlawful factor.

Clubs or associations may require special qualifications for membership if such qualifications relate directly to the purposes of the group.

Groups with a constitution and by-laws should submit such documents along with a listing of officers to the school administration and student council. Amendments to the constitution and changes in the by-laws should also be submitted.

2. Students shall have the right to decide the nature, organization, and procedures for their clubs and associations as long as such decisions do not threaten the health and safety of students, or disrupt the educational process.

Clubs and associations should be organized within the guidelines and policies established through an effective Student Council, Student Government Organization, where applicable.

Student Responsibilities

1. The rights assumed by students must be accompanied by corresponding responsibilities as they exercise their rights. They must further accept the consequences of their actions, recognize the limits of their freedoms, and show concern and consideration for the rights of others.
2. Student rights thus involve equivalent responsibilities. Students thus have the following responsibilities:
 - To accept every person as an individual human being and to promote intercultural and group relations and understanding
 - To apply their abilities and interests to the improvement of their knowledge and to the development and application of learning skills
 - To recognize and function within the policies established by the school board and school officials
 - To attend school for the purpose of obtaining a quality and meaningful education
 - To abide by rules and regulations necessary for the orderly conduct of school activities by the administration and faculty
 - To implement and abide by rules and regulations developed through the cooperation of student-faculty committees

- To contribute cooperatively toward the improvement of the teacher-learning situation and to strive for the overall betterment of the total school environment
- To maintain respect for school officials and students and to exhibit conduct reflecting self-control, self-regulation, and self-discipline
- To plan, organize and participate in school activities – such as assemblies and clubs – which provide constructive learning opportunities and contribute toward the educational progress of all students
- To assure all students have a voice in the student government through their duly selected representatives and to cooperate with the student officers in the development and implementation of student related policies
- To contribute toward the overall improvement of the school curriculum through active involvement in both classroom and extra-curricular activities
- To develop a sense of pride and respect for the school and the ideas for which it stands
- To provide support for the members of athletic and other groups representing the school as part of the esprit de corps necessary for team success
- To realize that all rights are relative to the rights of others and must be protected with the same degree of respect with which they are accepted.

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