Pennsylvania School Boards Association

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION

APPROVED: January 15, 2026

REVISED:

122.3-AR-0. NON-SCHOOL-SPONSORED STUDENT GROUPS

The following administrative regulation governs the registration and operation of non-school-sponsored student groups at the secondary level.

The school will grant access to student groups that request to meet for academic, religious, political, or philosophical purposes under a limited open forum provided by the Equal Access Act.

Establishment of a limited open forum does not limit the authority of the school, its agents, or its employees to maintain order and discipline on school premises; to protect the well-being of students and staff; and to assure that attendance of students at meetings is voluntary. A limited open forum is established when the school grants an opportunity for one or more non-school-sponsored student groups to meet on school premises during non-instructional time.

Non-instructional time – means the time determined by the administration before actual classroom instruction begins or after actual classroom instruction ends, and the lunch hour. For purposes of determining the beginning and ending of the school day, the school will designate the first period in the day when the majority of the students attend class as the first period; the last period in the day will be the period that is the last class period for the majority of the students.

Non-school-sponsored student group – means any student group that does not directly relate to the curriculum programs offered by the school.

The school will be deemed to offer a fair opportunity for students to conduct meetings within a limited open forum if it uniformly ensures that:

1. **The meeting is voluntary and student-initiated.**

2. **There is no sponsorship of the meeting by the school or any government, its agents or employees.**

3. **School employees are present only in a non-participatory capacity.**

4. **The meeting does not materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of educational activities within the school.**

5. **Non-school persons do not direct, conduct, control, or regularly attend activities of student groups.**

Establishment of a limited open forum does not authorize the school to:

1. **Influence the form or content of any prayer or other religious activity.**

2. **Require any person to participate in prayer or other religious activity.**

3. **Expend school funds beyond the incidental cost of providing the space for the student-initiated meetings.**

4. **Sanction meetings that are otherwise unlawful.**

5. **Limit the rights of groups of students that are not of a specified numerical size.**

6. **Abridge the constitutional rights of any person.**

Student religious groups and political clubs will be allowed to use school premises on the same basis as other non-school-sponsored student groups.

The building administrator may approve a non-school-sponsored student group's use of facilities to conduct a meeting during the limited open forum, provided that:

1. **The meeting will take place during non-instructional time, as determined by the building administrator.**

2. **The meeting is voluntary and student-initiated. The building administrator must be assured that students are the ones promoting such activities and are participating of their own volition. Only students enrolled in the school may request such meetings.**

3. **School authorities or personnel do not promote, lead, or participate in such meetings. Building administrators must assign personnel to monitor these meetings. This action does not constitute sponsorship of such meetings.**

4. **The presence of school authorities is for the purpose of observation only, and such attendance is non-participatory in nature.**

5. **The school may deny facilities use to students on the basis that such activities or meetings substantially and materially interfere with the orderly conduct of regular instructional activities in the school.**

6. **Student meetings are not controlled, conducted, or directed by persons or groups not affiliated with the school. Non-school individuals may attend student meetings, but not on a regular basis. The student who requested use of the school facility for a student meeting must receive approval from the building administrator at least seven (7) days in advance for any non-school individual who will be attending the meeting and must state**

the purpose for attendance. All visitors must comply with Policy 907. School Visitors.

7. **The meeting is open to all students without regard to race, color, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, religion, ancestry, national origin or handicap/disability.**

8. **Student-initiated, non-school-sponsored groups must apply for the use of school facilities for student meetings on the appropriate form. Approval or denial will be made by the building administrator or designee.**

9. **Groups denied use of facilities may appeal the decision pursuant to Joint Operating Committee Policy 906. Public Complaints.**

10. **Approved groups will not use the school name, school mascot name or any name that might imply school sponsorship.**

Staff Monitor

To ensure appropriate levels of safety, the school requires the presence of a staff monitor for all meetings and activities of student groups. If a student group is unable to secure a staff monitor, the school will ensure that one is provided. No school employee will be expected to attend or monitor a meeting if the content of the speech at the meeting is contrary to the employee's beliefs.

Meeting/Activity Announcements

The building administrator will allow all student groups to have their meetings and activities announced through school media, such as bulletin boards, morning announcements on the P.A. system, television program, calendar, newspaper, website, and hallways for announcement posters, subject to the following requirements:

1. **Announcements for student group meetings and activities may only include the name of the group clearly identified as a student-initiated group; date, time, and place of the meeting or activity; and general subject of the meeting or activity.**

2. **All announcements must be submitted to the building administrator or designee at least one (1) school day in advance of the meeting or activity.**

   { } and must include a waiver stating that the meeting or activity is not sponsored by the center (school).

3. **The building administrator or designee will ensure that all announcements adhere to these requirements and will decide how such announcements may be displayed and/or conveyed.**

Dissemination of Policy/Regulations

A copy of pertinent Joint Operating Committee policy and administrative regulations will be provided to the student members and staff monitors of all student groups upon initial registration and annually thereafter.

Each member of the student group will be asked to sign a statement indicating that they have read, understand, and agree to abide by Joint Operating Committee policy and administrative regulations.

Violations

Any activity that would violate Joint Operating Committee policy and/or discipline codes is prohibited on school property. Any student who engages in misconduct is subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion.

Any group that violates Joint Operating Committee policy and/or administrative regulations may be subject to losing its right to meet on school premises, as otherwise guaranteed under the Equal Access Act.

Equal Treatment

The provisions of this administrative regulation will be applied equally to all student-initiated non-school-sponsored student groups.

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