

Instruction

Student Publications

Purposes of Official Student Newspaper

1. To exist as an instructional device for the teaching of writing and other journalistic skills;
2. To provide a forum for opinions of students, school staff, and members of the community; and
3. To serve the entire school by reporting school activities.

Rights of Student Journalists

1. To print factual articles dealing with topics of interest to the student writers; and
2. To print, on the editorial page, opinions on any topic, whether school related or not, which students feel are of interest to themselves or to the readers.

Responsibilities of Student Journalists

1. To submit copy that conforms to good journalistic writing style;
2. To rewrite stories, as required by the journalism advisor, to improve journalistic structure, sentence structure, grammar, spelling and punctuation;
3. To check facts and verify quotes;
4. In the case of editorials on controversial issues, to provide space for rebuttals, in the same issue if possible, but otherwise no later than the following issue; and
5. Subject to the specific limitations in these guidelines, to determine the contents of official student newspapers.

Material Not Permitted in Official School Newspapers

1. Material which is libelous or which violates the rights of privacy;
2. Profanity, hereby defined as the language which would not be used in The Hartford Courant or the New York Times;
3. Material which demeans any race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, physical disability or ethnic group;
4. Ads for cigarettes, liquor, or any other product not conducive to good health.
5. Any material, the publication of which would cause substantial disruption of the school. "Substantial disruption" is hereby defined as the threat of physical violence in the school or nearby community and/or the disruption of the school's educational program; and
6. Endorsements of political candidates or ballot measures, whether such endorsements are made via editorial, articles, letter or photograph cartoon. The newspaper may, however, publish "fact sheet" types of articles on candidates and ballot measures, provided such articles do not endorse any person or position, and provided equal space is provided for all candidates for a particular office or both sides of a ballot measure.

Determination of Appropriateness

The newspaper advisor shall have the primary responsibility of reviewing each article prior to its publication to determine if it satisfies all the conditions of these guidelines. However, if there is probable cause to believe that there is a violation of these guidelines, the school principal or his/her designated representative other than the newspaper advisor may also review copy prior to its publication. The principal shall inform the advisor of the basis for the review. However, such copy must be returned to the student editors within 24 hours after it is submitted for review. No copy may be censored except for

reasons specifically listed in these guidelines. Nothing in these guidelines is intended to allow censoring of any article merely because it is controversial or because it criticizes a particular school, a school procedure, or the school system itself.

Resolution of Differences

In the event of disagreement as to whether an article should be printed, the principal shall convene a publications review committee, which shall meet within 48 hours to submit its opinion. The publications review committee shall consist of the principal or designated representative; the journalism advisor; the editor-in-chief, a representative from the student government; a member of the Board of Education; and other members as mutually agreed upon by the parties in disagreement. If the publications review committee cannot solve the dispute, then an appeal shall be made to the Superintendent who may seek advice from the Board's legal counsel in making a decision. The Superintendent shall act on the appeal within 48 hours.

Legal Reference:

Eisner v Stamford Board of Education, 440 F.2d 803 (2nd Cir 1971).

Trachtman v Anker, 563 F.2d 518 (2nd Cir 1977), cert. denied, 354 U.S. 925 (1978).

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LEDYARD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Ledyard, Connecticut