



Mars Area School District

545 Route 228; Mars, Pa. 16046

Ph: (724) 625-1518

Fax: (724) 625-1060

Website: www.marsk12.org

Book	Policy Manual
Section	900 Community
Title	Submission/Distribution of Non-School Materials
Number	913.1
Status	Active
Legal	1. Pol. 707 2. Pol. 915 3. Pol. 216
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Purpose

The Board recognizes the social and educational values that may be derived from student participation in various opportunities outside of school-sponsored activities. Organizations/Groups/Individuals defined as Class B, C, or D (in accordance with District Policy 707 Community Use of School Facilities) seeking to have students participate in or be informed about non-school-sponsored programs shall be governed by this policy.[1]

Definitions

Non-school Organizations/Groups/Individuals - are those entities that are not part of the school program, school-sponsored activities, or organized pursuant to the Pennsylvania School Code or Board policy. Non-school Organizations/Groups/Individuals shall be classified in the following categories:

Class A - Public schools of the District. A District employee and/or student acting on behalf of him/herself or a Class B, C, or D organization is not recognized under this category.

Class B - Mars Area School District-affiliated organizations (SAOs), including Board-recognized booster groups, Mars Area Elementary PTO and Mars Planet Foundation. The primary purpose of these groups is to supplement and/or augment the District's educational programs, as outlined in District Policy 915 School-Affiliated Organizations.[2]

Class C - District non-profit civic, recreational, and church groups.

Class D - Private individual/groups and commercial uses.

Non-school Materials - Printed or written materials prepared by Class B, C and D Organizations/Groups/Individuals for posting or general distribution which are not prepared as a part of the curricular or approved extracurricular programs of the District. Materials include, but are not limited to, flyers, invitations, announcements, pamphlets, posters, and Internet/social media messages, websites belonging to Non-school Organizations/Groups/Individuals, and the like.

Distribution - Handing written Non-school Materials to others on school property or during school-sponsored events; placing upon desks, tables, on or in lockers; or engaging in any other manner of delivery of written Non-school Materials to others while on school property or during school functions. When e-mail, text messaging or other technological delivery is used as a means of distributing or accessing written Non-school Materials via use of school equipment or while on school property or at school functions, it shall be governed by this policy.

Off-campus or after hours distribution, including technological distribution, that does or is likely to materially or substantially interfere with the educational process, including school activities, school work or discipline and order on school property or at school functions is also covered by this policy.

Posting - Publicly displaying written Non-school Materials on school property or at school-sponsored events, including but not limited to affixing such materials to walls, doors, bulletin boards, easels, the outside of lockers, on District-sponsored websites, through other District-owned technology and the like.

Prohibited Activities/Materials - Are those that:

1. Are libelous, defamatory, obscene, lewd, vulgar, or profane;
2. Violate federal, state or local laws;
3. Violate District policy or administrative procedures/regulations;
4. Advocate the use or advertise the availability of any substance or material that may reasonably be believed to constitute a direct and substantial danger to the health or welfare of students, such as tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs;
5. Incite violence;
6. Advocate use of force or urge violation of federal, state or municipal law, Board policy or District administrative procedures and regulations;
7. Interfere with or advocate interference with the rights of any individual and/or the orderly operations of the District and its programs.

Authority

Students have the right to express themselves during school, on school property, and at school-sponsored events unless such expression materially or substantially interferes with the educational process, including school activities, school work, or discipline and order on school property or at school functions; threatens serious harm to the school or community; consists of or encourages unlawful activity or interferes with another's rights.

The Board shall require that distribution or posting of Non-school Materials occurs only at the places and during the times approved by the District in order to ensure the orderly operation of schools, while recognizing the rights of students to engage in protected expressions.

Guidelines

Restrictions

The District reserves the right:

- To determine the amount of Non-school Material that is disseminated as not to interfere with Class A/school-related communications and/or to result in unnecessary expense to the District.
- To decide how, when, and the duration that the Non-school Material will be communicated.
- To refuse Non-school Materials with content that is commercial, political, religious, and/or targeted to non-student audiences.
- To determine if the material is age appropriate and/or promotes activities or substances that may reasonably be believed to constitute a direct and substantial danger to the welfare of children, such as tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs.

Written Non-school Materials may not be used during instructional time or a school-sponsored activities, unless such materials are of educational value to the school program; benefit District students or the school community; and are factually accurate. Prohibited Activities/Materials may never be used.

Approval Requirements

Organizations/Groups/Individuals that do not comply with the terms of this policy may be denied future consideration for distribution/posting of Non-school Materials and information.

