

STUDENTS

Freedom of Expression

The Port Townsend School District believes that free expression of student opinion is central to a high-quality civic education in a democratic society. The development of skills in verbal, written or illustrated expression enhance students' confidence, engagement in learning and preparation for life beyond high school. Those skills practiced and honed at school can be a basis for learning to respect a variety of cultures, opinions and personal preferences.

While there are limits to the language and symbols that may be used in the classroom, at assemblies or school sponsored activities, student opinion – expressed appropriately – is considered a valuable part of the educational environment.

The superintendent will: 1) develop guidelines ensuring that students are able to enjoy free expression of opinion while maintaining orderly and civil conduct of the school; and, 2) develop guidelines to implement these standards and will establish procedures for the prompt review of any materials that do not appear to comply with the standards.

1. Student Publications

Student publications or student work produced as part of the school's curriculum or with the support of the associated student body fund are intended to serve both as vehicles for instruction and student communication. They are supported, operated and substantively financed by the district.

Material appearing in such publications can reflect any area of student interest, including topics about which there may be controversy and dissent. Controversial issues may be presented within parameters of civic and legal discourse and provided that they are treated in depth, represent a variety of viewpoints or have editorial authorship.

Such materials may not:

- Demean any race, religion, sex or ethnic group;
- Be libelous or slanderous;
- Be an unwarranted invasion of privacy;
- Be obscene or profane, in violation of federal or state laws, rules or regulations;
- Incite others to violate federal or state laws, rules or regulations, including the standards established by the Federal Communications Act or applicable FCC rules
- Incite students so as to create a clear and present danger or substantial disruption of the school;
- Violate district policy or procedure related to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or discrimination;
- Violate federal or state laws, rules, regulations, or incite the violation of such laws;
- Advertise tobacco products, liquor, illicit drugs, or drug paraphernalia; or
- Represent any writing or other materials that have been plagiarized.

2. Distribution of Materials

Publications or other materials that are produced by students may be distributed on school premises in accordance with procedures developed by the superintendent. Such procedures may impose limits on the time, place, and manner of distribution including prior authorization for the distribution or circulation of substantial quantities of printed material or the posting of such material on school property.

Students responsible for the distribution of material which leads to a substantial disruption of school activity or otherwise interferes with school operations will be subject to corrective action or punishment, including suspension or expulsion, consistent with student discipline policies.

Materials cannot be distributed on school grounds by non-students and non-employees of the district without prior permission from the superintendent or their designee.

Cross Reference:	Policy 2340	Religious-Related Activities and Practices
	Policy 2314	Electronic Information System
	Policy 4060	Distribution of Materials
	Policy 3207	Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying etc.

Legal References:	WAC 180-40-215	Student Rights
	RCW 28A.642.010.	Discrimination Prohibition

Management Resources:	Policy News, August 2001	A Few Civil Liberty Reminders
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Date: 2/13/86; 11/17/88; 12/20/99; 10/28/02; 5/23/05, 07/07/22.

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