

## PROPOSED REVISIONS

### Prayer and Reading of Bible or Other Religious Text

In accordance with the resolution adopted by the Board, each school day each campus shall provide an opportunity for students to participate in a period of prayer and reading of the Bible or other religious text.

### General Provisions

The principal shall designate the appropriate location and time for the period of prayer and reading of the Bible or other religious text in accordance with law. The period designated for prayer and reading of the Bible or other religious text shall not be substituted for instructional time.

No prayer or reading of the Bible or other religious text shall occur over a District facility's public address system.

### Consent Forms

A student who wishes to participate in the period of prayer and reading of the Bible or other religious text must submit a consent form signed by their parent or guardian that includes:

1. An acknowledgement that the student has a choice whether to participate in the period of prayer and reading of the Bible or other religious text;
2. A statement that the parent or guardian has no objection to the student's participation in or hearing of the prayers or readings offered during the period; and
3. An express waiver of the student's and parent's or guardian's right to bring a claim under state or federal law arising out of the adoption of this policy, including a claim under the First Amendment, Establishment Clause in the United States Constitution or a related federal law, releasing the District and District employees from liability for those claims brought in state or federal court.

If the parent or guardian has not submitted a consent form or has revoked a previous consent form, no prayer or reading of the Bible or other religious text shall take place in that student's physical presence, within the hearing of that student, or in another manner that would constitute an injury in fact within the meaning of the United States or Texas Constitution.

### **Student Expression of Religious Viewpoints**

The District shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the District treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and may not discriminate against the student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

<b>Student Speakers at Nongraduation Events</b>	The District hereby creates a limited public forum for student speakers at all school events at which a student is to publicly speak. For each speaker, the District shall set a maximum time limit reasonable and appropriate to the occasion.
Introductory Speakers	<p>Student speakers shall introduce:</p> <p><u>4.4.</u> Football games; and</p> <p><u>2.5.</u> Opening announcements and greetings for the school day.</p> <p>The forum shall be limited in the manner provided by this section on nongraduation events.</p>
<i>Eligibility and Selection</i>	<p>Only those students in the highest two grade levels of the school at which the student is publicly speaking and who hold one of the following positions of honor based on neutral criteria are eligible to use the limited public forum: student council officers, class officers of the highest grade level in the school, and captains of the football team.</p> <p>An eligible student shall be notified of the student's eligibility, and a student who wishes to participate as an introducing speaker shall submit the student's name to the campus principal during an announced period of not less than three days.</p> <p>The announced period shall occur at the beginning of each semester. The names of the volunteering student speakers shall be randomly drawn until all names have been selected, and the names shall be listed in the order drawn.</p>
<i>Assignment of Introductory Speakers</i>	Each selected student shall be matched chronologically to the event for which the student shall be giving the introduction. Each student may speak for one week at a time for all introductions of events that week. The list of student speakers shall be chronologically repeated as needed, in the same order. The District may repeat the selection process each semester rather than once a year.
<i>Content of Student Introductions</i>	The subject of the student introductions must be related to the purpose of the event and to the purpose of marking the opening of the event; honoring the occasion, the participants, and those in attendance; bringing the audience to order; and focusing the audience on the purpose of the event. A student must stay on the subject, and the student may not engage in obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd, or indecent speech. The District shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the District treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and may not discriminate against the student

based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

*Disclaimer*

For as long as there is a need to dispel confusion over the non-sponsorship of the student's speech, at each event in which a student shall deliver an introduction, a disclaimer shall be stated in written or oral form, or both, such as, "The student giving the introduction for this event is a volunteering student selected on neutral criteria to introduce the event. The content of the introduction is the private expression of the student and does not reflect the endorsement, sponsorship, position, or expression of the District."

**Other Student  
Speakers**

Certain students who have attained special positions of honor in the school have traditionally addressed school audiences from time to time as a tangential component of their achieved positions of honor, such as the captains of various sports teams, student council officers, class officers, homecoming kings and queens, prom kings and queens, and the like, and have attained their positions based on neutral criteria. Nothing in this policy eliminates the continuation of the practice of having these students, irrespective of grade level, address school audiences in the normal course of their respective positions.