- All Non-school Materials are subject to District approval in every instance that a request to distribute/post is made. A previous approval does not guarantee subsequent approvals.
- To be considered for approval, all Non-school Materials must provide contact information and visibly include the following statement:
"This correspondence is being circulated as a community service at the request of a Non-school Organization/Group/Individual. This information and/or activity is not associated with Mars Area School District. Any questions or correspondence should be directed to the activity coordinator using the contact information provided."

All Organizations/Groups/Individuals are responsible for creating/drafting all non-school materials. The District will not produce or duplicate any Non-school Materials.

- Only District personnel is permitted to physically distribute/post Non-school Materials on District property or at District-sponsored events. Any materials distributed/posted by non-District personnel will be discarded/removed.
- Requests by Class B/SAOs shall receive priority over requests by Class Cs and Ds.
- Directory information regarding students or staff may only be released to Non-school Organizations/Groups/Individuals in accordance with the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) and District Policy 216 Student Records as published in the annual FERPA Notice. Directory information will not be released to Non-school Organizations/Groups/Individuals seeking this information for commercial or fundraising purposes.[3]
- Where a Non-school Organization/Group/Individual is a for-profit entity that will benefit commercially from an activity or distribution of its material during instructional time, other factors must outweigh the commercial benefit to the Non-school Organization/Group/Individual. In all cases, the Board must approve proposals that would commercially benefit a for-profit entity.

The review of any activities or any written Non-school Materials under this policy shall not discriminate on the basis of content or viewpoint, except that Prohibited Materials will be rejected, as will any materials that do not comply with Board policy, administrative procedures and regulations, or written announcements relating to proposed Non-school Materials.

Procedure

Requesting Organizations/Groups/Individuals must submit Non-school Materials electronically to the District's Director of Communications for approval by the Superintendent or designee a minimum of two (2) weeks in advance of any dates listed.

Appeal of a reviewer's decision shall first be made to the Superintendent and then to the Board, in accordance with Board policy and District regulations and procedures.

The District reserves the right to prohibit students from posting or distributing Non-school Materials constraining unprotected student expression and to discipline students for posting and/or distributing unprotected student expression or posting and/or distributing non-school materials without first obtaining the required approval(s).

Class B/SAO's fundraising events must be approved by appropriate Building Principal and/or Athletic/Activities Director, as outlined in District Policy 915 School-Affiliated Organizations, prior to submitting the distribution/posting request for consideration.[2]

All parties interested in seasonal/annual advertising on fences at outdoor District facilities and/or all District scoreboards must do so through Mars Planet Foundation, which will coordinate the purchase and/or production of such materials.

The Mars Planet Foundation has exclusive permission to affix/remove seasonal/annual advertising on fences at outdoor District facilities and/or all District scoreboards through its fund-raising campaign.

The District reserves the right to enter into independent contracts that may include advertising in District facilities outside of the Mars Planet Foundation fund-raising campaign.

Placement of any Non-school Materials in District facilities or on school grounds may not present a safety hazard; inhibit any public ingress/egress; or violate District policy and/or applicable local municipal ordinance(s).

All Non-school Materials not included in the Mars Planet Foundation fund-raising campaign shall be temporary and shall be removed immediately upon conclusion of the corresponding activity and/or event. Such banners, signs and other promotional materials that are not removed immediately upon conclusion of the corresponding activity and/or event will be removed by the District and discarded.

Only approved and provided Non-school Materials from Class B/SAOs will be distributed directly to students in accordance with building-level procedures. Approved Non-school Materials from Class C and/or D Organizations/Groups/Individuals will be posted to a designated location on the District's website as a community service.

Information provided as part of approved Non-school Materials also may be included in the following (upon request) with separate approval by the

Superintendent or designee:

- MASD-TV (Cable Ch. 50 or Digital Cable Ch. 209) - Information is limited to upcoming events/activities and/or information that directly related to the School District, its schools and students; the Mars Area community; and the District's surrounding communities.
- Electronic Bulletin Board - Information is limited to School District events, school-related activities, and items of student and/or staff achievement.
- District Electronic Newsletter - Information is limited to upcoming events/activities and/or information that directly related to the School District, its schools, students and the Mars Area community. Information regarding events/activities occurring in surrounding communities will be considered.
- Social Media (Facebook/Twitter) - Information is limited to School District events, school-related activities, and items of student and/or staff achievement.

Any deviation from the above must be approved by the Superintendent or designee in advance. All information must be submitted for approval a minimum of one (1) week in advance of the event/activity.