

FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Book	Policy Manual
Section	300 Employees
Title	Freedom of Speech by Employees
Code	320
Status	Active
Adopted	May 10, 2010
Last Revised	November 10, 2025
Last Reviewed	September 3, 2025
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Authority

The Board respects employees' freedom of speech. Public school employees do not surrender their rights to free speech merely because of their status as an employee of the school district. The Board acknowledges the right of administrative, professional and support employees as private citizens in a democratic society to speak on issues of public concern.

The Board adopts this policy to clarify situations in which an employee's expression could conflict with the district's interests, when the employee is not engaged in assigned duties. In such instances, the district, in coordination with the school solicitor, must balance the employee's interests regarding freedom of expression on issues of public concern as a private citizen against the interests of this district in promoting the efficient and effective functioning and educational purpose of the district.

In situations in which a district employee is not engaged in the performance of assigned duties, the employee's freedom of speech may be addressed when the employee's speech impacts efficiency or constitutes a reasonable likelihood of disruption, as indicated by any one of the following:

1. Impairing discipline by superiors or harmony among co-workers;
2. Having a detrimental impact on close working relationships requiring loyalty and confidence;
3. Impeding the performance of the duties of the employee that conducted the speech; or
4. Interfering with the operations of the school district.

Any decisions based on the above listing shall take into consideration all of the facts of each individual situation and shall include consultation with the school solicitor.

[22 PA Code 235.1 et seq](#)

[PA Const. Art. I Sec. 7](#)

[U.S. Const. Amend. I](#)

Connick v. Myers, 461 U.S. 138 (1983)

Dougherty v. Sch. Dist. of Philadelphia, 772 F.3d 979, 991 (3d Cir. 2014)

Garcetti v. Ceballos, 547 U.S. 410 (2006)

Natalie Munroe v. Central Bucks School District, 805 F.3d 454 (3d Cir. 2019)

Pickering v. Board of Education, 391 U.S. 563 (1968)

Pol. 816