

Liberty Union High School District

Board Policy

Classification: Students

Policy No. **BP5145**

Page 1 of 2

Effective 1/20/82

Subject: Civil and Legal Rights and Responsibilities

Revised

Schools are for students. Schools reflect the educational philosophy of the community served. Parents, school staff, and students are in pursuit of a common goal, a program preparing the participants for full, active, responsible participation in the community throughout their lives.

Such a program implies an appreciation for what has preceded us, an understanding of who and where we are, and the opportunity to exercise our rights and assume our responsibilities in participating in the determination of the community's direction.

Such a program promotes individual freedom, responsibility, and productive citizenship, as well as recognizes the rights and the standards of the community.

Such program protects an individual through limitations upon the rights of others by living up to the guarantees of the U.S. Constitution and the laws of the state.

Personal or public irresponsibility, anarchy, or violence have no place in American democracy; neither do the extremes of regimentation and authoritarianism. The street can never be the alternative for the healthy productive development of citizens; schools cannot tolerate conditions that drive students into the streets.

1. School boards are legally responsible for the establishment of school policy, and every effort should be extended to include in the formulation of school policy consideration or the developing maturity of the student. Concomitant responsibilities flow from the exercise of rights and privileges. Among these are

Respect for oneself

Respect for others and their rights

Respect for individual dignity.

Respect for legally constituted authority and the legal responsibility of those in authority.

2. All rules and regulations to maintain the process of education must be common knowledge. Orientation programs and free student handbooks should provide this information in clear and understandable language. Any changes should be widely publicized in print in both school and community media, and no regulations should be summarily drafted and enforced.

3. The board, certificated staff, and student governments should work cooperatively within the limitations prescribed by law in the establishment of these regulations. The amending, appeal, and student referenda and recall processes for the establishment and enforcement of these rules should be clearly defined and made available to all interested and affected parties.

4. Students must be free to establish and should be encouraged to participate in student governments and provide all students, through a representative system, a voice in school affairs. All registered students should be eligible to hold office.

5. Schools are for students and students should be involved in the educational process in their schools. Certificated staff members should solicit student suggestions and recommendations concerning curricular offerings. Curriculum offerings in local

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2 of 2

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schools should meet the needs and interests of all students.

6. Freedom of speech is guaranteed to all citizens, and students must be allowed to exercise their constitutionally protected rights of free speech, petition, and assembly as long as they do not interfere with the educational process.

Materials presented to students should be relevant to the course and appropriate to the maturity level and intellectual ability of the students. Students should have the opportunity to investigate different views related to topics and materials introduced or presented. Teachers should, at all times, strive to promote tolerance for the views and opinions of others and for the rights of individuals to form and hold differing views and opinions. The teacher should further be responsible to permit the expression of the views and opinions of others and to encourage students to examine, evaluate, and synthesize all available information about such topics and materials.

School newspapers, yearbooks, literary magazines, and other publications should be guaranteed the right of freedom of the press, subject to the existing laws of libel obscenity and public safety. As learning experiences within the school, the staff should seek the highest publication standards. Other non-school sponsored student publications should be subjected to locally determined procedures for distribution on school premises.

7. The activities of students other than at school functions carried on entirely outside of normal hours and off school premises, should not be the responsibility of the school and no student should be penalized because of such outside activities.
8. Students should be allowed the use of school facilities for school sponsored extracurricular activities and should be encouraged for participation in these, including clubs, recreational events, and other such related activities. These activities must be scheduled in keeping with normal school board policy and provide for supervision according to school rules.
9. Students have a right to an education and to the equality of educational opportunity. Disciplinary measures that deprive him/her of this right should be utilized only in extreme cases. Disciplinary actions of administrators and teachers should be fair and consistent in all cases and resorted to only when the student, by his/her conduct, reveals his/her inability to recognize the rights of others.
10. Schools should establish a clearly defined procedure for the consideration of student problems and the processing of student complaints.