

Policy

BOARD OF EDUCATION
HORTONVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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SCHOOL-SPONSORED PUBLICATIONS AND PRODUCTIONS

The Board of Education sponsors student publications and productions as means by which students learn, under adult direction/supervision, the rights and responsibilities inherent when engaging in the public expression of ideas and information in our democratic society.

For purposes of this policy, “school-sponsored student media” shall include both student publications and productions. “Student publications” shall include any written materials, including, but not limited to, banners, flyers, posters, pamphlets, notices, newspapers, playbills, yearbooks, literary journals, books, and t-shirt and other school-sponsored clothing), as well as materials in electronic or on-line form (including, but not limited to, websites, web logs (“blogs”), video or audio clips, and newsletters or announcements transmitted by e-mail, wireless broadcast or other similar distribution/dissemination). “Student productions” shall include vocal and theatrical performances, impromptu dramatic presentations, or any electronic media (including, but not limited to, radio and television programs, podcasts, and other video or audio productions that are recorded for re-broadcast or broadcast in real time using any available broadcast technology). Further, the term “publication” shall include distribution and dissemination of a student publication; and the term “performance” shall include presentation and broadcast of a student production.

The following speech is unprotected and prohibited in all school-sponsored student publications and productions: speech that is defamatory, libelous, obscene or harmful to juveniles; speech that is reasonably likely to cause substantial disruption of or material interference with school activities or the educational process; speech that infringes upon the privacy or rights of others; speech that violates copyright law; speech that promotes activities, products or services that are unlawful (illegal) as to minors as defined by State or Federal law; and speech that otherwise violates school policy and/or State or Federal law. The board authorized the administration to engage in prior review and restraint of school-sponsored publications and productions to prevent the publication or performance of unprotected speech.

All school-sponsored student publications and productions are nonpublic forums. While student may address matters of interest or concern to their readers/viewers, as nonpublic forums, the style and content of the student publications and productions can be regulated for legitimate pedagogical, school-related reasons. School officials shall routinely and systematically review and, if necessary, restrict the style and/or content of all school-sponsored student publications and productions prior to publication/performance in a reasonable manner that is neutral as to academic issues, but include the teaching by example of the shared values of a civilized social order, which consists of not only independence of thought and frankness of expression but also discipline, courtesy/civility, and respect for authority. School officials may further prohibit speech that is grammatically incorrect, poorly written inadequately researched, biased or prejudiced, vulgar or profane, or unsuitable for immature audiences.

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School-sponsored student media may not be published/performed outside the school community (i.e. publication/performance is limited to students, staff and parents/family members) except with prior written approval of the building principal.

The building principal shall designate one or more professional staff members to serve as advisors for the purpose of establishing guidelines for appropriate subject matter for publication and with responsibility for compliance with established guidelines. The staff member shall review proposed content and promptly notify the student writers whether their proposed article will or will not be published.

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