

# Walla Walla Public Schools

## BOARD POLICY

Policy No. 3220

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### FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

The free expression of student opinion is an important part of education in a democratic society. The district encourages students' verbal and written expression of opinion on school premises so long as it does not substantially disrupt the operation of the school or otherwise violate this policy. Students are expressly prohibited from the use or display of verbal and symbolic expressions disruptive to the furtherance of Walla Walla Public Schools' educational process and operations. These disruptive expressions may include but are not limited to the use or display of vulgar, obscene, and/or offensive terms during class or assemblies, when school activities are taking place, or at other times when Walla Walla Public Schools is able to forecast substantial disruption of or material interference with school activities.

#### **Student Publications**

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 substantively financed and operated by the district, student editors of school-sponsored media are responsible for determining the news, opinion, feature, and advertising content of the media, consistent with chapter 28A.600 RCW. Material appearing in such publications may reflect various areas of student interest, including topics about which there may be controversy and dissent. When engaging with a controversial issue, student publications should strive to provide in-depth treatment and represent a variety of viewpoints. Such materials may not:

- Be libelous or slanderous;
- Be an unwarranted invasion of privacy;
- Violate federal or state law, rules, or regulations;
- Incite students to violate federal or state laws, rules, or regulations;
- Violate district policy or procedure related to harassment, intimidation, or bullying pursuant to RCW 28A.300.285, or related to the prohibition on discrimination pursuant to RCW 28A.642.010;
- Incite students so as to create a clear and present danger of:
  - The commission of unlawful acts on school premises;
  - The violation of lawful district policy or procedures; or
  - The material and substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school;
- Advertise tobacco products, liquor, illicit drugs, or drug paraphernalia; or
- Violate the Federal Communications Act or applicable Federal Communications Commission rules or regulations.

The superintendent or designee will develop guidelines, assuring that students are able to exercise freedom of expression so long as it does not present a material and substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school, implementing the standards above, and establishing procedures for the prompt review of any materials that appear not to comply with the standards.

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### **Distribution of Materials**

Students and district staff may distribute student publications or other materials on school premises in accordance with procedures developed by the superintendent or designee. Such procedures may impose limits on the time, place, and manner of distribution including prior authorization for the posting of such material on school property.

Students responsible for the distribution of material that leads to a substantial disruption of school activity or otherwise interferes with school operations will be subject to corrective action, including suspension or expulsion, consistent with student discipline policies.

Nonstudents and nonemployees may distribute materials on school grounds in accordance with Policy and Procedure 4060.

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### Cross References:

Board Policy 2340 - Religious-Related Activities and Practices

Board Policy 3241 - Student Discipline

Board Policy 4060 - Distribution of Materials to Students

### Legal References:

Chapter 28A.600 RCW Students

RCW 28A.600.027 Student expression in school-sponsored media

**Adopted: July 16, 2002**  
**Revised: March 17, 2020**  
**Revised: July 20, 2021**