



NEW VOICES

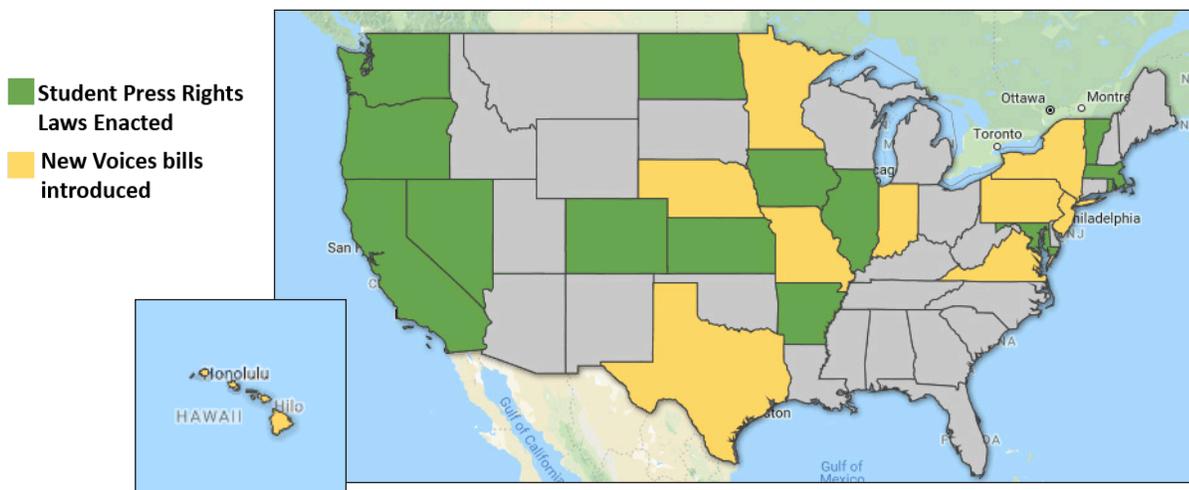
The New Voices movement works to protect student free press rights.

New Voices is a nonpartisan, grassroots, student-driven effort to create state-based student free press protections and to prevent retaliation against advisers who stand up for student free press rights.

New Voices protections are needed because without them, school administrators can (and do) censor many student publications for “any reasonable pedagogical purpose” (*Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier*, 1988.) Censoring students not only quells their engagement in the life of their community, but sends a clear message that their voices are not valued and respected.

To date, 14 states have adopted New Voices protections and campaigns are underway in many more. In 2019, legislation has been introduced in 11 states.

Join New Voices! To get involved, find your state’s New Voices Facebook group or go to [SPLC.org/New-Voices](https://www.splc.org/New-Voices) for more information.



What is New Voices?

New Voices is a nonpartisan student-driven grassroots effort to create state-based student free press protections and to prevent retaliation against advisers who stand up for student free press rights. It has led to student free press laws being passed in 14 states, with other administrative protections in place in Pennsylvania and Washington, D.C.. New Voices succeeds best with broad coalitions of supporters concerned with education, law, journalism, youth empowerment and civic engagement. Its name, “New Voices” was taken from the John Wall New Voices Act which was passed in North Dakota in 2015.

Why is it important?

Since 1988, when the U.S. Supreme Court decided *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier*, schools have had an ever-expanding right to censor student publications. The Hazelwood court gave administrators the right to censor student publications which were sponsored by the school (like a formal class or an elective or a club with school funds) for “any reasonable legitimate pedagogical purpose.” This vague standard could mean just about anything and has been misapplied to censor stories which are critical of the school administration, stories which may expose scandals in the school, or which may just make the school “look bad.” The standard is overbroad and has resulted in unwarranted censorship and restrictions on student publications at the hands of school administrators eager to control the image of their school.

Don't students have First Amendment protections already?

They do – but not in print. In the famous 1969 U.S. Supreme Court decision *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent School District*, Justice Abe Fortas wrote, “It can hardly be argued that either students or teachers shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate.” The *Tinker* Standard protects student speech unless it is libelous, an invasion of privacy or creates a “clear and present danger” or a “material and substantial disruption” of the school. While *Tinker* creates broad rights for student speech and expression in school, Hazelwood specifically limits such speech at the discretion of school administrators when it is in a student publication. New Voices seeks to restore the *Tinker* standard to student publications.

Who supports New Voices?

New Voices has been endorsed by a wide variety of organizations including the American Bar Association, the Journalism Education Association, the Society of Professional Journalists, the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, the National Council of Teachers of English, the American Society of News Editors and more.

How can I get involved in New Voices?

Join the movement! New Voices is a grassroots, student-driven, nonpartisan effort. All are welcome. The best way to get involved is to join your state's New Voices Facebook group. You can find the Facebook groups online, or through the New Voices section of the SPLC website at [SPLC.org/New-Voices](https://www.splc.org/New-Voices).

