Community Relations

Distribution of Materials by Students (Use of Students)

Students may distribute printed materials to parents as a cost-effective means of mass communication. To provide the most effective use of this technique without exploitation of staff or students, the Superintendent or his/her designee may approve such distribution, provided:

1. The materials relate to the school, community, local recreational or civic activities.
2. The materials do not relate to any religious belief or activity, or promote private gain, or political position.
3. The materials do not promote any political party or candidate.

All requests from groups or individuals to have students distribute materials to people in the community, with the exception of requests from school-connected organizations like parent-teacher organizations or Board-appointed citizens' ad hoc advisory committees, will be referred to the office of the Superintendent to determine whether the requests comply with overall school purposes and policy.

Use of Students

The Board prohibits the use of students during normal school hours in activities which are not part of the normal educational and planned curriculum process. Permission for use of students in activities of a non-educational nature must be obtained from the Superintendent or his/her designee who will ensure that the student's rights in terms of voluntary activities are maintained and that students are not exploited either knowingly or unknowingly.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall interpret this policy strictly. In case of differences regarding the decision, the Superintendent's decision will be final to ensure the best interests of the students are served.

Budget/Referendum Materials

Information concerning a budget or referendum, specifying only the time, date, location, and the neutral text of the question or proposal, may be disseminated through the students or included in regularly published district newsletters.

In accordance with C.G.S. § 9-369b (as amended by P.A. 26-125), the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee may disseminate a written notice through the schools to inform parents and guardians of enrolled students of an upcoming referendum pertaining to the school district.

No school district funds, electronic mail systems, automated messaging services, or notification platforms (including, but not limited to, parent notification systems, robocalls, or targeted electronic mass mailings) shall be used to send unsolicited electronic communications to a group of residents or parents regarding a pending referendum for the purpose of reminding or encouraging them to vote. Official municipal or regional district notifications sent via an opt-in

town-wide community notification system shall be governed strictly by the provisions of C.G.S. § 9-369b(a)(3).

This information may not contain statements or be written in a manner which may advocate a position on the budget or on a referendum question or otherwise attempt to influence, aid, or defeat the referendum.

Advertising in the Schools

No advertising of materials used for commercial purposes shall be permitted in the school buildings or on the grounds of the District without prior approval of the Superintendent. Advertising in student publications shall be regulated by rules and regulations developed by the Superintendent. Ads concerning drug paraphernalia, tobacco/nicotine products, cannabis, and any controlled substance are prohibited in any school-sponsored publication.

CABE Note: This is the section which would cover the distribution of planners/notebooks/book bags, etc. with advertising on them.

Dissemination of Religious Materials

Materials that have religious content may be made available to students during non-instructional time. The District shall impose content-neutral, time, place, and manner restrictions on the dissemination of religious materials to ensure that students are aware that the materials are not being endorsed or sponsored by the District.

(cf. 3152 – Spending Public Funds for Advocacy)

(cf. 3543.31 – Electronic Communications/Digital Platforms)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

9-369 Procedure for holding referendum.

9-369b Local questions and proposals. Preparation, printing and dissemination of explanatory texts and other materials. Use of community notification systems. Expenditure of state and municipal funds to influence vote prohibited; exceptions. Civil penalty. (as amended by P.A. 26-125)

Declaratory Ruling 2009-01 (SEEC) – Dissemination of Neutral Information Regarding Referenda.

In the Matter of a Complaint by William E. Marsh, Windsor Locks (SEEC File No. 2014-037) – Electronic Communications and Website Postings as In-Kind Public Fund Expenditures.

Public Act 13-247 / Public Act 15-173 / Public Act 26-125

Policy adopted: