

FREEDOM OF SPEECH/EXPRESSION

School-Sponsored Publications

Students shall have the right to exercise freedom of speech and of the press in official school publications, except for expression that is obscene, libelous, slanderous, or so incites students as to create a clear and present danger of the commission of unlawful acts on school premises, the violation of lawful school regulations, or the substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

Official school publications include material produced by students in journalism, newspaper, yearbook, or writing classes and distributed to the student body either for a fee or free.

High School Journalistic Standards:

Student editors of official publications shall be responsible for assigning and editing the news, editorials, and feature content of their publications subject to the limitations of this Administrative Regulation (AR). However, it shall be the responsibility of a journalism advisor or advisors of student publications within each school to supervise the production of the student staff, to maintain professional standards of English and journalism, and to maintain the provisions of this AR. High journalistic standards will be enforced by means of "post-publication" grading or discipline responses.

All student submissions shall be held to professional standards of English and journalism.

If the principal considers material submitted for publication to violate Education Code 48907, he/she shall notify the student, without undue delay, and give specific reasons why the submitted material may not be published. Absent extraordinary circumstances, such notice should be given in sufficient time to allow the student time to either modify the material or to seek review of the principal's determination from the Superintendent or designee. Prior to any restriction of student speech, school officials shall consider any feasible alternative options to restricting the speech.

Distribution of Printed Materials and Petitions by Students

The principal or designee may provide bulletin boards on which students and student organizations may post materials of general interest. Students also may post or distribute handbills, leaflets, and other printed material, whether produced within or outside of the school. Students may collect signatures on petitions concerning school or nonschool issues.

Students are expected to use good taste in their manner of expressing ideas.

Printed materials or petitions may be distributed only:

1. Before or after school or during lunch time.
2. In locations that do not obstruct the normal flow of traffic within the school or at entrances.

No student shall use coercion to induce any other student or person to accept printed matter or to sign a petition. No funds shall be collected for any material distributed. No written materials distributed or circulated, shall be left unattended at any place on campus or in the immediate vicinity of the school. All material displayed shall clearly indicate the author or agency responsible for its production and shall be dated.

Clothing, Buttons, and Badges

Buttons, badges, armbands, and clothing bearing slogans or sayings may be worn unless their message falls into the categories prohibited by law and Board policy. No employee shall interfere with this practice on the grounds that the message may be controversial or unpopular with students or faculty.

Classroom activities, assemblies, rallies and similar convocations are designed for specific purposes and goals. Interference that is obscene, libelous, slanderous, or so incites students as to create a clear and present danger of the commission of unlawful acts on school premises, the violation of lawful school regulations, or the substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school will not be tolerated.

Violation of Policy

Violation of the Administrative Regulation by any student shall be sufficient cause for disciplinary action including suspension and/or expulsion.

Adopted: August 27, 2008

(Replaces: AR 5131 Student Exercise of Free Expression)
(Revised: November 1988)
(Adopted: March 1972)