

Students

Use of Electronic Devices

Restrictions on Publications and Written or Electronic Material

School-Sponsored Publications and Websites: School-sponsored publications, productions, and websites are part of the curriculum and are not a public forum for general student use. School authorities may edit or delete material that is inconsistent with the District's educational mission.

All school-sponsored communications shall comply with the ethics and rules of responsible journalism. Text that is libelous, obscene, vulgar, lewd, invades the privacy of others, conflicts with the basic educational mission of the school, is socially inappropriate, is inappropriate due to the maturity of the students, or is materially disruptive to the educational process will not be tolerated.

The author's name will accompany personal opinions and editorial statements. An opportunity for the expression of differing opinions from those published/produced will be provided within the same media.

Non-School Sponsored Publications and Web Sites Accessed or Distributed at School: Students are prohibited from accessing and/or distributing at school any written or electronic material, including material from the Internet that:

1. Will cause substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities;
2. Violates the rights of others, including but not limited to, material that is libelous, invades the privacy of others, or infringes on a copyright;
3. Is socially inappropriate or inappropriate due to the maturity level of the students, including, but not limited to, material that is discriminating, obscene, pornographic, or pervasively lewd and vulgar, or contains indecent or vulgar language; or
4. Is primarily intended for the immediate solicitation of funds.

The distribution of non-school sponsored written material shall occur at a time and place and in a manner that will not cause disruption, be coercive, or result in the perception that the distribution of the material is endorsed by the School District.

Accessing or distributing "at school" includes accessing or distributing on school property or at school-related activities. A student engages in gross disobedience and misconduct and may be disciplined for: (1) accessing or distributing forbidden material, or (2) for writing, creating, or publishing such material intending for it to be accessed or distributed at school.

Student-Created or Distributed Written or Electronic Material Including Blogs: A student engages in gross disobedience and misconduct and may be disciplined for creating and/or distributing written or electronic material, including Internet material and blogs, that causes substantial disruption to school operations or interferes with the rights of other students or staff members.

Students

Use of Electronic Devices

Restrictions on Publications and Written or Electronic Material (continued)

Using the Internet to harass, humiliate, or defame any person, student, teacher, or adult alike is unacceptable. Acts of cyberbullying are not tolerated, are disruptive to the learning process, and are therefore prohibited in the district. As stated in the Newtown Public Schools Responsible Use of Technology Agreement, it is each person's responsibility to "report inappropriate behaviors and uses to an administrator or staff member.

Sexting

The taking, disseminating, transferring or sharing of obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfer or otherwise (commonly called texting, e-mailing or sexting, etc.) may constitute a crime under State and/or Federal law. Any person taking, disseminating or sharing obscene, pornographic, lewd or otherwise illegal images or photographs, even if the subject is oneself, may be punished under this policy/code of conduct and will be reported to law enforcement and/or other appropriate state or federal agencies, which may result in arrest, criminal prosecution and lifetime inclusion on sexual offender registries.

- (cf. 0521 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 5114 – Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)
- (cf. 5131 – Conduct)
- (cf. 5131.8 – Off School Grounds Misconduct)
- (cf. 5131.81 – Use of Electronic Devices)
- (cf. 5131.911 – Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy)
- (cf. 5131.913 – Cyberbullying)
- (cf. 5144 – Discipline/Punishment)
- (cf. 5145.4 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 5145.5 – Sexual Harassment)
- (cf. 5145.51 – Peer Sexual Harassment)
- (cf. 6145.3 – Publications)

Legal Reference: *Eisner v. Stamford Board of Education*, 440 F. 2d 803 (2nd Cir 1971)
 Trachtman v. Anker, 563 F. 2d 512 (2nd Cir. 1977) cert. denied, 435 U.S.
 925 (1978)
 Hazelwood School District v. Ruhlmeir, 484 U.S. 260, 108 S Ct 562
 (1988)
 Bethel School District v. Fraser, 478 US 675 (1986)
 Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community Dist., 393 US 503, (1969)

Policy adopted: November 7, 2018

NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Newtown, Connecticut

