

PENN MANOR SCHOOL DISTRICT

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION

APPROVED: March 18, 2011

REVISED:

122-AR-3. LIMITED OPEN FORUM

Secondary schools in the district will grant access to student groups that request to meet for academic, religious, political, or philosophical purposes under a limited open forum provided by the Equal Access Act. The implementation of Board Policy 122, Cocurricular Activities is governed by established administrative regulations.

Establishment of a limited open forum does not limit the authority of the school, the district, its agents, or its employees to maintain order and discipline on school premises; to protect the well-being of students and staff; and to assure that attendance of students at meetings is voluntary.

A limited open forum is established when the school grants an opportunity for one or more noncurriculum-related student groups to meet on school premises during noninstructional time.

Noninstructional time – means the time determined by the administration before actual classroom instruction begins or after actual classroom instruction ends, and the lunch hour. For purposes of determining the beginning and ending of the school day, the school will designate the first period in the day when the majority of the students attend class as the first period; the last period in the day will be the period that is the last class period for the majority of the students.

Noncurriculum-related student group – means any student group that does not directly relate to the curriculum programs offered by the school.

The school will be deemed to offer a fair opportunity for students to conduct meetings within a limited open forum if it uniformly ensures that:

1. The meeting is voluntary and student-initiated.
2. There is no sponsorship of the meeting by the school or any government, its agents or employees.
3. School employees are present at religious meetings only in a non-participatory capacity.
4. The meeting does not materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of educational activities within the school.
5. Nonschool persons do not direct, conduct, control, or regularly attend activities of student groups.

Establishment of a limited open forum does not authorize the school or the district to:

1. Influence the form or content of any prayer or other religious activity.
2. Require any person to participate in prayer or other religious activity.
3. Expend public funds beyond the incidental cost of providing the space for the student-initiated meetings.
4. Compel any school employee to attend a meeting if the content of the speech at the meeting is contrary to the beliefs of the employee.
5. Sanction meetings that are otherwise unlawful.
6. Limit the rights of groups of students that are not of a specified numerical size.
7. Abridge the constitutional rights of any person.

Student religious groups and political clubs will be allowed to use school premises on the same basis as other noncurriculum-related groups.

The building principal may approve a student group's use of facilities to conduct a meeting during the open forum, provided that:

1. The meeting will take place during noninstructional time, as determined by the principal.
2. The meeting is voluntary and student-initiated. The principal must be assured that students are the ones promoting such activities and are participating of their own volition. Only students enrolled in the school may request such meetings.
3. School authorities or district personnel do not promote, lead, or participate in such meetings. Principals may assign personnel to supervise these meetings. This action does not constitute sponsorship of such meetings.
4. The presence of school authorities is for the purpose of observation only, and such attendance is nonparticipatory in nature.
5. The school may deny facilities use to students on the basis that such activities or meetings interfere with the instructional program when the meeting interferes with the conduct of regular instructional activities in the school.

6. Student meetings are not controlled, conducted, or directed by persons or groups not affiliated with the schools. Nonschool individuals may attend student meetings but not on a regular basis. The student who requested use of the school facility for a student meeting must receive approval from the principal at least seven (7) days in advance for any nonschool individual who will be attending the meeting and must state the purpose of his/her attendance. All visitors must register at the school office before proceeding to any scheduled student meeting.
7. The meeting is open to all students without regard to race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ancestry, national origin, or handicap/disability.
8. Student-initiated, noncurriculum-related groups must apply for the use of school facilities for student meetings on the appropriate form. Approval or denial will be made by the principal or designee.
9. Use of school equipment by noncurriculum-related groups will be subject to Board policy.
10. Groups denied use of facilities may appeal the decision pursuant to Board Policy 906, Public Complaints.
11. Approved groups will not use the school name, school mascot name, district name or any name that might imply school or district sponsorship.

Any activity that would violate Board policy and/or discipline codes is prohibited on district property. Any student who engages in misconduct is subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsions.