

Milton Town School District

Procedures

F15-P: STUDENT PUBLICATIONS PROCEDURES

Guidelines for student-printed materials are provided so that teachers and students, in preparing material for distribution and publication, may plan the contents of those materials to be consistent with the basic aims and endeavors of the Milton Town School District. Students or student organizations preparing newspapers, magazines, newsletters, mailout information, and any other type of written or printed material for public distribution should be aware of and must conform to the following guidelines which also apply to all statements, pictures, and illustrations in such material.

Guidelines and Expectations

Students will be instructed in and guided to adhere to the Code of Ethics of the Society of Professional Journalists (2014):

Seek Truth and Report It

Ethical journalism should be accurate and fair. Journalists should be honest and courageous in gathering, reporting and interpreting information.

Minimize Harm

Ethical journalism treats sources, subjects, colleagues and members of the public as human beings deserving of respect.

Act Independently

The highest and primary obligations of ethical journalism is to serve the public.

Be Accountable and Transparent

Ethical journalism means taking responsibility for one's work and explaining one's decisions to the public.

Teachers and media advisors will adhere to the Code of Ethics of the Journalism Education Association (2015):

Media Advisors will:

- *Model standards of professional journalistic conduct.*
- *Empower students to make decisions of style, structure and content by creating a learning atmosphere where students will actively practice critical thinking and decision-making.*
- *Encourage students to seek divergent points of view and to explore a variety of information sources in their decision-making.*
- *Support and defend a free, robust and active forum for student expression without prior review or restraint.*
- *Emphasize the importance of accuracy, balance and clarity in all aspects of news gathering and reporting.*
- *Show trust in students as they carry out their responsibilities by encouraging and supporting them in a caring, learning environment.*
- *Remain informed on press rights and responsibilities across media platforms.*
- *Advise and mentor, rather than act as a censor or decision-maker.*
- *Display professional and personal integrity in situations that might be construed as potential conflicts of interest.*

- *Support free expression for others in local and larger communities.*
- *Model traits of a life-long learner through continuous professional development in media education along with membership and involvement in professional media organizations.*
- *Champion inclusion so that all students not only see themselves and their ideas represented, but also see themselves as able to contribute to and lead student-determined media.*
- *Foster cooperation and open communication with administrators and other stakeholders while students exercise their First Amendment rights.*
- *Encourage journalistically responsible use of social media in schools and educate students, school officials and community to its value. Educate students about the ramifications of its misuse.*

Student Publications

Milton High School Year Book

The yearbook is published annually and distributed to the student once payment has been received. Cost is based on cost of goods sold and needs of yearbook club (i.e. camera equipment/software licenses). The yearbook is comprised of about 100 pages and bound together as a hardcover book. Students work together twice weekly to plan, collect information, produce, and edit each segment of the yearbook until the publication is completed (due date from publisher is mid-April).

The purpose of Yearbook is to produce an accurate, professional, original publication that through pictures, poems, excerpts, quotes, and more, thoroughly reflects the school pulse, represents the differing interests of the student body, and highlights activities of the year, being respectful of all members of the school community without bias, that the entire student body can feel proud to be included in.

Yellow Jacket Television

Yellow Jacket Television is produced monthly and posted to its youtube channel associated with MTSD. Additionally, we bring the entire school community together in the auditorium for an assembly to screen each episode. Crew members work throughout the month to plan, produce, edit, and format each episode to celebrate our broader school community.

The purpose of YJTV is to highlight student achievement, celebrate milestones, encourage curiosity and empathy, and underscore a positive school culture.

Milton High School Newsletter

The school newsletter will be produced digitally and distributed multiple ways. First, the newsletter is linked on the website under "co-curriculars" on the newsletter page. Second, the newsletter is emailed to all students and staff via our dedicated newsletter email address - blueandgold@mymtsd-vt.org. Finally, a small number of copies will be printed and displayed in the front office and potentially on a bulletin board in the future. Currently, our staffing situation allows for one edition a month but that could potentially increase in the future.

The newsletter's purpose is to foster a community of school journalism and to lend student voice to the issues that concern Milton High School while keeping the student population informed and involved.

Procedures for Adhering to the Code of Ethics of Journalism and Resolving Disputes

- The adult supervisor is responsible for reviewing all material and making sure it adheres to the six guidelines before publication but shall have little input in regards to content that falls outside of those guidelines. Student creators and editors are responsible for supervising content.
- Within each publication student editors are responsible for checking all material to ensure that it adheres to the six guidelines laid out in F15 - Student Publications. When a concern is raised the adult advisor will review the material as well. A conference will be held with the editor, adult advisor, and the student(s) responsible for producing the work to see if the issue can be resolved. If the issue cannot be agreed upon to either be modified or resolved then the oversight committee would become involved.
- There will be a Student Publications Oversight Committee designed to resolve conflicts or differences. The committee will consist of a student representative from each publication that embodies the Code of Ethics of the Society of Professional Journalists as well as the adult advisors from each publication.
- If the Student Publications Oversight Committee is unable to resolve the conflict or difference or if the person responsible for the publication wants to appeal the committee's decision, then the material will be presented to the MHS Administration for review, and render a decision. The administrator's decision is final.

Date reviewed/Updated: 01/16/2019

School Counsel: 01/19/2018 (C. Leopold)

Legal Reference(s): Vermont Statute Chapter 42. STUDENT RIGHTS § 1623. FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION (2017)