

**COMMUNITY RELATIONS
PUBLIC ACTIVITIES INVOLVING SCHOOL PERSONNEL,
STUDENTS OR SCHOOL FACILITIES**

Various organizations, private and public, profit and non-profit, often seek to have materials distributed to students and staff for charitable events, fund raising, advertising, contests and other such activities. The following guidelines govern the distribution of such materials:

1. No materials may be distributed without the approval of the Superintendent of Schools or designee.
2. For public or non-profit organizations sponsoring fund raising contests, community events, or the like, the materials, when approved, shall be made available to students and staff in the office of the school. The school has no responsibility to distribute such materials in classrooms. Posters and public address announcements shall be permitted only with administrator's approval.
3. For private or profit making organizations, approval of the distribution of materials or contests shall be limited only to activities directly connected with school events or curriculum, organizations, or class activities. Such approved materials or contests shall be made available to students through the building office under the direction of the administrator so as not to interfere with normal school operations.

Adopted: December 13, 1993

Revised: January 15, 2001

Reviewed: March, 2002

DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS AND LITERATURE TO STUDENTS

Students or others may wish to distribute or receive materials/literature at school. The exchange of information and expression of ideas are highly valued principles within a democratic society and are considered essential to the educational process and learning in the School District of Merton. Based on this belief, the School Board supports the flow and expression of ideas within schools.

There are two categories of materials/literature – those that are school sponsored and those that are non-school sponsored.

School sponsored materials/literature may be distributed, with the approval of the principal and/or superintendent, to students by the district staff. Such distribution is intended to be informational in nature and may include information about the school's operations, program and events; and may include information about a school-community event that is related to the school's mission, is an extension of the district's curriculum and will educationally benefit students.

Non-school sponsored materials/literature may be distributed to students. Non-school sponsored materials/literature may not be treated as if they are school sponsored materials, nor may they be distributed within schools in any manner other than as identified under this policy or its accompanying administrative rules.

The following procedures are applicable to the distribution of non-school sponsored materials/literature:

- A. Request to Distribute Materials/Literature
Persons requesting to distribute materials/literature district wide shall submit to the Superintendent a sample of the materials and a request to distribute the materials/literature. The Superintendent will provide a copy of the administrative procedures to be used for distribution.

Persons requesting to distribute materials/literature at a school shall submit to the building principal a copy of the materials and a request to distribute the materials/literature. The principal will provide a copy of the administrative procedures to be used for distribution.

B. Distribution Approval/Disapproval Considerations

The superintendent or principal shall expeditiously review the materials submitted and provide a timely response. The following factors shall be used to form that response:

1. The materials/literature or the distribution of materials/literature shall not in any way involve discrimination prohibited by state or federal law.
2. In order to prevent the disruption of the educational process, the manner of distribution and the materials/literature distributed may not be obscene, lewd, pornographic, defamatory, insulting, libelous, encourage or advocate disruption, illegal activity or violence, commercial, solicit money, be contrary to the mission of the school, nor may the materials/literature be distributed in a manner that hinders traffic flow, distracts from the instructional or classroom activities, creates litter, etc.

The physical distribution of materials/literature shall occur only in a non-disruptive manner. No student may be required, coerced or harassed to accept materials.

Any physical distribution shall be in accordance with this policy's administrative procedures. Those procedures shall address or include the wearing of proper identification, the designation of location(s) for the physical distribution of the materials/literature, identification of the author/sponsor, a statement disclaiming school endorsement; litter clean up will be the responsibility of the distributor, etc.

3. Staff have a substantial interest in light of their "in loco parentis" responsibility to protect elementary school children from harmful experiences. Since unrestricted distribution could pose significant difficulty to less cognitively, emotionally, or psychologically mature children (due of their undeveloped ability to distinguish the source of a message, to derive abstract or conceptual meaning, or to decide what weight to give a message, etc.), distribution of materials/literature in elementary schools warrants a close review for age-appropriateness.

Materials that seek to market, solicit money, recruit, indoctrinate or convert shall not be distributed in the elementary school to elementary school students.

