

## Students

### Restrictions on Publications; High Schools

[For high school or unit districts only]

#### Definitions

Libel means the willful or negligent publication of provably false and unprivileged statements of fact that do demonstrable harm to a living person's reputation.

Obscene means lewd; impure; indecent; calculated to shock the moral sense of humans by a disregard of chastity or modesty. Objectionable or offensive to accepted standards of decency.

*School official* means a Building Principal or designee.

*School-sponsored media* means any material that is prepared, substantially written, published, or broadcast by a student journalist, distributed or generally made available to members of the student body, and prepared under the direction of a student media advisor. It does not include media intended for distribution or transmission solely in the classroom in which the media is produced.

Slander means the speaking of false statements of fact that seriously harm a living person's reputation.

*Student journalist* means a public high school student who gathers, compiles, writes, edits, photographs, records, or prepares information for dissemination in school-sponsored media.

*Student media ~~adviser~~advisor* means an individual employed, appointed, or designated by the District to supervise or provide instruction relating to school-sponsored media.

#### School-Sponsored Media

School-sponsored publications, productions, and websites are governed by the Speech Rights of Student Journalists Act and ~~the School Board policies. Student, and student~~ journalists may not use school-sponsored media that: are responsible for determining the news, opinion, feature, and advertising content of those publications, productions, and websites.

#### Student journalists must:

1. Make decisions based upon news value and guided by the Code of Ethics provided by the Society of Professional Journalists, National Scholastic Press Association, Journalism Education Association, or other relevant group;
2. Produce media based upon professional standards of accuracy, objectivity, and fairness;
3. Review material to improve sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and punctuation;
4. Check and verify all facts and verify the accuracy of all quotations;
5. In the use of personal opinions, editorial statements, and/or letters to the editor, provide opportunity and space for the expression of differing opinions within the same media to align with the District's media literacy curriculum mandate in 105 ILCS 5/27-20.08; and
6. Include an author's name with any personal opinions and editorial statements, if appropriate.

#### Student journalists may not create, produce, or distribute school-sponsored media that:

1. Is libelous, slanderous, or obscene;
2. Constitutes an unwarranted invasion of privacy;
3. Violates federal or State law, including the Constitutional rights of third parties; or

4. Incites students to:
  - a. Commit an unlawful act;
  - ~~b. Violate any of the District's policies, including but not limited to (1) its educational mission in policies 1:30, School District Philosophy and 6:10, Educational Philosophy and Objectives, and (2) speech that is socially inappropriate or inappropriate due to the maturity of the students pursuant to policies 6:65, Student Social and Emotional Development, and 7:180, Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment; or~~
  - b. Violate any of the District's policies; or
  - c. Materially and substantially disrupt the orderly operation of the school.

~~All~~The District will not engage in prior restraint of material prepared by student journalists for school-sponsored media shall comply with, unless the ethics and rules of responsible journalism. Text that material fits into ~~numbers one (1) through of the four (4)~~prohibited categories listed above ~~will not be tolerated and school officials and, in which case the Superintendent or designee and/or student media advisers~~adviser may review, edit or, and delete such media material.

~~The author's name will accompany personal opinions and editorial statements. An opportunity for the expression of differing opinions from those published/produced will be provided within the same~~ before publication or distribution of the media.

No expression made by students in the exercise of freedom of speech or freedom of the press under this policy shall be deemed to be an expression of the District or an expression of Board policy.

#### Non-School Sponsored Publications Accessed or Distributed On Campus

For purposes of this section and the following section, a *publication* includes, without limitation: (1) written or electronic print material, (2) audio-visual material on any medium including electromagnetic media (e.g., images, ~~MP3~~digital files, flash memory, etc.), or combinations of these whether off-line (e.g., a printed book, ~~CD-ROM~~digital files, etc.) or online (e.g., any website, social networking site, database for information retrieval, etc.), or (3) information or material on electronic devices (e.g., ~~data~~text or voice messages delivered by cell phones, tablets, and other hand-held devices).

Creating, distributing, and/or accessing non-school sponsored publications shall occur at a time and place and in a manner that will not cause disruption, be coercive, or result in the perception that the distribution or the publication is endorsed by the School District.

Students are prohibited from creating, distributing, and/or accessing at school any publication that:

1. Will cause a material and substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities;
2. Violates the rights of others, including but not limited to material that is libelous, slanderous or obscene, ~~or~~ invades the privacy of others, or infringes on a copyright;
3. Is socially inappropriate or inappropriate due to maturity level of the students, including but not limited to material that is obscene, pornographic, or pervasively lewd and vulgar, contains indecent and vulgar language, or *sexting* as defined by School Board policy and Student Handbooks;
4. Is reasonably viewed as promoting illegal drug use;
5. Is distributed in kindergarten through eighth grade and is primarily prepared by non-students, unless it is being used for school purposes. However, material from outside sources or the citation to such sources may be allowed, as long as the material to be distributed or accessed is primarily prepared by students; or
6. Incites students to violate any Board policies.

Accessing or distributing *on-campus* includes accessing or distributing on school property or at school-related activities. A student engages in gross disobedience and misconduct and may be disciplined for: (1) accessing or distributing forbidden material, or (2) for writing, creating, or publishing such material intending for it to be accessed or distributed at school.

#### Non-School Sponsored Publications Accessed or Distributed Off-Campus

A student engages in gross disobedience and misconduct and may be disciplined for creating and/or distributing a publication that: (1) causes a substantial disruption or a foreseeable risk of a substantial disruption to school operations, or (2) interferes with the rights of other students or staff members.

#### Bullying and Cyberbullying

The Superintendent or designee shall treat behavior that is *bullying* and/or *cyberbullying* according to Board policy 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*, in addition to any response required by this policy.

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/27-~~20.08~~ and 5/27-23.7.  
~~105 ILCS 80/, Speech Rights of Student Journalists Act, 105 ILCS 80/,~~  
~~Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier, 108 S.Ct. 562 (1988).~~  
~~Hedges v. Wauconda Community Unit School Dist. No. 118, 9 F.3d 1295 (7th Cir.~~  
~~1993).~~  
Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Cmty. Sch. Dist., ~~89-393 U.S.Ct. 733~~ 503 (1969).  
Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier, 484 U.S. 260 (1988).  
Morse v. Frederick, 551 U.S. 393 (2007).  
Hedges v. ~~Wauconda Cmty. Unit Sch.~~ Dist. No. 118, 9 F.3d 1295 (7th Cir. 1993).

CROSS REF.: 1:30 (School District Philosophy), 6:10 (Educational Philosophy and Objectives), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 8:25 (Advertising and Distributing Materials in ~~School~~Schools Provided by Non-School Related Entities)

ADOPTED: February 21, 2017