

Student Organizations

All members of the school community including staff, administrators and the Board are responsible for the activities that are conducted in the schools. It is important, therefore, to the orderly use of school facilities that the use of all space be approved and planned in advance. An attempt shall be made to present a balance of viewpoints.

Students may be permitted to hold meetings on school property before or after the regular student school day under the following conditions:

1. The meeting shall be scheduled in advance following Board "Use of School Building and Facilities" policies;
2. All meetings must be approved by the building principal or designee;
3. The meeting may be sponsored by school officials, official school clubs or organizations and non-school organizations.

In addition to the rules and regulations of "Use of School Building and Facilities", the following restrictions shall apply:

1. Normal class activities shall not be interrupted;
2. The meeting shall not incite hazard to person or property;
3. No group which encourages or advocates the violation of federal laws, state laws or school laws shall be granted use of school facilities;
4. No speaker who encourages or advocates breaking the law shall be invited to speak.

If a crowd is anticipated, a crowd control plan shall be filed in the building administration office two days in advance of the meeting for final approval.

Students may have the right to gather informally during the regular student school day provided they meet the following criteria:

1. Students gathered informally shall not disrupt the orderly operation of the educational process;
2. Students gathered informally shall not infringe upon the rights of others to pursue their activities;

3. Student organizations may be curriculum related or voluntary student initiated clubs that are not curriculum related.

“Curriculum related” student organizations must meet one of the following:

1. Group’s subject matter is actually taught (or will soon be taught) in a regularly offered course;
2. Group’s subject matter concerns the body of courses as a whole; or
3. Participation in the group is required for a particular course or results in academic credit.

Voluntary student-initiated clubs must:

1. Be voluntary and student-initiated;
2. Not be sponsored by the school, the government or its agents or employees;
3. Not materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of educational activities within the school;
4. Not be directed, controlled, conducted or regularly attended by “nonschool” persons.

Definitions

1. “Noninstructional time” – time set aside by the school before actual classroom instruction begins or after actual classroom instruction ends;
2. “Sponsorship” – act of promoting, leading or participating in a meeting. The assignment of a teacher, administrator or other school employee to a meeting for custodial purposes does not constitute sponsorship of the meeting.

Equal Access Act preserves the authority of the school, its agents and employees to maintain order and discipline on school premises, to protect the well being of students and staff and to assure that their attendance at meetings is voluntary.

Schools may prohibit meetings which would materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of educational activities within the school.

In an “open forum” situation, schools may not deny equal access of fair opportunity to, or discriminate against student initiated clubs on the basis of religious, political, philosophical or other content of the speech at such meetings.

If the meetings are religious, the school may not influence the form of any religious activity.