

Policy Title:

Freedom of Expression

Code No. 502.4

Students are allowed, indeed encouraged, to express their viewpoints and opinions. However, student expression must be appropriate to assure students learn and meet the goals of the school district and the potential audience is not exposed to material that may be harmful or inappropriate for their level of maturity.

Students will be allowed to express their viewpoints and opinions as long as the expression is responsible. The expression shall not, in the judgment of the administration, encourage the breaking of laws or school rules, cause defamation of persons, be obscene, indecent, lewd, vulgar, or profane, or encourage or cause a material and substantial disruption to the educational program.

Further, the expression must be done in a reasonable time, place, and manner that is not disruptive to the orderly and efficient operation of the school district.

Students who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary measures. Employees shall be responsible for ensuring students' expression is in keeping with this policy. It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

Student expression in official school publications, including material produced in the journalism, newspaper, yearbook, or writing classes and distributed to the student body either free or for a fee, are not subject to any prior restraint by school employees or officials except when the material violates this policy. A faculty advisor shall supervise student writers to maintain professional standards of English and journalism and to comply with the restrictions against unlawful speech. The superintendent or designee shall be responsible for developing a student publication code.

Any expression made by students, including student expression in official school publications, is not an expression of official school policy. The school district, the board and the employees or officials are not liable in any civil or criminal action for any student expression made or published by students unless the employees or officials have interfered with or altered the content of the student speech or expression, and in such case the liability, if any, is only to the extent of the interference or alteration of the speech or expression.

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June 12, 2017