

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

The Board of Education shall permit the organization and operation of student organizations in schools and shall permit such organizations to meet on school premises during non-instructional time. The purpose of this policy is to establish criteria governing the operation of student organizations. The Thompson School District recognizes two types of student organizations: district sponsored, and student sponsored at the secondary level.

GENERAL

Membership in all student organizations shall be on a voluntary basis. Membership is open to and limited to students currently enrolled in the district or in an approved home school program. Student organizations may establish academic qualifications for membership where necessarily related to the purposes of the organization. No student shall be denied membership based on race, color, sex (which includes marital status), sexual orientation, national origin, religion, ancestry, ethnicity, disability and/or any other status protected by law. Qualifications based on gender may be imposed only where necessary to preserve the health, safety, or welfare of students or where gender is a bona fide integral qualification for the activities of the organization.

Fraternities, sororities and/or secret societies shall not receive recognition in any manner under this policy.

All forms of hazing in initiations shall be prohibited in all student organizations. The superintendent or designee shall develop guidelines for the establishment and operation of student organizations. Among other provisions, such guidelines shall require the approval of the principal or designee prior to the formation of any club or organization in a school. The principal or designee shall also identify the procedure for scheduling meetings of student organizations and setting the time and facilities which shall be available for such meetings. These guidelines shall be made available to all students and employees.

All student organizations shall have the right to meet on school premises during non-instructional time as designated by the principal or designee. Subject to limited exceptions, no student organization shall be denied equal access to school facilities during designated meeting times on the basis of the religious, political, philosophical or other content of the speech at the meetings of such organizations. All student organizations shall operate under the fee schedule outlined in Board regulation KF-R.

The district, through the superintendent or designee, retains the authority to prohibit meetings which otherwise would be unlawful. Further, nothing in this policy shall be construed to limit the authority of the district or school to maintain discipline on school premises, to protect the well-being of students and employees and to ensure that attendance at meetings is voluntary.

Student organizations shall not engage in any activity which is contrary to law, Board policy or school rules, which disrupts or clearly threaten to disrupt the orderly operation of the school, or which would adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of any students or employees. Failure to comply with the provisions set forth in this policy shall be grounds for revocation of the right to continue to meet under this policy.

DISTRICT SPONSORED STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

District sponsored student organizations shall serve as an extension of the regular school curriculum. Their function shall be to enhance the participants' educational experience and to

supplement the educational program of the schools. The activities of these organizations shall bear a clear relationship to the regular curriculum. Student organizations shall be considered directly related to the curriculum if one or more of the following applies:

1. The subject matter of the group is actually taught in a regularly offered course.
2. The subject matter of the group concerns the body of knowledge of the discipline as a whole.
3. Participation in the group is required for a particular course.
4. Academic credit or extra credit is given for participation in the group.

District sponsored student organizations will meet at a designated district facility. In recognizing this requirement, the Board authorizes the use of facilities for the purpose of meetings, rehearsals, practices and competitions.

Organizations must have a duly appointed staff sponsor. This would be an advisor or coach who is a district employee and assumes the responsibility of leadership over the organization. The duty of such individuals will be to keep and maintain a record of student participation, attend all meetings, practices or functions on or off district property, to advise and supervise students, and to keep the building principal and the enrichment coordinator informed regarding activities so that they may be included on the district calendar. The sponsor will also communicate with the district as to when activities happen and include them on the school calendar.

In order to help ensure appropriate oversight of school activities and the welfare and safety of employees and students, volunteers working with a district sponsored organization must be registered through the district, background checked, attend the volunteer training session through the Enrichment Office, complete the volunteer/confidentiality agreement and be familiar with the enrichment volunteer handbook. All requirements must be completed prior to the start of the group in accordance with Board policy KJ. This requirement applies to every individual who serves as an authorized volunteer (including parents/guardians) and applies to all volunteer service, whether it is only for a single occasion or will occur on a sporadic or regular basis, and regardless of the program, event or activity involved. A background check shall be conducted by the district, at its expense, as part of the authorized volunteer registration/application review process. This background check requirement is not meant to discourage or offend prospective volunteers, but rather to help ensure the safety and welfare of students. Volunteers may not supervise students without the direction and control of the district staff sponsor.

