

FREEDOM OF SPEECH / EXPRESSION: PUBLICATIONS CODE

Students are prohibited from making any expressions or distributing or posting any materials which are obscene, libelous or slanderous, or which demonstrably incite students to commit unlawful acts on school premises, violate school rules, or substantially disrupt the school's orderly operation. (Education Code 48907)

Conduct by a student, in class or out of it, which for any reason materially disrupts class work or involves substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others, is not immunized by the constitutional guarantee of free speech. (*Tinker v. Des Moines School District* (1969) 393 U.S. 503)

The use of "fighting words" or epithets is not constitutionally protected where:

1. The speech, considered objectively, is abusive and insulting rather than a communication of ideas, and
2. The speech is actually used in an abusive manner in a situation that presents an actual danger that it will cause a breach of the peace. (*Collin v. Smith* (1978) 447 F. Supp. 676, affd. (1978) 578 F. 2d 1197, cert. den. (1978) 439 U.S. 916)

(cf. 5137 - Positive School Climate)

Students shall be free to post or distribute handbills, leaflets and other printed material, whether produced within or outside of the school. Students may collect signatures on petitions concerning either school or out-of-school issues.

All printed matter and petitions distributed, circulated or posted on school property shall bear the name and the address or contact location of the sponsoring organization or individual.

Printed materials or petitions may be distributed only:

1. Before school begins, during lunch time, or after dismissal
2. In locations that do not obstruct the normal flow of traffic within school or at entrances
3. Without undue noise.

No student shall use coercion to induce students or any other persons to accept printed matter or to sign petitions. No funds or donations shall be collected for any material distributed.

(cf. 1321 - Solicitation of Funds From and By Students)
(cf. 5131 - Conduct)
(cf. 5144 - Discipline)

FREEDOM OF SPEECH / EXPRESSION: PUBLICATIONS CODE (continued)

Clothing/Buttons and Badges

Buttons, badges, armbands or clothing bearing slogans or sayings may be worn unless their message falls within the categories prohibited above. No teacher or administrator shall interfere with this practice on the grounds that the message may be unpopular with students or faculty.

(cf. 5132 - Dress and Grooming)

(cf. 5136 - Gangs)

Bulletin Boards

Bulletin boards may be provided where students and student organizations may post materials of general interest.

(cf. 1325 – Advertising and Promotion)

(cf. 6145.5 – Student Organizations and Equal Access)

Appeals

The following procedures shall be used to address disputes regarding student freedom of expression:

1. The student and faculty member shall first attempt to resolve the problem by themselves.
2. If the student and faculty member are unable to resolve the dispute, the student and/or faculty member may bring the matter to the principal or designee, who shall hear both sides and strive to resolve the dispute as quickly as possible.
3. If the principal or designee is unable to resolve the dispute, the student and/or faculty member may bring the matter to the Superintendent or designee, who shall hear both sides and strive to resolve the dispute as quickly as possible.
4. If the Superintendent or designee is unable to resolve the dispute, the student and/or faculty member may ask for a hearing to determine whether a deprivation of freedom of expression was justified under the above regulations. This hearing shall be held before the Board or impartial person(s) appointed by the Board as soon as possible after it is requested. Both sides shall be given an opportunity to demonstrate that Board policy and administrative regulations were properly applied.

Regulation

approved: May 9, 1990

revised: March 13, 1997

MURRIETA VALLEY USD

Murrieta, California