

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Cherry Hill, New Jersey

POLICY 6145.3

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

School-sponsored student publications convey news, opinions, and literary and graphic expressions of the school community. They function in a position which must be kept carefully balanced.

The publications are edited by students. In order for the student editors and their peers to take satisfaction from producing and reading them, and in order for the editing and production to contribute usefully to their learning, it is important that those students have a reasonable editorial freedom.

Freedom carries responsibility. Each publication is sponsored by its school. It is read not just by students but by the wider school community. And before that community, as also before people outside the community, the publication stands as an expression of its sponsoring school. True, it is not an official organ. Opinions expressed in its are not necessarily those of all students, nor of the faculty, administration, or the Board of Education of the district. Yet those who produce it must be aware that it will inevitably be read as being, at least unofficially, an organ of school opinion.

Therefore, to assist in keeping a balance between editorial freedom and editorial responsibility, the Board of Education establishes the following articles:

- A. Student publications need not avoid controversial subjects. However, a distinction between items of news and information and items of opinion shall be maintained. Opinion items carry explicit indication of their source and of editorial participation in the opinions expressed. Further, it is an editorial responsibility to provide for the publication of differing opinions on controversial issues.
- B. The faculty advisor, together with the editorial staff, shall assure full respect for the Canons of Journalism as adopted by the American Society of Newspaper Editors in 1923 (see Exhibit A appended).
- C. The advisor shall be responsible to the school principal or his designated representative, for his/her exercise of editorial freedom and editorial responsibility.

Legal References: N.J.S.A. 18A:11-1 *General mandatory powers and duties*
 N.J.S.A. 18A:54-20 *Powers of boards (county vocational schools)*

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Legal References(continued):

Tinker v. Des Moines Independent School District, 393 U.S. 503 (1969)

Bethel School District No. 403 v. Fraser, 478 U.S. 675 (1986)

Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier, 484 U.S. 260 (1988)

Desilets v. Clearview Regional Board of Education, 137 N.J. 585 (1994)

Formerly Policy JHCC

Adopted: 3/20/72

Renumbered 3/28/01

Attachment: Canons of Journalism

CANONS OF JOURNALISM

This code of ethics was adopted by the American Society of Newspaper Editors in 1923.

- I. **RESPONSIBILITY** The right of a newspaper to attract and hold readers is restricted by nothing but considerations of public welfare. The use a newspaper makes of the share of public attention it gains serves to determine its sense of responsibility, which it shares with every member of its staff. A journalist who uses his power for any selfish or otherwise unworthy purpose is faithless to a high trust.
- II. **FREEDOM OF THE PRESS** Freedom of the press is to be guarded as a vital right of mankind. It is the unquestionable right to discuss whatever is not explicitly forbidden by law, including the wisdom of any restrictive statute.
- III. **INDEPENDENCE** Freedom from all obligations except that of fidelity to the public interest is vital.
 1. Promotion of any private interest contrary to the general welfare, for whatever reason, is not compatible with honest journalism. So-called news communications from private sources should not be published without public notice of their source or else substantiation of their claims to value as news, both in form and substance.
 2. Partisanship in editorial comment which knowingly departs from the truth does violence to the best spirit of American journalism; in the news columns it is subversive of a fundamental principle of the profession.
- IV. **SINCERITY, TRUTHFULNESS, ACCURACY** Good faith with the reader is the foundation of all journalism worthy of the name.
 1. By every consideration of good faith a newspaper is constrained to be truthful. It is not to be excused for lack of thoroughness or accuracy within its control or failure to obtain command of these essential qualities.
 2. Headlines should be fully warranted by the contents of the articles they surmount.
- V. **IMPARTIALITY** Sound practice makes clear distinction between news reports and expressions of opinion. News reports should be free from opinion or bias

of any kind.

(over)

Attachment to Policy 6145.3 --
Student Publications

This rule does not apply to so-called special articles unmistakably devoted to advocacy or characterized by a signature authorizing the writer's own conclusions and interpretations.

- VI. FAIR PLAY A newspaper should not publish unofficial charges affecting reputation or moral character without opportunity given to the accused to be heard; right practice demands the giving of such opportunity in all cases of serious accusation outside judicial proceedings.
1. A newspaper should not invade private rights or feelings without sure warrant of public right as distinguished from public curiosity.
 2. It is the privilege, as it is the duty, of a newspaper to make prompt and complete correction of its own serious mistakes of fact or opinion, whatever their origin.
- VII. DECENCY A newspaper cannot escape conviction of insincerity if while professing high moral purpose it supplies incentives to base conduct, such as are to be found in details of crime and vice, publication of which is not demonstrably for the general good. Lacking authority to enforce its canons, the journalism here represented can but express the hope that deliberate pandering to the vicious instincts will encounter affective public disapproval or yield to the influence of a preponderant professional condemnation.

Source:

Gerald Gross, Responsibility of the Press.
(New York: Fleet Publishing Corp., 1966) pp. 405-6