STUDENT EXPRESSION AND STUDENT PUBLICATIONS CODE

A. **Student Expression defined:** Student Expression is speech, action or other forms of expression which convey a student's beliefs, views or opinions.

B. **Official school publications defined:** An "official school publication" is material produced by students in journalism, newspaper, yearbook, or writing classes and distributed to students either free or for a fee.

C. **Limitations to Student Expression**

1. No student will express, publish or distribute publication material which is:
   - a. obscene;
   - b. libelous;
   - c. slanderous; or
   - d. encourages students to:
     - 1) commit unlawful acts;
     - 2) violate lawful school regulations;
     - 3) cause the material and substantial disruption of the orderly and efficient operation of the school or school activity;
     - 4) disrupt or interfere with the education program;
     - 5) interrupt the maintenance of a disciplined atmosphere; or
     - 6) infringe on the rights of others.

D. **Responsibilities of students for official school publications.**

1. Students writing or editing official school publications will assign and edit the news, editorial and feature contents of the official school publications subject to the limitations of the student publications code and the law.
2. Students will strive to achieve professional standards of accuracy, fairness, objectivity and thoroughness in each and every aspect of official school publications.
3. Students will strive to achieve professional standards of grammar, usage, punctuation and spelling for clarity and accuracy of official school publications.

E. **Responsibilities of faculty advisors for official school publications.**

Faculty advisors will supervise student writers to maintain professional standards of English and journalism and to comply with the law including, but not limited to, the restrictions against unlawful speech. Official school publications are produced under the supervision of a faculty advisor. Faculty advisors to students producing official school publications shall supervise the production of the student staff in order to maintain professional standards of English journalism. District employees acting within the scope of their professional ethics will not suffer adverse employment action or retaliated against for acting to protect a student for engaging in authorized student expression or for refusing to infringe on protected student expression.

F. **District employee rights**

Any District employee or official, acting within the scope of that person's professional ethics, if any, shall not be dismissed, suspended, disciplined, reassigned, transferred, subject to termination

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or nonrenewal of a teaching contract or extracurricular contract, or otherwise retaliated against for acting to protect a student for engaging in expression protected by law, or refusing to infringe upon student expression that is protected by law.

G. **Liability**

Student expression, including student expression in an official school publication will not be deemed to be an expression of the school district. The school district, the board, and the employees or officials are not liable in any civil or criminal action for any student expression made or published by students unless the employees or officials have interfered with or altered the content of the student expression. The liability, if any, is only to the extent of interference or alteration of the speech or expression.

H. **Appeal procedure**

1. Students who believe they have been unreasonably restricted in their exercise of expression in an official student publication will seek review of the decision through the student grievance procedure, under board policy 502.4.
2. Persons who believe they have been aggrieved by a student-produced official student publication will file their complaint through the citizen grievance procedure, under board policy 213.1.

I. **Time, place and manner of restrictions on student expression.**

1. Student expression may be conveyed and official student publications may be distributed in a reasonable manner on or off school premises.
2. Student expression and distribution of official school publications in a reasonable manner will not encourage students to:
    a. commit unlawful acts;
    b. violate school rules;
    c. cause the material and substantial disruption of the orderly and efficient operation of the school district or school activity;
    d. disrupt or interfere with the education program;
    e. interrupt the maintenance of a disciplined atmosphere; or
    f. infringe on the rights of others.