

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Students have the constitutional rights of freedom of expression. They will have the right to express their views in speech, writing, or through any other medium or form of expression within limitations comparable to those imposed on all citizens but specifically designed for children and youth in a school setting.

The School Committee will encourage student publications not only because they offer an educational activity through which students gain experience in reporting, writing, editing, and understanding responsible journalism, but also because they provide an opportunity for students to express their views.

All student publications will be expected to comply with the rules for responsible journalism. This means that libelous statements, unfounded charges and accusations, obscenity, defamation of persons, false statements, material advocating racial or religious prejudice, hatred, violence, the breaking of laws and school regulations, or materials designed to disrupt the educational process will not be permitted.

The Superintendent will establish guidelines that are in keeping with the above and provide for the review of the content of all student publications prior to their distribution.

Review of content prior to publication is not censorship, but part of the educational process as this concerns student publications. It can be pointed out to students, as it frequently is to journalists, that a publisher (in this case, the school system) enjoys freedom to determine what it will and will not publish.

Students have a right to write, publish and disseminate their views on school grounds and in school buildings, except that the Superintendent or his/her designee may prohibit the distribution in school buildings of a specific issue or publication if it does not comply with rules for responsible journalism. The Superintendent will require that no literature be distributed unless a copy is submitted to him/her or his/her designee in advance.

The time, place, and manner of distribution of literature will be reasonably regulated by the Superintendent.

Each student publication shall contain the following: "Pursuant to state law, no expression made by students in the exercise of such rights shall be deemed to be an expression of school policy and no school officials shall be held responsible in any civil or criminal action for any expression made or published by the students."

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:82

Adopted By The
Hadley School Committee: September 22, 2014