

## **STUDENT GROUP USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES**

Secondary schools of the district will provide an opportunity for student-initiated, noncurricular groups to meet on school premises during noninstructional time, providing a limited open forum environment, as described in this policy.

An activity is to be considered curricular if the subject matter is or will be taught in a regularly offered class; if the subject matter concerns the body of courses as a whole; if participation in the group is a requirement for a course; or if academic credit is granted for participation. Extracurricular activities will be those organized and supervised activities conducted under the auspices of the school district which primarily involve students in activities occurring outside academic class time, for which no units of credit are awarded. Any activity which does not fit these guidelines will be considered noncurricular.

Pursuant to the Equal Access Act, secondary schools of the district will not deny equal access and a fair opportunity to student-initiated, noncurricular groups who wish to conduct a meeting on school premises during noninstructional time, on the basis of religious, political, philosophical or other content of the speech at such meetings. To make use of the school facilities, a noncurricular meeting must meet the following criteria:

- ▶ A meeting must be voluntary and student-initiated. No student shall be in any way coerced to participate in religious activity. Teachers and school administrators, when acting within the course and scope of their employment, will strictly observe a policy of official neutrality regarding religious activity.
- ▶ No sponsorship, promotion, leadership or participation in the meeting by the school or any employee of the school is permitted, and no group violating this prohibition shall have access to the school facilities. However, a teacher, administrator or other school employee may be assigned to the meeting to monitor facility use and student conduct.
- ▶ Employees and agents of the school, if present at any religious meetings, are to be solely in a non-participatory capacity.
- ▶ The meeting does not materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of educational activities within the school.
- ▶ Nonschool persons may not direct, conduct, control or regularly attend the meetings of a noncurricular group making use of this limited open forum.

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**FILE: IGDA**  
**Critical**

Adopted: 8-12-99 Re-adopted 6-28-12

Cross Refs: KG, Community Use of School Facilities

Legal Refs: The Equal Access Act (1984), 20 U.S.C. 4701, 4702  
"Religious Expression in Public Schools," U.S. Dept. of Education, May, 1998

Dent-Phelps R-III School District, Salem, Missouri