The District shall create a limited public forum for the speakers and shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the District treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and may not discriminate against the student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

**Student Speakers at  
Graduation  
Ceremonies**

Opening and  
Closing Remarks

The District hereby creates a limited public forum consisting of an opportunity for a student to speak to begin graduation ceremonies and another student to speak to end graduation ceremonies. For each speaker, the District shall set a maximum time limit reasonable and appropriate to the occasion.

The forum shall be limited in the manner provided by this section on student speakers at graduation. [See also FMH(LEGAL)]

Eligibility

Only students who are graduating and who hold one of the following neutral criteria positions of honor shall be eligible to use the limited public forum: class officers of the graduating class and the top three academically ranked graduates.

A student who shall otherwise have a speaking role in the graduation ceremonies is ineligible to give the opening and closing remarks. The names of the eligible volunteering students shall be

randomly drawn. The first name drawn shall give the opening, and the second name drawn shall give the closing.

**Content of Opening  
and Closing  
Remarks**

The topic of the opening and closing remarks must be related to the purpose of the graduation ceremony and to the purpose of marking the opening and closing of the event; honoring the occasion, the participants, and those in attendance; bringing the audience to order; and focusing the audience on the purpose of the event.

**Other Student  
Graduation Speakers**

In addition to the students giving the opening and closing remarks, the valedictorian may have speaking roles at graduation ceremonies.

For each speaker, the District shall set a maximum time limit reasonable and appropriate to the occasion and to the position held by the speaker. For this purpose, the District creates a limited public forum for these students to deliver the addresses. The subject of the addresses must be related to the purpose of the graduation ceremony, marking and honoring the occasion, honoring the participants and those in attendance, and the student's perspective on purpose, achievement, life, school, graduation, and looking forward to the future.

The student must stay on the subject, and the student may not engage in obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd, or indecent speech. The District shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the District treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and may not discriminate against the student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

**Disclaimer**

A written disclaimer shall be printed in the graduation program that states, "The students who shall be speaking at the graduation ceremony were selected based on neutral criteria to deliver messages of the students' own choices. The content of each student speaker's message is the private expression of the individual student and does not reflect any position or expression of the District or the board of trustees, or the District's administration, or employees of the District, or the views of any other graduate. The contents of these messages were prepared by the student volunteers, and the District refrained from any interaction with student speakers regarding the student speakers' viewpoints on permissible subjects."

**Religious  
Expression in Class  
Assignments**

Students may express the students' beliefs about religion in homework, artwork, and other written and oral assignments free from

discrimination based on the religious content of the students' submission. Homework and classroom work shall be judged by ordinary academic standards of substance and relevance and against other legitimate pedagogical concerns identified by the school. Students may not be penalized or rewarded on account of religious content. If a teacher's assignment involves writing a poem, the work of a student who submits a poem in the form of a prayer (for example, a psalm) should be judged on the basis of academic standards, including literary quality, and not penalized or rewarded on account of its religious content.

**Freedom to Organize  
Religious Groups  
and Activities**

Students may organize prayer groups, religious clubs, "see you at the pole" gatherings, and other religious gatherings before, during, and after school to the same extent that students are permitted to organize other noncurricular student activities and groups. [See FNAB(LOCAL)] Religious groups must be given the same access to school facilities for assembling as is given to other noncurricular groups without discrimination based on the religious content of the groups' expression. If student groups that meet for nonreligious activities are permitted to advertise or announce the groups' meetings, for example, by advertising in a student newspaper, putting up posters, making announcements on a student activities bulletin board or public address system, or handing out leaflets, school authorities may not discriminate against groups that meet for prayer or other religious speech. School authorities may disclaim sponsorship of noncurricular groups and events, provided they administer the disclaimer in a manner that does not favor or disfavor groups that meet to engage in prayer or other religious speech.