

SCHOOL SPONSORED PUBLICATIONS AND PRODUCTIONS

Definition of Terms As used in this Policy

“Publication” means all student work created for display or distribution as a curricular or extracurricular activity, and includes but is not limited to newspapers, newsletters, yearbooks, content that is electronically distributed to an audience (such as list-serv publications), and web site content. The term does not include works that are not created for display or distribution.

“Production” means a project created for public display or distribution by a single or group of students as a curricular or extracurricular activity, and includes but is not limited to musical and dramatic productions, displays of art work, and radio and television programs. The term does not include works that are not created for display or distribution.

Statement of Policy

The Metropolitan School District of Washington Township Board of Education authorizes school sponsored student publications and productions as means of instructing students, under adult supervision, in the process of responsible creative expression.

The publications and productions of the District are limited public forums. They are solely for students’ use and for the expression of values inherent in the Board-established curriculum.

The Board, while maintaining the ultimate authority, looks to staff and administrators to apply the criteria in this Policy to guide them in their work. Administrators and staff are authorized to exercise broad editorial discretion, which is based upon reasonable educational concerns when evaluating material submitted for inclusion in school-sponsored publications.

Unacceptable Content of Publications and Productions

The following is a nonexclusive list of the content that is unacceptable in student production or publication:

1. Grossly prejudicial, demeaning or derogatory to an ethnic, racial, religious, or gender references or stereotypes or other delineated group.
2. Libel, slander, or defamation.
3. Advocacy of, or opposition to, a religion or religious practice, except in a context in which it does not support or endorse a particular religion or religious practice.
4. Obscene, indecent, or vulgar content that is inconsistent with the values inherent in the curriculum.

5. Content which incites, encourages, promotes or assists in preparation for an act of violence, intimidation, harassment, or bullying.
6. Content which does not identify the author(s) and school curricular or extracurricular activity for which it was prepared.
7. Content which advocates, incites, or advances the preparation for an act or acts which are illegal for minors.
8. Content which advocates, incites, encourages or advances preparation for an act or acts which are dangerous to the health or welfare of any person.
9. Content which advocates, incites, encourages or advances preparation for an act or acts capable of damage to property.

Criteria Not To Be Employed

The content of a school publication or production shall not be restricted solely because:

1. It supports or opposes an act or failure to act by a governmental entity or public official.
2. It is critical of a Corporation policy or practice.

Unacceptable Distribution of Acceptable Content

Publications and productions containing acceptable content shall not be distributed at a time or in a manner that:

1. Disrupts a curricular or extracurricular activity.
2. Restricts the passage of students, employees and visitors through school buildings and facilities.
3. Causes litter or an unsafe condition in a Corporation school or facility.

Appeal

A person who believes the standards in this Policy have not been properly or fairly implemented may appeal to the principal of the school in which the publication or production is created or displayed. The decision of the principal may be appealed in writing to an administrator designated by the Superintendent, and then to the Superintendent.

Administrative Guidelines

The Superintendent is authorized to implement administrative guidelines to effectuate this Policy.

MSD of Washington Township

Adopted: 2/28/24

Revised: [date]