

( ) Required  
(X) Local  
(X) Notice

## 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 may prohibit 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.

Administrative regulations governing the use of school facilities shall abide by the Equal Access Act in the creation of a "limited open forum." All non-curricula related student activities, regardless of religious or political content, shall have the same opportunities as any other such activity to operate on school grounds.

### Funding by District

No public funds shall be supplied to any non-curricular student groups, organization, or entity, except through incidental and minimal costs involved in providing a meeting place.

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)

Adoption date: February 8, 2018

## STUDENT ORGANIZATION REGULATIONS

### Limited Open Forum Established

Students may initiate meetings to discuss matters unrelated to the school curriculum. These meetings shall not be sponsored by the school(s) attended by the students. No student request to conduct a meeting shall be denied based on the religious, political, philosophical, or other content of the speech at such a meeting.

### Initial Determination of Character of Student Group

It shall be the responsibility of the building principal to first determine whether a student group is related to the curriculum. Generally, if the school or school District encourages students to attend meetings in connection with their educational program at school, then the organization will be considered to be curriculum-related. If a student group's mission or interests are not directly related to the educational program at school, then the organization will not be considered to be curriculum-related.

No group shall be considered to be curriculum related if it may not legally be sponsored by the school District. Examples of such groups are those whose purposes or interests are political or religious.

### Groups Must Be Student Initiated

School personnel, parents, and all other non-students are prohibited from initiating, directing, or controlling the activities, objectives, and goals of any group meeting under these regulations.

This form is found as Exhibit **5210-E.2**

### Time of Meetings

Students may conduct meetings that are not curriculum-related on school premises at times determined by the Superintendent.

### Attendance Voluntary

The principal shall ensure that no one who is attending the meeting of a group that is not curriculum-related is attending involuntarily.

### Attendance of Non-School Persons

Non-school persons may attend the meetings of a student group that is not curriculum-related upon receipt of permission from the building principal. The term "non-school person" means any person who is not an employee or agent of the Schodack Central School District Board of Education.

### Non-Discriminatory Membership Practices

The membership of all non-curriculum-related student groups and organizations authorized to use school facilities under these regulations shall be open to all students, regardless of race, religion, or other protected classification.

No Minimum Number of Participants Required

No minimum number of students shall be required to constitute a student group or organization that is not curriculum-related.

Participant Lists

Any student or students initiating a meeting under these regulations shall submit a list of prospective group or organization participants to the building principal in September and again in January of each school year. Said student or students shall be responsible for assisting the principal in procuring a completed parental consent form (see below), where applicable, for each participant. Additions to the participant list shall be made continually, as completed parental consent forms are received. A copy of the current list shall be provided to the meeting's monitor (see number 12, below), who shall be responsible for ensuring that a completed consent has been provided for each attendee at the meeting.

Parental Consent

Consent of a Parent or Guardian shall be required for any minor, except an emancipated minor, to participate in any non-curricular student organization or group. An administrative form shall be provided for that purpose. In the event that written consent cannot be obtained due to extreme circumstances, (ie: Homeless) the building principal will work with the student and guardian to determine consent and will keep documentation of such.

This form is found as Exhibit 5210-E.3

Meeting Requests

Requests for permission to hold and to schedule meetings of non-curricular student groups shall be submitted to the building principal at least ten school days prior to the meeting on forms provided administratively for that purpose. Requests for meeting space shall be accommodated on a first come, first served basis and should be requested in accordance with district policy 1500 Use of School Buildings and Athletic Facilities.

Monitors

The student or students initiating a meeting of a non-curriculum-related group shall have the responsibility of arranging for the presence at that meeting of a member of the school staff as a monitor. Monitors shall not participate in the meeting.

No employee of the Schodack Central School District shall be expected to serve as a monitor at a meeting if the content of the speech at that meeting is or is expected to be contrary to the employee's beliefs.