Organizations must comply with all policies, eligibility requirements, rule and procedures established by the district or established by CHSAA and other associations when applicable and are subject to district supervision and discipline.

District sponsored organizations who intend to travel need to submit paperwork for preapproval at the beginning of the season. Organizations who wish to travel out of state must use commercial transportation. Commercial transportation will not be funded by the district. Groups, students, staff members and volunteers will follow all laws and comply with all Board policies while traveling.

If the district sponsored organization receives or expends monies from students, it shall maintain records documenting all receipts and expenditures, in accordance with Board policy, and may be subject to audits to assure consistency in records at any time throughout the active season and during the calendar year.

Activities by district sponsored organizations and/or their members that constitute district related advertising, including but not limited to sponsorships, fundraisers, endorsements and exclusive provider contracts, are subject to Board Policy KHB.

District sponsored organizations shall be permitted to use the name and mascot of the school(s) they support in connection with activities conducted in accordance with applicable laws, association bylaws and rules, and Board policies and regulations, and approval of the principal or designee.

Student organizations meeting these criteria must sign and complete the "Agreement for Sponsorship" form before the beginning of the season. Upon turning in the form and being approved by the district enrichment coordinator or designee, the organization shall be an officially recognized, district sponsored organization.

STUDENT SPONSORED ORGANIZATIONS (SECONDARY SCHOOLS)

Students shall also be permitted to organize, meet and pursue activities inside and outside of the school curriculum subject to the provisions of this policy. Requests to conduct a curriculum or noncurriculum related student meeting must originate from a student or group of students. Employees, parents and any other persons who are not students enrolled in the school shall be prohibited from directing, controlling, conducting or regularly attending the meetings of such organizations.

Students must request permission for a meeting of a student-sponsored group from the principal or designee and submit all scheduling requests to the principal or designee for approval.

Curriculum or noncurriculum related student-sponsored organizations shall not be deemed to be school-sponsored or endorsed nor are they given all the privileges afforded to district-sponsored organizations. The fact that such organizations shall be permitted equal access to conduct meetings under this policy shall not constitute an expression of district or school support for the purposes of such organizations or the content of any meetings thereof.

Students may conduct meetings under this policy on school premises with the provision that meetings do not interfere with the orderly conduct of the educational activities of the school and only during non-instructional time. For the purposes of this policy, non-instructional time means time set aside by each school before actual classroom instruction begins or after actual classroom instruction ends. Meetings of curriculum and noncurriculum related student sponsored organizations must be scheduled, organized and conducted within the guidelines established by this policy. Attendance at all meetings must be voluntary.

Curriculum and noncurriculum related student-sponsored organizations shall not have an employee sponsor. However, an employee shall serve as a monitor for purposes of general supervision. Students shall be responsible for ensuring the presence of an employee monitor prior to every meeting. No employee shall be compelled to attend a meeting of any student sponsored organization if the content of such meeting is contrary to his/her belief. Employees present at any meeting of a curriculum and noncurriculum-related student-sponsored organization shall attend in a non-participatory capacity only.

Nothing in this policy shall be used to imply that the district or school is sponsoring a curriculum or noncurriculum related student-sponsored organization. No public funding or support shall be extended to any curriculum or noncurriculum related student-sponsored

organization other than an opportunity to meet on school premises on an equal basis as other student organizations.

APPEAL

When the principal or designee denies the request of a student organization desiring to meet or form in a particular school, the principal or designee shall inform the group of the reason for the denial. The students and/or group shall be given an opportunity to request a review of the principal or designee decision by the superintendent or designee by requesting a review in writing within ten working days of the denial of the request. The decision of the superintendent shall be final.

Adopted September 16, 1988

Revised March 20, 2013

Revised May 21, 2014

Legal refs.: CRS 22-1-117 (secret fraternities forbidden)
CRS 22-1-118 (school board to enforce)
20 USC 4071 et seq.

Cross refs.: EC, Property Management
IHAL, Teaching About Religion in the Schools
JJF, Student Activities Funds
KBF, Relations with Educational Partnership Organizations
KF, Use of District Facilities
KFA, Public Conduct on District Property
KHB, Advertising and Sponsorships
KJ, Volunteers