It is the policy of the Seattle School Board to promote the free expression of
student opinion in school-sponsored media, which is a fundamental part of
education in a democratic society.

Student publications produced as part of the school’s curriculum or with the
support of the associated student body fund are intended to serve both as vehicles
for instruction and student communication. Although the District substantively
finances and operates school-sponsored media, student editors are responsible
for determining the news, opinion, feature, and advertising content of the media,
consistent with RCW 28A.600.027. A student media advisor may not be
terminated, transferred, removed, or otherwise disciplined for complying with
RCW 28A.600.027.

Material appearing in a student publication may reflect various areas of student
interest, including topics about which there may be controversy and dissent.
When engaging in a controversial issue, student publications should strive to
provide in-depth treatment and represent a variety of viewpoints.

School officials, including principals and/or media advisors, may only prohibit
student expression that:

A. Is libelous or slanderous;
B. Is an unwarranted invasion of privacy;
C. Violates federal or state laws, rules, or regulations;
D. Incites students to violate federal or state laws, rules, or regulations;
E. Violates school district policy or procedure related to harassment,
   intimidation, or bullying pursuant to RCW 28A.300.285 or the prohibition
   on discrimination pursuant to RCW 28A.642.010;
F. Inciting of students so as to create a clear and present danger of:
   a. The commission of unlawful acts on school premises;
   b. The violation of lawful school district policy or procedure; or
   c. The material and substantial disruption of the orderly operation of
      the school. A school official must base a forecast of material and
      substantial disruption on specific facts, including past experience in
      the school and current events influencing student behavior, and not
      on undifferentiated fear or apprehension; or
G. Is in violation of the federal communications act or applicable federal
   communication commission rules or regulations.
Students may distribute school-sponsored media on school premises in accordance with procedures developed by their principal, unless stated differently by the Superintendent in Superintendent Procedures. Such procedures may impose limits on the time, place, and manner of distribution, including prior authorization for the distribution or posting on-line of such material on school property.

Students who publish material in violation of this policy may be subject to corrective action, consistent with student discipline policies.

Political expression by students in school-sponsored media shall not be deemed the use of public funds for political purposes, for purposes of the prohibitions of RCW 42.17A.550.

Any decision by a principal or student media advisor to prohibit student expression under this policy, is subject to immediate review, within three business days, by an Executive Director of Schools. That Executive Director’s decision is a final decision and may be appealed under RCW 28A.645.

The Superintendent or their designee is granted the authority to develop procedures to implement this policy and establish procedures for the prompt review of any materials that appear not to comply with the standards.

Adopted: September 2018
Revised:
Cross Reference: Policy No. 2340, Religious-Related Activities and Practices; Policy No. 3207, Prohibition or Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying; Policy No. 3210, Nondiscrimination, Acts of Hostility & Defamation; Policy No. 4060, Distribution of Information
Related Superintendent Procedure:
Previous Policies:
Legal References: RCW 28A.600.027; WAC 392-400-215 Student Rights; Laws of 2018, ch. 125, Student Freedom of Expression