

Student Publications

Student publications and student websites shall be printed or created, and published under the auspices of the District. Student publications and student websites represent the students, the school staff, and the District Board to the community at large. ~~Student publications shall not be printed or distributed under the auspices of the District should they contain printed or graphic representation that could be considered libelous, slanderous, obscene or morally objectionable to the community at large.~~

The principal of each school shall be responsible for providing skilled faculty guidance and direction to students in the publications area. While the Board recognizes and respects the rights of District students to express themselves through student publications and websites, the Board authorizes the Superintendent to develop regulations which permit the administration to exercise its oversight authority to the maximum extent permitted by law.

Adopted: January 11, 1971

Revised: September 26, 1994

Draft: June 30, 2009

Tredyffrin/Easttown School District

Student Publications

Freedom of Expression

The right of public school students to freedom of speech is guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the Commonwealth.

Students shall have the right to express themselves unless the expression materially and substantially interferes with the educational process, threatens serious harm to the school or community, encourages unlawful activity or interferes with another individual's rights.

Current Student Publications

Conestoga High School:

- *The Spoke* (newspaper)
- *Pioneer* (yearbook)
- *Illuminations* (literary magazine)
- *Frame & Canvas* (literary magazine)
- *stoganews.com* (online newspaper)

Hillside Elementary School:

- *Student Scoop*

Journalistic Guidelines

School newspapers and publications including but not limited to student yearbooks, student literary magazines, and student websites must conform to the following guidelines:

1. Students have a right and are as free as editors of other newspapers and journalistic publications to report the news and to editorialize within the provisions of items (4) and (5) below.
2. School officials shall supervise student newspapers and other student publications published with school equipment, remove obscene or libelous material and edit other material that would cause a substantial disruption or interference with school activities.

Obscenity

Obscenity is not protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.

The definition of "obscenity" has been determined by the U.S. Supreme Court to include (among other factors) a description or depiction that does not have serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value according to national standards.

Libelous Material

One may be sued for using libelous material.

"Libel" is defined as a statement recorded in writing or in some other permanent form that is defamatory in that it tends to adversely affect one's reputation.

3. School officials may not censor or restrict material simply because it is critical of the school or its administration.
4. Material for the school newspaper must be submitted for prior approval to [INSERT TITLE OF INDIVIDUAL]. A decision regarding approval of material will be made within [INSERT #] days from the date when the material was received.
5. Students who are not members of the newspaper staff shall have access to its pages and may submit material that complies with the criteria of this regulation in addition to any criteria developed and distributed to all students by the school newspaper advisor.

Distribution of Student Publications

School officials may set forth the time and place of distribution of materials so that distribution will not materially or substantially interfere with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school.

A proper time and place set for distribution is one that would give the students the opportunity to reach fellow students.

The place of the activity may be restricted to permit the normal flow of traffic within the school and at exterior doors.

Description of the Roles and Responsibilities of the Publications Adviser: A PROPOSAL

General Description of the Publications Club: A major goal of a school publications club is to create a student written and produced work that reflects the coverage of major events [from the school building] and, in the case of a literary magazine, showcases student talent on a regular basis. Publication staff members will learn how to produce a publication for mass distribution.

General Description of the Adviser: The Adviser supervises and coordinates a student publication. The Adviser reports to the Principal. Specific responsibilities include:

Publication Staff Management

- Selects publication staff and informs the principal.
- Holds regular meetings and/or maintains regular correspondence with students for the purpose guiding the development of assignments.
- Meets as frequently as needed with editors to guide content selection and coordinate the production of issues.
- Serves as ex-officio member of the editorial board so as to provide advice and assistance in the planning of activities and the decision making of the editorial board.
- Monitors innovations, evaluates activities, and recommends program improvements.
- Provides guidance, communicates high expectations, and shows an active interest in student progress.
- Watches for student behavior that may indicate a problem (e.g., profanity, teasing, bullying, distress, etc.) and intervenes and/or reports concerns to an administrator.
- Maintains high standards and upholds the student code of conduct.
- Supervises publication staff during authorized meetings and work sessions and oversees penalties for violation of standards stipulated in school procedures and Board policy.
- Promotes the proper use and care of school property.
- Accepts personal responsibility for decisions and conduct.

