School-sponsored Organizations

School-sponsored student organizations must be organized at the school, have a certificated advisor, be composed completely of current student body members and be approved by the Superintendent or designee in accordance with Board policy. They shall hold the majority of their meetings at school and have a democratic plan for the selection of members. Organization activities shall not conflict with the authority and responsibilities of school officials.

Limited Open Forum

The Superintendent or designee shall not deny any student-initiated group access to school facilities during noninstructional time on the basis of religious, political, philosophical or any other content to be addressed at such meetings. The Superintendent or designee shall provide for a limited open forum during noninstructional time so that any such meetings do not interfere with regular school activities.

The Equal Access Act prohibits the district from discriminating on the basis of meeting content. By ruling that this law does not violate the first amendment’s ban on state establishment of religion, the Supreme Court has clearly protected students right to hold religious club meetings. The Board still has authority, however, to maintain order and protect students and staff; it may deny the use of facilities to any groups that threaten to disrupt the school program or threaten the health and safety of students and staff.

The Superintendent or designee shall insure that student meetings are voluntary, with no direction, control or regular attendance by non-school persons, and that students leave the meeting place in a clean, orderly and secure condition after their meetings.

School staff shall not promote or participate in these meetings but may be assigned voluntarily to observe them for purposes of maintaining order and protecting student safety.

Meetings held within the limited open forum shall entail no expenditure of public funds beyond the incidental cost of providing the meeting space. Any announcement of meetings shall clearly state that the group is not sponsored by the school or school staff. Such announcements may be posted in accordance with Board policy and state law applicable to all students, but students shall not use the school’s equipment or public address system to publicize the meetings of groups not sponsored by the school.

(cf. 5145.2 - Freedom of Speech/Expression)