

The Board of Education ("Board") sponsors student publications as important elements of the instructional program. Pupils are encouraged to develop skills of written and verbal communication and to exercise the right to express their opinions freely and responsibly. The Board permits and encourages the preparation and distribution of school-sponsored publications under staff direction in order that pupils learn the rights and responsibilities of the press in a free society.

The Board acknowledges the value of enabling students to develop journalistic skills in a real-life setting, but is also mindful of the legal and operational differences between school-affiliated publications and privately-owned commercial enterprises, as well as its obligation to preserve an orderly school environment free from harassment, intimidation, bullying and other expressional behavior violative of the rights of students or others. Accordingly, the Board of Education reserves the right to designate administrative staff or faculty members to exercise pre-publication review over school-sponsored publications. These designees shall have the authority to disapprove the publication of any matter that violates this Policy, to the full extent permitted by law. Students shall have the right to appeal any disapproval to the Board of Education. Appropriate measures shall be taken to assure that individuals who are the subject of the material in question do not participate in the pre-publication review or appeal process.

1. Students producing school-sponsored publications are under the supervision of a faculty Advisor and the Principal or his designee. School-sponsored student publications are subject to District policy, regulations, and applicable law.
2. All published material shall conform to objectively reasonable journalistic and literary standards relevant to the particular publication for fact-checking, objectivity, use of anonymous sources and other ethical and/or stylistic matters.
3. Subject to the limitations imposed by this Policy, student publications may address controversial subjects. Student publications shall make plain to the reasonable reader whether an article contains factual news information, editorial positions or personal opinion. When editorial positions or personal opinion are presented, the articles shall plainly disclose the author or authors taking responsibility for the positions or opinions expressed. Further, it is an editorial responsibility to provide reasonable opportunities for the publication of differing opinions on controversial issues.
4. School-sponsored student publications shall prominently disclose that their contents do not reflect the official position of the District or any District official except where so stated, and that the authors take personal responsibility for the material that they have written.



5. No school-sponsored publication may contain material that:
- a. Undermines or disrupts the basic educational activities of the school;
 - b. Interferes with educational continuity of instruction;
 - c. Is inconsistent with the District's legitimate pedagogical concerns;
 - d. Creates or contributes to the creation or exacerbation of a hostile environment for any student based on that student's race, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, religion or membership in any other legally protected class;
 - e. Contains vulgarity, profanity, obscenity or material otherwise reasonably deemed to be harmful to impressionable pupils;
 - f. Infringes the personal or family privacy of any student in a manner posing a realistic threat to the student's mental or emotional well-being and/or ability to attend Northern Highlands Regional High School free from harassment, intimidation, bullying, humiliation or ostracism. This paragraph shall be deemed to include, but not be limited to, disclosure of students' sexual activity, drug or alcohol use or other unlawful conduct, or material that promotes or glorifies such activities.
 - g. Promotes, favors or opposes any candidate for election to the Board of Education or the adoption of any bond issue, proposal, or question submitted at any school election;
 - h. In the reasonable opinion of the Board of Education's legal counsel, exposes the Board or the District to litigation for any legally cognizable cause of action including, but not limited to, claims of defamation, invasion of privacy, infringement of copyright or other violation of intellectual property rights, or tortious conduct of any kind;
 - i. Seeks to establish the supremacy of a particular religious denomination, sect, or point of view over any other;
 - j. Incites violence, advocates the use of force, or urges the violation of law or school regulations;
 - k. Solicits funds for non-school organizations when such solicitations have not been approved by the Board of Education;

1. Except as may be required for literary purposes, does not conform to acceptable standards of grammar, clear expression, and responsible research.

6. The Board of Education may, in its discretion, approve the posting of student publications on the Internet; provided, that Internet posting of publications shall be limited to a "read only" or PDF format. The Board may impose other reasonable conditions on its approval for this activity.

7. As of July 1, 2015 all students participating in school-sponsored student publications shall receive from the publication's faculty advisor complete copies of this Policy and its Regulations and shall sign a statement acknowledging receipt of same.

Students who violate this Policy by expression, publication or distribution of any materials may be subject to removal from participation in the publication, or other consequences if appropriate under the Student/Parent Handbook.