Publication

- Evaluates and selects a publisher.
- Works closely with vendor to ensure a quality product and to meet publication deadlines.

- Counsels publication staff on content and exercises authority to keep content from being libelous, destructively offensive, or in poor taste as a reflection of the school and its student body.
- Provides guidance with layout, picture/artwork selection, writing styles, etc.
- Helps students with proofreading and editing functions.
- Ensures that publication content is accurate and appropriate.
 - Reviews and approves final layouts for all photographic and advertising inclusions as well as for the articles and other materials.
 - Reads and approves all articles for publication.
 - Proofreads all articles to enhance the skills, grammar, and mechanics of the publication editors and staff.
- Provides the principal an opportunity to review proof materials before publication.
- Oversees distribution procedures.
- Respects personal privacy and maintains the confidentiality of privileged information.

Publication Staff and Adviser Development

- Participates in continuous study and research and/or attends relevant conferences and/or workshops, in accordance with district guidelines and budget allocations, to maintain and enhance professional competence.
- Participates as needed as a functionary during workshops, contests or other activities in which the publication staff is involved.
- Participates in publication staff meetings and professional growth opportunities as directed.
- Organizes a training workshop for publication staff when needed.
- Educates the publication staff about ethics, effective journalism techniques, and appropriate publication content.

School and Community Relations

- Strives to establish cooperative relations and makes a reasonable effort to communicate with parents and community residents as appropriate.
- Develops and thereafter revises as needed a publication editorial policy.

- Promotes awareness about the publication through communications with the principal and other relevant audiences.
- Promotes favorable recognition of program participants.
- Encourages community partnerships that enhance district programs and services.
- Promotes a favorable image of the school district and high school.
- Participates in national, state, and/or regional activities that advance district goals.
- Upholds board policies and follows administrative procedures.
- Coordinates activities with the school calendar: communicate regularly with Student Activities and Athletics Offices to get updates of upcoming events.
- Manages individual, group, and organizational interactions skillfully.

Budgeting and Financing

- Ensures that the program is self-sustaining except for financial support authorized by the board or administration. Requisitions program supplies and equipment.
- Supervises the sale of advertising.
- Ensures that contractual obligations are fulfilled.
- Ensures that all financial activities are processed through the proper student activity account.
- Orders all supplies and materials necessary for publication related activities in accordance with district procedures and budget allocations.
- Oversees use of all funds generated through publication sales and related activities.

Professionalism

- Models sensitivity and professionalism; contributes to a positive [work] environment.
- Averts problem situations and intervenes to resolve conflicts.
- Exercises self-control and perseverance when dealing with students.
- Understands implications and intended and unintended impact of published material.
- Performs other appropriate tasks and assumes such other responsibilities in connection with the advisership as assigned by the Principal and/or Superintendent.

Sources:

Amherst Exempted Village School District Newspaper Adviser Job Description. Retrieved June 15, 2009 from

http://www.amherst.k12.oh.us/administration/jobs/descriptions/ec/newspaper_advisor.pdf.

Holmdel Township Public Schools Schedule "B" Job Description Newspaper Advisor, March 22, 1995. Retrieved June 15, 2009 from http://www.holmdel.k12.nj.us/home/career_opp/job_descriptions/newspaper_advisor.pdf

Job Description for Publication Advisers. Retrieved June 22, 2009 from <http://www.jea.org/about/guidelines.html>.

<http://www.svcc.edu/InfoMenu/about/policies/board-policy/611.01.pdf> Retrieved June 15, 2009.