

JICEC - School Sponsored and Non-School-Sponsored Student Publications

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It is beneficial to the educational mission of the school for students to express their own views concerning a wide variety of topics and issues and share them in an appropriate manner with other students in the school. Students' rights to express their views in the school, however, must be exercised responsibly and with consideration for the special characteristics of the school environment. The school has a duty to ensure that students' views are expressed in a manner that is consistent with the educational mission of the school.

This policy addresses the following categories of materials:

School-sponsored student publications, and Non-school-sponsored student publications distributed on school premises.

For the purposes of this policy, the term publication includes any form of communication including but not limited to writing, printing, recorded tape, film, video, any digital medium, and nonverbal communication through symbols/images/drawings.

I. School-Sponsored Student Publications

School-sponsored student publications are curriculum related extracurricular activities approved by the school, supervised by teachers or activity advisors, and designed to develop participants' knowledge and skills. School-sponsored student publications include, but are not limited to newspapers, yearbooks, literary magazines, and digital content. School administrators and staff are expected to exercise sufficient control of school-sponsored publications to ensure that students are learning what the activity is intended to teach, that audiences are not exposed to materials that may be inappropriate for their level of maturity, and that the views of the individual writer or creator are not erroneously attributed to the school.

To the extent deemed educationally appropriate by school administrators and teachers/activity advisors, student editors shall have initial responsibility for determining content. However, the teacher/activity advisor or an administrator may override the student editors' decision for reasons consistent with the educational goals of the schools after giving substantial and due regard for the judgment of student editors and the educational value of exercising that judgment.

Factors that teachers/advisors and administrators should consider in determining whether content is appropriate include, but are not limited to, the educational objectives of the school-sponsored activity (for example, teaching accuracy and fairness are legitimate educational objectives of a student newspaper) and whether the content complies with the guidelines for publications listed in Section III of this policy.

II. Non-School-Sponsored Student Publications

Distribution of non-school-sponsored publications by students is subject to the following rules:

A. Content of Publications

All materials distributed by students must meet the guidelines delineated in Section III of this policy.

B. Copy for Building Administrator

A copy of the publication shall be provided to the building administrator before distribution begins, long with the name of the student or students who will be distributing the publication.

C. Voluntary Review of Publications

Students may voluntarily request review of publications by the building administrator in advance of distribution. If review is requested, the building administrator shall determine whether the publication complies with the guidelines in Section III of this policy and shall consult with the Superintendent and legal counsel if necessary.

The schools' determination that the publication complies with the guidelines does not imply approval of its contents by the school, the administration, the Board, or the individual reviewing the publication. The student distributors and authors of the publication shall be solely responsible for its contents and the building administrator may require that the publication include disclaimers.

D. Time, Place and Manner of Distribution

Students may distribute publications at any entrance or exit to the school before and after school and in a location in the cafeteria designated by the building administrator during all lunch periods. Students shall not distribute publications in a manner which disrupts any school activity or blocks or impedes the safe flow of traffic within corridors and entranceways of the school. No students, staff members or visitors to the schools shall be compelled or coerced to accept any publications. Students who distribute publications shall be responsible for cleaning up materials left on the grounds and within school buildings.

E. Compliance with Policy

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

III. Guidelines for School-Sponsored and Non-School-Sponsored Publications

School-sponsored and non-school-sponsored publications distributed on school premises shall not include expressions that:

- A. Present a clear and present likelihood that it will cause a material and substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities, or will cause or promote the commission of unlawful acts or violations of Board policies and/or school rules;
- B. Constitute insulting or fighting words, the very expression of which injures or harasses other people (e.g., threats of violence or harassment based on race, religion, ethnic origin, disability, gender or sexual orientation);
- C. Are libelous (e.g., contains false statements that are injurious to a person's reputation);
- D. Are indecent, obscene or vulgar, if distributed in the district schools;
- E. Advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law; and/or
- F. That do not conform to MSAD #35 policy KHB and KHB-E "Advertising in the Schools".

Cross Reference:

IJND – MSAD #35 website

KHB – Advertising in the Schools

Policy Adopted: June 21, 1995

Policy Revised: June 7, 2006; June 24, 2024

Revision #2

Created 3 October 2022 15:03:29 by Elaine Robinson

Updated 25 June 2024 15:25:51 by Rebekah Williams