SCHOOL-SPONSORED STUDENT EXPRESSION

Students shall enjoy the constitutional right of freedom of expression. They shall have the right to express their views in speech, writing, or through any other medium or form, limited solely by those restrictions imposed on all citizens generally and those specifically applicable to children and youth in a school setting.

The Board of Education encourages student expression in its many forms, including the school newspaper, yearbook, literary magazines, concerts, shows and art exhibits. The Board believes these activities are an important part of student learning which enriches the life of the school community. The school newspaper, for example, is an important part of the school not only because it offers an educational activity through which students gain experience in reporting, writing, editing, and understanding responsible journalism, but also because it provides an opportunity for students to express their views in a responsible manner. Each school-sponsored activity offers unique opportunities for students to engage in creative and educational modes of expression.

All school-sponsored opportunities for student expression will comply with the rules set forth in this policy and in the Code of Conduct. Libelous statements, unfounded charges and accusations, obscenity, false statements, materials or performances advocating or expressing prejudice, hatred, discrimination, harassment, bullying or violence on the basis of a protected class (e.g., actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), or sex), the breaking of laws and school regulations, or materials designed to disrupt the educational process will not be permitted. Expressions of personal opinion must be clearly identified as such and bear the name of the author. Opportunity for the expression of opinions differing from those of the student publishers must be provided.

In addition, school-sponsored activities which are paid for by the school district and/or produced under the direction of a teacher as part of the school curriculum are not considered a public forum. In such cases, the Board reserves the right to edit or delete such student expression which it feels is inconsistent with the district’s basic educational mission.

Cross-ref: 0100, Equal Opportunity/Nondiscrimination
0115, Student Harassment and Hazing Prevention and Intervention
5300, Code of Conduct

Ref: Education Law Article 2, §§10-18 (Dignity for All Students Act)

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