STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Student publications are an important element of district programs and school goals. The Board supports the development of student produced school papers, annuals, and magazines as a means of productive involvement in constructive activities of interest. An atmosphere conducive to an orderly learning environment and the necessary respect for legitimate administrative rules are compelling interests of the Board.

Student publications are encouraged to provide opportunity for the expression of student opinion. Freedom of expression should be encouraged to seek an unbiased search for truth through intelligent disagreements without destroying the school. Freedom of expression is not absolute and creates an important responsibility for the editors and writers, whether the material is distributed as printed publication, handwritten statements, or duplicated papers. Those expressing themselves in writing, intending to cause or permit a substantial distribution of such writing, are obligated to have made an unbiased investigation to determine the facts, and if the facts are in dispute, to acknowledge that controversy exists. Advisors shall take the necessary precautions to assist students in distinguishing between freedom and license, reporting and editorializing.

The Board will permit the use of school facilities, equipment and materials for approved school publications. An approved school publication is one that is annually granted permission in writing by the school principal and renewed each school year. Other school publications are defined as a printed, handwritten or duplicated paper, or papers, prepared by students for distribution to other students.

Any disagreement between students and teachers, or advisors and editors, of a publication over content shall be resolved by the principal. Principals are encouraged to establish a student/facility committee to develop guidelines for student publications.

No publication shall publish profane, obscene or lascivious language or pictures, advocate the overthrow of our democratic system of government, copy that will materially interfere with school activities, material that is libelous, defamatory or statements known to be false. Materials that would have the effect of inflicting injury, disruptive school operations, or tend to incite an immediate breach of peace, are prohibited. As an example, a school publication could editorialize concerning a school matter such as closing of open campus. However, to encourage students to walk out of school because of such a policy would be interpreted as inciting an immediate breach of the peace.

A substantial distribution of publications on school property shall be made in accordance with rules and guidelines to be established by the school principal. Substantial distribution is intended to be distribution to a majority of an instructional class, or general distribution within the school without the intention or preventing the passing of notes, letters, or documents among a few friends or classmates, perhaps 6 to 10 persons. Such guidelines may define the times and places of distribution. There shall be no distribution of partisan political literature supporting or opposing candidates, in any national, state, municipal or school elections on school property.
STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

To carry out the Board policy on Publications, the following regulations apply:

The principal of each school, which sponsors student publications, shall create a student/facility committee to develop and publish guidelines for student publications that are consistent with the policy and regulations.

The guidelines shall address at least the following:

1. Limitations on the cost of supplies and materials furnished by the school district according to the prescribed budget.

2. Clarification of an advisor’s responsibility to assist student journalists concerning the responsibilities that accompany the freedom of expression granted to students; the obligation to seek contrasting views; responsibility to observe the applicable laws concerning libel, slander, obscenity, privacy, copyright, disruption of school activities, and accepted community standards of design and good taste; and the need to establish specific steps for a timely review of the content of the publication before printing.

3. Make reference to the school board policy Student Publications IGDB and the accompanying regulations.

4. Provide for the limitations on the use and availability of school equipment and materials, especially the frequency and times when equipment may be used.

5. Seek to provide copies of the Code of Ethics of the Society of Professional Journalists to assist in the legal and ethical responsibilities of journalism.

Students failing to comply with the policy, regulations and guidelines concerning student publications may be deprived of the opportunity to participate further, upon decision of the principal. Before making such decision, the principal shall consult with the advisor and with the student, giving both an opportunity to present evidence.

Material that fails to comply with the policy, regulations, and guidelines shall not be published. If the advisor deems that material does not so comply, the advisor’s decision may be appealed to the school principal, who shall make the final determination as to what material may be published. The principal’s final determination must be made in accordance with the policy, regulations and guidelines.