

## STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

The Board of Education recognizes the educational values inherent in student participation in the extracurricular life of the school, and supports the concept of the formation of student groups for such purposes as building sound social relationships, developing interests in an academic area, and gaining an understanding of the elements and responsibilities of good citizenship.

The Superintendent of Schools, with the aid of students, faculty and administration, is charged with developing procedures for registering and regulating student groups or clubs. Such procedures shall ensure that the district will register any group organized for a purpose not prohibited by Board policy or by law, if such group submits a list of its members designated as contacts, a copy of its constitution and/or bylaws, and the constitution and bylaws of any off-campus organization with which it may be affiliated. Student groups may not restrict membership on the basis of race, sex, national origin or other arbitrary criteria.

The Board prohibits the formation of any clubs, including fraternities or sororities, or any other secret society, whose deliberations and activities have caused or created, or are likely to cause or create, a disruption of or interference with the school program.

The Board maintains a limited open forum where secondary students may meet for voluntary student-initiated activities unrelated directly to the instructional program, regardless of religious, political or philosophical content.

To provide "a fair opportunity" to students who wish to conduct a meeting, the Board of Education, in accordance with the provisions of the Equal Access Act, shall ensure that:

1. the meeting is voluntary and student-initiated;
2. there is no sponsorship of the meeting by the school, the Board of Education, school employees, external organizations or individuals;
3. employees are present at the regular meetings only in a nonparticipatory capacity;
4. the meeting does not materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of educational activities within the school;
5. nonschool persons do not direct, conduct, control, or regularly attend the activities of student groups;
6. the meeting does not engage in illegal activities, contain slanderous expressions or endanger the safety, morale, health or welfare of others; and
7. the meeting does not intrude upon the rights of others.

Ref: Education Law §§207; 1709-a; 2503-a; 2554-a  
Equal Access Act, 20 U.S.C. §§4071-4074  
8 NYCRR Part 172  
*Board of Education of the Westside Community Schools v. Mergens*, 496 U.S. 226 (1990)  
*Garnett By Smith v. Renton School Dist. No. 403*, 865 F.2d 1121 (9th Cir., 1989)  
*Thompson v. Waynesboro Area School Dist.*, 673 F.Supp. 1379 (M.D. Pa. 1987)  
*Student Coalition v. Lower Merion School Dist. Bd.*, 633 F.Supp. 1040 (E.D. Pa. 1986)

*Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School Dist.*, 393 U.S. 503,  
89 S.Ct. 733 (1969)  
*Healy v. James*, 408 U.S. 169, 92 S.Ct. 2338 (1972)

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