No Limitation on Building Principal's Authority

The principal of any school building operated by the District shall have full authority to prohibit unlawful meetings; to maintain discipline on school premises; to prevent material and substantial interference with the orderly conduct of educational activities within the school; and to protect the well-being of students and other persons present on school District premises. Existing codes of behavior and discipline shall be deemed applicable to all circumstances involving meetings occurring under these regulations of non-curricular student groups or organizations.

Prayer and Other Religious Activities

District employees shall not influence the form or content of any prayer or other religious activity taking place under these regulations. No District employee acting in that capacity, or acting in circumstances that may lead another person to reasonably believe that individual is acting in the capacity of a District employee, shall compel, require, or in any way encourage any person to participate in any prayer or any religious activity taking place under these regulations.

Posting of Notice and Announcement of Meetings

Notices of the date, time, and place of any meeting of a non-curricular student group or organization may be posted on a designated bulletin Board, on which the disclaimer referred to in Exhibit 5210-E.1, below, shall be displayed. Such notices may also be announced in a manner consistent with school practice and what is permitted for other extracurricular organizations.

Required Publication of Disclaimer and Prohibition of Use of School or District Name

The disclaimer incorporated in the policy adopted by the Schodack Central School District Board of Education regarding student organizations shall be incorporated in any publication regarding student meetings issued by any school operated by the District.

No non-curricular student organization or group shall use the name of the Schodack Central School District or of any school that is operated by the District as part of the name of the organization or group.

**NON-CURRICULAR STUDENT GROUP DISCLAIMER NOTICE**

The following disclaimer of sponsorship shall be published in every District publication pertaining to student meetings. Notices of meetings of student groups, organizations, or entities that are not school sponsored shall be posted and displayed in accordance with guidelines developed by the Superintendent of Schools for use in each school building.

"Nothing in the policy adopted by the Schodack Central School District Board of Education regarding non-curriculum-related student organizations or groups, or in regulations adopted to implement that policy, shall be construed to constitute sponsorship by the District, its agents, or its employees, of any student group, organization, or entity meeting without school sponsorship; nor shall any approval, advocacy, or other support of such group, organization, or entity's philosophy, program, or point of view be inferred therefrom."

**NON-CURRICULAR STUDENT ORGANIZATION OR GROUP MEETING REQUEST  
FORM**

Name or organization/group: \_\_\_\_\_

Date requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Time requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Attendance at meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose & Type of activity: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Monitor: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student Requesting Scheduling: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Request Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

**FOUR COPIES OF THIS FORM MUST BE SUBMITTED AT LEAST 10 SCHOOL DAYS  
BEFORE THE DATE ON WHICH MEETING SPACE IS DESIRED.**

Room assigned: \_\_\_\_\_

**NON-CURRICULAR STUDENT ORGANIZATION OR GROUP  
PARENTAL CONSENT FORM**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, the parent, (please print your name) guardian, or person in parental relationship

to \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print student's name)

hereby consent to her/his participation during non-instructional hours in the activities of the following organization:

\_\_\_\_\_

I UNDERSTAND THAT THE POLICY OF THE SCHODACK CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT PERMITTING STUDENT-INITIATED MEETINGS TO DISCUSS MATTERS UNRELATED TO THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM RELATES SOLELY TO MEETINGS THAT TAKE PLACE ON SCHOOL PREMISES. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE DISTRICT'S POLICY SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS SPONSORSHIP OF SUCH MEETINGS BY THE DISTRICT, ITS AGENTS, OR EMPLOYEES. I FURTHER UNDERSTAND THAT ACTIVITIES OF ORGANIZATIONS THAT HOLD SUCH MEETINGS, WHEN THEY OCCUR OFF SCHOOL PREMISES, ARE EXPRESSLY EXCLUDED FROM COVERAGE BY THIS POLICY,

AND THAT NO APPROVAL OR SPONSORSHIP OF SUCH ACTIVITIES BY THE DISTRICT, ITS AGENTS, OR EMPLOYEES SHOULD BE INFERRED FROM THIS.

\_\_\_\_\_

(Parent's Signature)

Date Signed: \_\_\_\_\_