

512 SCHOOL-SPONSORED STUDENT PUBLICATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to protect students' rights to free speech in production of official school publications and activities while at the same time balancing the school district's role in supervising student publications and the operation of public schools.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. The school district may exercise editorial control over the style and content of student expression in school-sponsored publications and activities.
- B. Expressions and representations made by students in school-sponsored publications and activities are not expressions of official school district policy. Faculty advisors shall supervise student writers to ensure compliance with the law and school district policies.
- C. Students who believe their right to free expression has been unreasonably restricted in an official student publication or activity may seek review of the decision by the publications committee. The committee shall issue a decision no later than three (3) school days after review is requested.
 - 1. Students producing official school publications and activities shall be under the supervision of a faculty advisor and the publications committee. Official publications and activities shall be subject to the guidelines set forth below.
 - 2. Official school publications may be distributed at reasonable times and locations.
 - 3. Publications committee will consist of the yearbook advisor, newspaper advisory, building principal and superintendent of schools.

III. GUIDELINES

- A. Expression in an official school publication or school-sponsored activity is prohibited when the material:
 - 1. is obscene to minors;
 - 2. is libelous or slanderous;

3. advertises or promotes any product or service not permitted for minors by law;
 4. encourages students to commit illegal acts or violate school regulations or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of school or school activities;
 5. expresses or advocates sexual, racial or religious harassment or violence or prejudice;
 6. is distributed or displayed in violation of time, place and manner regulations.
- B. Expression in an official school publication or school-sponsored activity is subject to editorial control by the publications committee over the style and content so long as the committee's actions are reasonably related to legitimate pedagogical concerns. These may include, but are not limited to, the following:
1. assuring that participants learn whatever lessons the activity is designed to teach;
 2. assuring that readers or listeners are not exposed to material that may be inappropriate for their level of maturity;
 3. assuring that the views of the individual speaker are not erroneously attributed to the school;
 4. assuring that the school is not associated with any position other than neutrality on matters of political controversy;
 5. assuring that the sponsored student speech cannot reasonably be perceived to advocate conduct otherwise inconsistent with the shared values of a civilized social order;
 6. assuring that the school is not associated with expression that is, for example, ungrammatical, poorly written, inadequately researched, biased or prejudiced, vulgar or profane, or unsuitable for immature audiences.

Legal References: U. S. Const., amend. I
Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier, 484 U.S. 260 (1988)
Bystrom v. Fridley High School, I.S.D. No. 14, 822 F.2d 747 (8th Cir. 1987)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 904 (Distribution of Materials on School District Property by Nonschool Persons)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 505 (Distribution of Nonschool-Sponsored Materials on School Premises by Students and Employees)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)