REQUIRED Descriptor Code: FGDD

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS & FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

- *School-sponsored media*, as defined in NDCC 15.1-19-25(1)(b), as any material that prepared, substantially written, published, or broadcast by a student journalist at a public school, distributed or generally made available to members of the student body, and prepared under the direction of a student media advisor. The term does not include any media intended for distribution or transmission solely in the classroom in which the media is produced.
- *Student journalist* is defined in NDCC 15.1-19-25(1)(c), as a public school student who gathers, compiles, writes, edits, photographs, records, or prepares information for dissemination in school-sponsored media.
- *Student media advisor* is defined in NDCC 15.1-19-25(1)(d), as an individual employed, appointed, or designated by a school district to supervise or provide instruction relating to school-sponsored media

Purpose

The Manvel School District believes that freedom of expression and freedom of the press are fundamental principles in a democratic society that provides all citizens with the right to engage in a vigorous discussion of ideas, and that a robust and free student press is critical to the development of informed and civic-minded adults. Freedom of expression through school-sponsored media is protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and state law.

The District shall ensure all students ensure free speech and free press protections related to school-sponsored media, and to encourage students to become educated, informed, and responsible members of society.

No expression made by students in the exercise of free speech or free press rights shall be deemed to be an expression of school or district policy.

Expectations

Student journalists are responsible for determining the news, opinion, feature, and advertising content of school-sponsored media. A student journalist has the right to exercise freedom of speech and of the press in school-sponsored media, regardless of whether the media is supported financially by the district, by use of facilities of the district, or produced in conjunction of a class the student is enrolled.

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All school-sponsored media shall be supervised by a student media advisor. School-sponsored media shall not be reviewed by an administrator unless the publication is believed to contain restricted content as listed in this policy.

No student journalist or student media advisor shall be dismissed, suspended, disciplined, or otherwise censored, penalized, or punished when acting in accordance with law and district policy.

Prohibitions

The following material is prohibited from being published in school-sponsored media:

1. Material that is profane, harassing, threatening, intimidating, or pornographic
2. Material that is libelous, slanderous or obscene in nature
3. Material that infringes or may infringe on the privacy rights of others
4. Material that violates federal or state law, promotes violence, terrorism, or other illegal activities including, but not limited to, material that promotes tobacco, drug or alcohol use by minors
5. Material that is reasonably forecasted to materially and substantially disrupt the educational environment
6. Material that violates or incites the violation of district policy including, but not limited to, the district's policies on bullying and harassment, or
7. Material that poses a direct safety threat to the District, its students, and/or staff

Appeals

A decision to prohibit publication and distribution of a student publication with restricted content shall be made by the building principal and may be appealed to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall investigate and issue a decision in a timely manner. The Superintendent's decision is binding.

Dissemination of school-sponsored media

The following time, place, and manner restrictions apply to school-sponsored media:

1. School newspapers shall only be placed in receptacles near school entrances, no student-sponsored media shall be distributed in the classroom with the exception of journalism courses.

End of Manvel School District #125 Policy FGDD.....Updated: 6/14/21