

Greater Albany SD 8J
Board Policy

Code: **IB**
Adopted: 7/23/79
Revised/Readopted: 3/12/01, 2/11/08
Orig. Code(s): BP 5315

Freedom of Expression

Students have a general right to freedom of expression within the school system. The district requires, however, that students exercise their rights fairly, responsibly and in a manner not disruptive to other individuals or to the educational process.

Freedom of Student Inquiry and Expression

1. Generally, students and student organizations are free to examine and discuss questions of interest to them and to express opinions publicly and privately within the school system, provided such examination and expression is fair and responsible and is not disruptive to other individuals or to the educational process. Students may support or oppose causes by orderly means which do not disrupt other individuals or the operation of the school.
2. In the classroom, students are free to examine views offered in any course of study, provided such examination is expressed in a responsible manner.

Freedom of Association

Students are free to organize associations to promote their common interests. Student organizations should be open to all students. Membership criteria may not exclude students on the basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, disability, marital status or sex. Each student organization must have a staff advisor to supervise students in the organization. All student organizations must submit to the school a statement of purpose, criteria for membership, rules and procedures and a current list of officers. School administrators may establish reasonable rules and regulations governing the activity of student organizations.

Publications

On occasion, materials such as leaflets, newsletters, cartoons and other items are prepared and distributed by students as part of the educational process and free expression in an academic community. Such materials may be restricted or prohibited, however, pursuant to legitimate educational concerns. Such concerns include:

1. The material is or may be defamatory;
2. The material is inappropriate based on the age, grade level and/or maturity of the reading audience;
3. The material is poorly written, inadequately researched, biased or prejudiced;
4. Whether there is an opportunity for a named individual or named individuals to make a response;
5. Whether specific individuals may be identified even though the material does not use or give names;

6. The material is or may be otherwise generally disruptive to the school environment. Such disruption may occur, for example, if the material uses, advocates or condones the use of profane language or advocates or condones the commission of unlawful acts;
7. Students, parents and members of the public might reasonably perceive the materials to bear the sanction or approval of the district.

High School Student Journalists

Generally, high school student journalists have the right to exercise freedom of speech and of the press in school-sponsored media. School sponsored media means materials that are prepared, substantially written, published or broadcast by student journalists, that are distributed or generally made available, either free of charge or for a fee, to members of the student body and that are prepared under the direction of a student media adviser. School-sponsored media does not include media intended for distribution or transmission solely in the classrooms in which they are produced.

School-sponsored media prepared by student journalists are subject to reasonable time, place and manner restrictions, pursuant to state and federal law. School-sponsored media cannot contain material that:

1. Is libelous or slanderous;
2. Is obscene, pervasively indecent or vulgar;
3. Is factually inaccurate or does not meet journalistic standards established for school-sponsored media;
4. Constitutes an unwarranted invasion of privacy;
5. Violates federal or state law; or
6. So incites students as to create a clear and present danger of:
 - a. The commission of unlawful acts on or off school premises;
 - b. The violation of district policies; or
 - c. The material and substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school. A school official will base a forecast of material and substantial disruption on specific facts, including past experience in the school and current events influencing student behavior, and not on undifferentiated fear or apprehension.

Any modification or removal of material may be appealed in writing to the superintendent or designee. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the superintendent, he/she may appeal to the School Board under established district procedures.

* As used in this policy, the term parent includes legal guardian or person in a parental relationship. The status and duties of a legal guardian are defined in ORS 125.005 (4) and 125.300 - 125.325. The determination of whether an individual is acting in a parental relationship, for purposes of determining residency, depends on the evaluation of the factors listed in ORS 4198.373. The determination for other purposes depends on evaluation of those factors and a power of attorney executed pursuant to ORS 109.056. For special education students, parent also includes a surrogate parent, an adult student to whom rights have transferred and foster parent as defined in OAR 581-015-0005 (18).

END OF POLICY

Legal Reference(s):

[ORS 109.056](#)
[ORS 125.005\(4\)](#)
[ORS 125.300-125.325](#)
[ORS 332.072](#)
[ORS 332.107](#)
[ORS 339.880](#)
[ORS 339.885](#)
[ORS 419B.373](#)

[OAR 581-021-0050](#)
[OAR 581-021-0055](#)

HB 3279 (2007)

Equal Access Act, P.L. 20 U.S.C. Sections 4071-4074.
Westside Community Board of Education v. Mergens, 496 U.S. 226 (1990).
Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier, 484 U.S. 260.
United States Constitution, Articles I and XIV.
Oregon Constitution, Article I, Section 8.

Cross Reference(s):

[IGDA](#) - Student Organizations
[IGDB](#) - Student Publications
[INB](#) - Studying Controversial Issues