

Students

Series 500

Policy Title: Student Organizations

Code No. 504.2

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Secondary school students who desire to form noncurricular groups must petition the school principal, in writing, for permission so to do, and, in such petition should specify the purpose and program of the projected organization. The petition shall be acted upon by the principal or designee, and such action shall be consistent with the fact that this school system has established itself as a "limited public forum" and is thus governed by the requirements of "equal access." (Such "limited public forum" is so called because participation is limited to students, to the exclusion of outsiders, in the interests of advancing and promoting the social, political and intellectual horizons of the student.)

It is to be understood that all such groups, when formed, must carry on their activities with decorum and without disrupting the work and discipline of the school or interfering with the privacy rights of other students.

It shall be the responsibility of the principal to determine whether a student group is or is not curriculum related.

Curriculum-Related Organizations

It will also be the responsibility of the principal to determine whether a student group is curriculum-related. One or more of the following questions will be answered affirmatively if the group is curriculum-related:

- Is the subject matter of the group actually taught in a regularly offered course?
- Will the subject matter of the group soon be taught in regularly offered course?
- Does the subject matter of the group concern the body of the courses as a whole?
- Is participation in the group required for a particular course?
- Does participation in the group result in academic credit?

Secondary school curriculum-related student organizations may use the school district facilities for meetings and other purposes before and after the instructional school day. Employees are assigned to monitor approved meetings and may interact with curriculum-related organizations.

Noncurriculum-Related Organizations

The school administration need not permit an activity of a group of students, curricular or noncurricular, in the event that it is not reasonably possible to accommodate all requests for time and space.

Only students may attend and participate in meetings of a noncurricular group. Attendance at its

meetings shall be strictly voluntary and student initiated.

Noncurricular groups may not use the school name, mascot name, district name or any name or emblem that might imply school district sponsorship. Noncurricular groups may, however, use bulletin boards designated by the school administration for the purpose of posting notice of the time and place of meetings of the group. Such notices must be submitted to the school administration for approval prior to posting, and no notices shall be posted or distributed otherwise than by posting in the designated location.

School district personnel will be assigned to monitor meetings of noncurricular groups; but such personnel shall not in any manner participate in the meeting or assist in planning, criticizing or encouraging attendance.

Nonschool personnel may not direct, conduct, control or regularly attend activities or meetings of such noncurricular groups. Actions permitted in such groups must be initiated by students of the school, acting independently of outside influences. Typed or written materials intended for circulation among the student body must be submitted to the superintendent prior to distribution among the student body. This requirement is not intended hereby to restrict or limit the freedom of expression of any of the members of such noncurricular group in the course of their meetings carried on at the location prescribed by the school administration.

Students of the school, whether or not members of any approved noncurricular group, will not be permitted to engage in any promotional activity which is disruptive to the educational process.

Legal Reference: (Code of Iowa)

Westside Community Board of Education v. Mergens, 496 U.S. 226 (1990).

Bender v. Williamsport Area Community School District, 741 F.2d 538 (3d Cir. 1984), *vacated and remanded on other grounds*, 475 U.S. 534 (1986).

20 U.S.C. §§ 4071-4074

Iowa Code §§ 287; 297.9.

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March 13, 1995

February 2, 2009

March 3, 2014

Cross Reference: 502-Student Rights & Responsibilities

504-Student Activities