This Policy shall be implemented in accordance with regulations that shall:

1. Identify District staff responsible for publications;
2. Establish procedures for pre-publication review; and
3. Specify procedures for appeal by pupils to the Board of Education with provisions for prompt decisions to be made at each level.

N.J.S.A. 2C:34-4
N.J.S.A. 18A:42-4

Adopted: 27 November 2000
Revised:



A. Objectives

School-sponsored publications are intended to:

1. Disseminate news, opinion and literary works to those who are interested in the Northern Highlands Regional High School District, including pupils, teachers, parents or legal guardians, administrators, alumni, and other members of the school community;
2. Provide a means for the expression of thought;
3. Highlight the achievements of students in other school-sponsored activities;
4. Provide training and experience in journalism, graphics, photography, and creative writing;
5. Create an appreciation for the best forms of journalism both in and out of school;
6. Serve as a record of the history of the school;
7. Assist the District's public information program; and
8. Teach pupils the rights and responsibilities of the press in a free society.

B. General Guidelines

1. Students producing school-sponsored publications are under the supervision of a Faculty Advisor and the Principal or his designee. School-sponsored student publications are subject to District policy, regulations, and applicable law.
2. All published material shall conform to objectively reasonable journalistic and literary standards relevant to the particular publication for fact-checking, objectivity, use of anonymous sources and other ethical and/or stylistic matters.
3. Subject to the limitations imposed by the underlying Policy, student publications may address controversial subjects. Student publications shall make plain to the reasonable reader whether an article contains factual news information, editorial positions or personal opinion. When editorial positions or personal opinion are presented, the articles shall plainly disclose the author or authors taking responsibility for the positions or



opinions expressed. Further, it is an editorial responsibility to provide reasonable opportunities for the publication of differing opinions on controversial issues.

4. School-sponsored student publications shall prominently disclose that their contents do not reflect the official position of the District or any District official except where so stated, and that the authors take personal responsibility for the material that they have written.

5. As of July 1, 2015 all students participating in school-sponsored student publications shall receive from the publication's faculty advisor complete copies of the Policy and its Regulations, and shall sign a statement acknowledging receipt of same.

6. Students who violate this Regulation or the underlying Policy by expression, publication or distribution of any materials may be subject to removal from participation in the publication, or other consequences if appropriate under the Student/Parent Handbook.

C. No school-sponsored publication may contain material that:

1. Undermines or disrupts the basic educational activities of the school;
2. Interferes with educational continuity of instruction;
3. Is inconsistent with the District's legitimate pedagogical concerns;
4. Creates or contributes to the creation or exacerbation of a hostile environment for any student based on that student's race, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, religion or membership in any other legally protected class;
5. Contains vulgarity, profanity, obscenity or material otherwise reasonably deemed to be harmful to impressionable pupils;
6. Infringes the personal or family privacy of any student in a manner posing a realistic threat to the student's mental or emotional well-being and/or ability to attend Northern Highlands Regional High School free from harassment, intimidation, bullying,



humiliation or ostracism. This paragraph shall be deemed to include, but not be limited to, disclosure of students' sexual activity, drug or alcohol use or other unlawful conduct, or material that promotes or glorifies such activities.

7. Promotes, favors or opposes any candidate for election to the Board of Education or the adoption of any bond issue, proposal, or question submitted at any school election;

8. In the reasonable opinion of the Board of Education's legal counsel, exposes the Board or the District to litigation for any legally cognizable cause of action including, but not limited to, claims of defamation, invasion of privacy, infringement of copyright or other violation of intellectual property rights, or tortious conduct of any kind.

9. Seeks to establish the supremacy of a particular religious denomination, sect, or point of view over any other;

10. Incites violence, advocates the use of force, or urges the violation of law or school regulations;

11. Solicits funds for non-school organizations when such solicitations have not been approved by the Board of Education;

12. Except as may be required for literary purposes, does not conform to acceptable standards of grammar, clear expression, and responsible research.

