

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS CODE

A. School-Sponsored Student Publications

The purpose of school-sponsored student publications is to provide students with experience in reporting, writing, editing and understanding English and responsible journalism. School newspapers can also serve the additional purpose of disseminating school-related information among the members of the school community; however, the student publications should not feel an obligation to serve as a public relations tool for the school – this is a function of the school newsletter. Because the Board recognizes creative student expression as an educational benefit of the school experience, it encourages freedom of comment, both oral and written, in a school setting with a degree of order in which proper learning can take place.

I. Responsibilities of Advisor

An advisor of a school-sponsored student publication shall:

1. supervise the production of the publication, including general supervision over all activities to create a proper learning environment;
2. establish or limit writing assignments for students;
3. appoint and remove students from staff positions;
4. direct and control the learning experience that the publication is intended to provide;
5. teach and encourage free, responsible expression and professional standards for English and journalism, including the ability to address difficult issues with judgment, maturity, and sensitivity to the audience and the school community;
6. maintain good communications with the building principal regarding topics which may bring inquiry from staff, community, parents or students; and
7. meet with his/her immediate supervisor for regular review and revision of his/her responsibilities as the advisor to ensure that all school-sponsored publications are in accordance with this policy.

School-sponsored publications that are part of the curriculum for which grades are assigned and academic credit is given serve as vehicles for teaching students the highest standards of writing and journalism including the ability to address difficult issues with judgment, maturity, and sensitivity to the audience and the school community. Instilling these standards requires that instructors take an active role in teaching journalistic standards, advising the journalistic process, and supervising the student editors who supervise the work of the other students, just as editors of privately-owned publications exercise control over the work of their reporters, and publishers exercise control over the work of their managing editors. Therefore, faculty advisors are expected to coach, advise, or question the work of student authors to insure that it meets the high standards of writing and journalism that the educational process is expected to instill in students

If an issue arises as to whether any materials are of the type prohibited by this policy, the advisor shall encourage the students to immediately consult the Student Press Law Center for advice and clarification prior to publishing.

II. Responsibilities of Students

Student editors of school-sponsored publication shall be responsible for determining news, editorial opinions, and advertising content of their publications subject to the limitations of sound journalistic practice and state law.

III. Time, Place and Manner Restrictions

The principal will coordinate with the advisor as to the time, place and manner of distributing school-sponsored publications to reduce any conflict with school instructional time and/or reduce any disruption of the orderly operation of the school which might be caused by the distribution of school-sponsored publications. This shall be reviewed and set at the start of each school year.

B. Non-School Sponsored Student Publications

The Board recognizes that freedom of speech and expression is a fundamental tenet of our nation. Freedom of speech and expression includes the right to distribute written or graphic material that is not part of a school-sponsored publication, class or activity at reasonable times and places and in a reasonable manner, subject to the limitations of this policy and state law.

C. Distribution of Materials

Students wishing to engage in an organized distribution of literature shall notify the building principal (or designee) of their intent to distribute at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the time of the planned distribution, except in the case of school-sponsored publications whose distribution has been set at the start of the school year. Principals may establish reasonable guidelines for the distribution to insure that the distribution does not interfere with the ordinary operations of the school and school environment. Students are not required to produce an advance copy of the materials for the principal's review.

The principal of the school may halt distribution only if the distribution interferes with the proper and orderly operation of the school or any school activity. No student may be compelled or coerced to accept any materials being distributed. Students distributing materials are responsible for picking up materials they have distributed that are discarded in the area of distribution.

Students distributing written or graphic materials in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion, in accordance with District disciplinary procedures.

D. UNAUTHORIZED PUBLICATIONS AND DISTRIBUTION

Nothing herein shall be interpreted to authorize the distribution of materials that:

1. are obscene or pornographic;

2. are libelous, slanderous or defamatory under state law;
3. invade the privacy of others;
4. contain expression that is false and not otherwise protected by laws relating to freedom of expression;
5. cause a material and substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

School equipment and supplies shall not be used for publication of non-school-sponsored written or graphic materials.

E. Disclaimer and Liability

All school-sponsored student publications shall contain a disclaimer that expression made by students in those publications is not an expression of the school, the District, the Board, or any District employee or Board member. The District and its employees shall be immune from any civil or criminal action based on any expression made or published by a student.

Adopted: May 7, 1991

Revised: October 21, 2003

Revised: November 17, 2009

LEGAL REFS.: Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Comm. Sch. Dist., 393 U.S. 503 (1968)
Colo. Const. Art. 9, § 5
C.R.S. 22-1-120 (*rights of free expression for public school students*)
C.R.S. 22-1-122(5)(e) (*state law does not prevent a student who is working under the supervision of a journalism teacher or sponsor from preparing or participating in a survey, analysis or evaluation without obtaining written parental consent as long as participation is not prohibited by federal law*)
C.R.S. 22-32-110 (1)(r) (*power to exclude materials that are immoral or pernicious*)

CROSS REFS.: JI/JIA, Students Rights and Responsibilities/Due Process Rights

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