

AR 5145.2 Freedom of Speech / Expression

Students

School-Sponsored Publications

Students shall have the right to exercise freedom of speech and of the press in official school publications, except for expression that is obscene, libelous, slanderous, or so incites students as to create a clear and present danger of the commission of unlawful acts on school premises, the violation of lawful school regulations, or the substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school. (Education Code 48907)

Official school publications includes material produced by students in journalism, newspaper, yearbook, or writing classes and distributed to the student body either for a fee or free. (Education Code 48907)

Each principal shall develop a school publications code outlining the responsibility of student journalists, editors, and publication advisors.

All student submissions shall be held to professional standards of English and journalism. (Education Code 48907)

If the principal considers material submitted for publication to violate Education Code 48907, he/she shall notify the student, without undue delay, and give specific reasons why the submitted material may not be published. Absent extraordinary circumstances, such notice should be given in sufficient time to allow the student time to either modify the material or to seek review of the principal's determination from the Superintendent or designee. Prior to any restriction of the student speech, school officials shall consider any feasible alternative options to restricting the speech.

To the extent that the principal or designee believes that the school and district should be disassociated from a particular idea or opinion, the principal may require student articles to include disclaimers.

Distribution of Printed Materials and Petitions by Students

The principal or designee may provide bulletin boards on which students and student organizations may post materials of general interest. Students also may post or distribute handbills, leaflets, and other printed material, whether produced within or outside of the school. Students may collect signatures on petitions concerning school or nonschool issues.

Printed materials or petitions may be distributed only:

1. Before or after school or during lunch time.
2. In locations that do not obstruct the normal flow of traffic within school or at entrances.

No student shall use coercion to induce students or any other persons to accept printed matter or to sign petitions. No funds shall be collected for any material distributed.

Clothing, Buttons, and Badges

A student shall not wear buttons, badges, armbands, or other clothing bearing slogans or sayings that either:

1. Intrudes upon the rights of other students including, but not limited to, derogatory and injurious remarks directed at students' minority status such as race, religion, and sexual orientation.
2. Causes substantial disruption to school activities.

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No employee shall interfere with a student's wearing of such items solely on the grounds that the message may be controversial or unpopular with students or staff.

Addressing Violations

If the principal or designee considers an item in violation of this Administrative Regulation or Board Policy 5145, the principal shall notify the student, without undue delay, and provide specific reasons for the violation. Prior to any restriction of student speech, school officials shall consider if there are feasible alternative options to restricting the speech.

Board Approved:

July 27, 2023

Effective Date: September 27, 2007