D. Duties of the Faculty Advisor

I. The faculty advisor shall provide complete copies of this Regulation and the underlying Policy to all student members of the publication promptly upon their initial involvement, and shall disseminate current copies to all student members promptly upon their commencement or recommencement of publication-related activities in each school year. As of July 1, 2015 all student members shall sign a written acknowledgment that they have received this Regulation and the underlying Policy as a condition of their participation in the publication's activities.

2. The faculty advisor shall be principally responsible for overseeing student members' compliance with the terms of this Regulation and the underlying Policy, and shall take all measures reasonably necessary to assure that student members are aware of their responsibilities.



3. The faculty advisor shall be acquainted with generally accepted journalistic and literary standards relevant to the particular publication, and shall consistently and rigorously apply them in reviewing and approving the publication's content.
4. The faculty advisor shall serve in a liaison capacity between the staff of the publication and the faculty and administration, including but not limited to, the Board of Education;
5. The faculty advisor shall evaluate the credibility, motivation and bias of anonymous sources in accordance with generally accepted journalistic standards. Pupils are required to obtain from the faculty advisor permission before agreeing to grant anonymity to a source. The pupil must inform the faculty advisor of the name of the anonymous source, that person's background and connection to the news story, and contact information. Except as required by law, the faculty advisor shall not reveal to other members of the faculty, the Administration or the Board of Education the identity of any anonymous source.
6. The faculty advisor shall proofread each publication before it is printed and distributed, offer editorial advice and suggestions when necessary, interpret the publication guidelines set forth in paragraphs B and C, and review and approve all material intended for publication.
7. The faculty advisor shall approve the form and substance of any advertisement.

E. Pre-Publication Review and Rights of Appeal

1. In order to ascertain that school-sponsored publications do not violate the standards established by this Policy, the Board requires that each publication be submitted to the Principal or his designee for review five school days in advance of its publication. Each publication, with the exception of yearbooks and literary magazines, shall be submitted in its entirety in final layout form. A publication that contains material in violation of this Regulation and the underlying Policy shall not be published.
2. The Principal or his designee shall, within five school days, determine whether any portion of the publication violates the prohibitions of this Regulation and the underlying Policy. If such a determination is made, the Principal or his designee shall promptly inform the student editors and faculty advisor in writing with specific reference to the offending material and the reasons for the determination. Material cannot be censored merely because it is personally offensive to the reviewer or may tend to embarrass the Board or faculty or staff. Pupils must be offered the opportunity to modify or delete any



material that violates this Regulation or the underlying Policy, and to resubmit the publication to the Principal or his designee for further review. If written notification of disapproval is not provided by the Principal or his designee within five school days of submission for review, the publication shall be deemed approved as submitted.

3. If the decision of the Principal or his designee is not acceptable to the pupils or the faculty advisor, they may appeal the decision in writing to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee, which must be received by the Superintendent or designee within five school days following the date of the Principal's/designee's decision.
4. The Superintendent or his designee must affirm or deny the Principal's/designee's decision within five school days of the receipt of the appeal.
5. If the decision of the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee is not acceptable to any of the parties involved, they may appeal the decision in writing to the Board of Education, which must be received by the Secretary of the Board of Education within five school days of the date of the Superintendent's or designee's decision.
6. The Board of Education shall affirm or deny the Superintendent's/designee's decision at the next regularly scheduled board meeting.
7. Appropriate measures shall be taken to assure that individuals who are the subject of the material in question do not participate in the pre-publication review or appeal process.

F. Distribution

1. Distribution of school publications will be limited to those times and places that best serve the purpose of reaching the designated audience without disturbing normal school building activities.
2. The Board of Education may, in its discretion, approve the posting of student publications on the Internet, provided that Internet posting of publications shall be limited to a "read only" or PDF format. The Board may impose other reasonable conditions on its approval for this activity.



G. Definitions

1. "Distribution" means circulation or dissemination of material by means of handing out free copies, selling or offering copies for sale through subscriptions, accepting donations for copies, posting or displaying material in a building, or placing materials in mailboxes or, when approved by the Board of Education, posting on the Internet.
2. "School-sponsored publications" means material intended for distribution from print or electronic sources including, but not limited to: school newspapers, yearbooks, or literary magazines.

Adopted: 27 November 2000

Revised:

