

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Distribution of Materials and Communications in the Schools by Outside Sources

I. Purpose

This regulation establishes the criteria and procedures for the approval, distribution, and posting of materials and communications in Prince William County Public Schools (PWCS) by outside sources, in order to avoid or minimize intrusions upon the educational process and disruption to the operations of the Division and its schools.

School facilities and school property are not open, limited, or other public forums accessible to the public for the dissemination of information or expression of views. Materials or any other communications may only be distributed or posted in school facilities and on school property by non-school persons, groups, and organizations as provided in this regulation.

School principals (or the Associate Superintendent for Communications and Technology Services, where materials are to be distributed or posted in administrative facilities) and/or their designees, are responsible for determining whether outside persons, groups, or organizations are eligible to distribute or post materials, and whether such materials/communications meet the criteria set forth in this regulation.

II. Nature of Materials and Communications Distributed/Posted in the Schools

All materials and communications, written or electronic, which are distributed or posted by outside sources in school facilities or on school property shall advance the educational mission of PWCS, either directly, or by providing students and/or parents/guardians with information relating to educational, athletic, civic, or community opportunities and activities which support the education of PWCS students.

Any access to school facilities or to school property for the purpose of distributing or posting such materials or communications shall be provided on a non-discriminatory basis and shall not be based on the viewpoint of the requestor.

III. Application

- A. This regulation does not apply to official PWCS information, materials, or communications.
- B. The distribution and posting of materials and communications by student groups is governed by the procedures set forth in Regulations 646-1, "School-Sponsored

Student Clubs, Teams, and Organizations” and 646-2, “Equal Access-Public Secondary Schools, Non-School-Sponsored Student Clubs, Groups, or Organizations – Limited Open Forum”; as well as the time, place, and manner restrictions set forth at Section VII of this regulation.

- C. The rights of PWCS employees and professional organizations to distribute and post certain materials in the schools and on school property are governed by Regulations 285-2, “Display of Materials of Employee Groups on Bulletin Boards” and 593.01-1, “Professional Rights and Privileges.”

IV. Eligibility

The following outside sources are eligible to distribute or post materials and communications in school facilities or on school property:

- A. All groups or organizations sponsored and formally approved by the Division or by an individual school or department, such as PWCS parent-teacher organizations; booster clubs and other parent groups approved under Regulation 951-2, “Booster Clubs and Other Approved Parent Groups”; School Board or school advisory councils; and the PWCS Education Foundation. Materials or communications distributed or posted by such groups are limited to information relating to official organization business and events. Materials are not considered related to such groups or organizations solely because the materials are sponsored by such groups or organizations.
- B. Persons, businesses, or other private or public entities which have entered into written private or public partnership agreements with the School Division through the PWCS Office of Community and Business Engagement, or with any PWCS school or department consistent with Policy 950.01 and Regulation 950.01-1, “Public and Private Partnerships with the School Division,” shall be provided access to schools or departments to distribute information. For the purpose of validating/identifying partnering entities a signed copy of any partnership agreement not facilitated by the Office of Community and Business Engagement must be provided to that office. Only materials or communications that relate to the purpose of the partnership shall be distributed. Incidental identification of a business, commercial enterprise, product, or service is permissible.
- C. All federal, state, and county governmental agencies.

- D. 501(c)(3) organizations whose primary objective enhances the educational mission of PWCS, and provides educational, athletic, and civic and community opportunities or activities which support the education of PWCS students. Organizations will need to provide proof of 501(c)(3) status at time of request (i.e., Employee Identification Number, website, etc.).
- E. Public or private entities which have entered into contracts with the Prince William County School Board for the provision of before and after school, vacation, or summer day care services, and other groups or persons which have obtained written approval to provide after school or summer enrichment or athletic programs from the PWCS Office of Health, PE, Driver Education, JROTC, and Athletics.

Questions relating to eligibility should be directed to the Associate Superintendent for Communications and Technology Services or designee.

V. Non-Eligible Outside Sources

In addition to those persons, groups, or organizations which do not qualify as eligible under Sections IV A-E above, other non-eligible outside persons, groups, and organizations include:

- A. Political candidates, elected public officials, and partisan political organizations. However, this regulation shall not be construed to prevent elected officials from distributing materials or communications which merely congratulate or recognize students, teachers, school groups, teams, or activities for meritorious activities or achievements.
- B. Commercial or profit-making businesses or enterprises (individually-operated or otherwise), except as provided for in Regulations 923-1, "Commercial Advertising"; 950.01-1, "Public and Private Partnerships with the School Division"; and 951-2, "Booster Clubs and Other Approved Parent Groups."

Where the outside entity does not meet the eligibility criteria set forth in this regulation, referral should be made to the Supervisor of Community and Business Engagement to review commercial advertising or partnership opportunities.

VI. Criteria for Approval of Requests to Distribute Materials or Post Communications

- A. All materials shall enhance the educational mission of PWCS, either directly, or by providing information relating to educational, athletic, civic, and community opportunities or activities which support the education of PWCS students.
- B. All materials distributed by outside groups, with the exception of those groups sponsored and approved by PWCS such as parent-teacher organizations, boosters, etc., as defined in Section IV. A. of this regulation, shall include the following disclaimer prominently displayed:

These materials are neither sponsored nor endorsed by Prince William County Public Schools.

- C. Any material or information which suggests that PWCS endorse a commercial product, service, group, or endeavor shall be prohibited. Incidental identification of a commercial source is permissible if the material otherwise meets the criteria set forth in this regulation.
- D. No request shall be granted that advertises, or could be construed as advertising, any product or service, or promotes any fund-raising activity of any person or any organization or business. Exceptions shall be made:
 - 1. For advertising conducted by authorized school booster clubs and other approved parent organizations as provided in Regulation 951-2, "Booster Clubs and Other Approved Parent Groups";
 - 2. For fund-raising activities conducted by authorized school-sponsored groups or organizations, as defined in Section IV. A. above, and approved pursuant to Regulation 341-1, "Guidelines for Fund-Raising Activities";
 - 3. For solicitations conducted by the United Way, or such other organizations as may be approved by the School Board to conduct a charitable solicitation among PWCS employees, pursuant to Policy 924, "Public Solicitations in the Schools and Annual Employee Charitable Campaign";
 - 4. For persons, businesses, or other organizations which have entered into a commercial advertising agreement with the School Division or a PWCS school or department, pursuant to Regulation 923-1, "Commercial Advertising";

5. For persons, businesses, or other private or public entities which have entered into signed partnership agreements that include fund-raising activities through the PWCS Office of Community and Business Engagement, or through the PWCS Education Foundation (SPARK).

E. Prohibited Materials and Communications

1. Materials or communications shall not be approved for distribution or posting if they:
 - a. Are reasonably likely to cause substantial disruption to, or materially interfere with, the educational process or school operations;
 - b. Endorse or encourage the use of alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal substance or activity;
 - c. Endorse or encourage any violation of the PWCS “Code of Behavior”;
 - d. Conflict with the PWCS curriculum or the educational mission of the School Division; or
 - e. Are lewd, indecent, vulgar, sexually explicit, obscene, pornographic, patently offensive, defamatory, or age/subject matter inappropriate for students.
2. Material of a partisan political nature shall not be distributed in the schools or on school property, except at such time as the schools are in use as polling places, and then only as permitted by law.

As provided by Virginia Code § 22.1-79.3(A), students shall not be asked or required to convey any materials that:

- a. Advocate the election or defeat of any candidate for elective office;
- b. Advocate the passage or defeat of any referendum question; or
- c. Advocate the passage or defeat of any matter pending before the Prince William County School Board, the Prince William County Board of County Supervisors, or the General Assembly of Virginia or the Congress of the United States.

However, this regulation shall not be construed to prohibit the discussion or use of political or issue-oriented materials as part of classroom discussions or projects or

to prohibit the delivery of informational materials related to the school curriculum.

VII. Procedures for Approval of Materials

- A. Prior to distribution or posting, all materials must be presented for approval in their final form to the school principal or designee (or the Associate Superintendent for Communications and Technology Services, or designee, if materials are to be distributed or posted in an administrative facility). Reasonable limits may be set on the volume and frequency of distribution or posting of such materials and the time period within which such materials must be submitted for approval prior to distribution or communication.
- B. The principal or designee shall determine whether the request and materials comply with this regulation. If compliance is unclear, the principal or designee shall seek a review of the request/materials by the Associate Superintendent for Communications and Technology Services or designee prior to distribution or posting.
- C. If a request for distribution or posting of materials is denied by the principal or designee, the requestor may seek final review of the principal/designee's decision by contacting the Associate Superintendent for Communications and Technology Services or designee.
- D. The principal or designee may require that the requestor provide volunteers or other assistance in the posting or distribution of materials as a condition of approval.

VIII. Time, Place, and Manner Restrictions on the Distribution and Posting of Outside Materials and Communications

The uninterrupted flow of educational services to students and the efficient operation of the schools is of paramount importance to the School Division and takes precedence over the distribution or posting of materials from any outside source. In order to avoid disruption to the educational process and school operations, the unnecessary diversion of staff and administrative time, and/or expenditure of taxpayer dollars, principals may impose reasonable conditions and restrictions upon the time, place, and manner of distribution or posting of materials by outside sources. These include, but are not limited to, the following options:

- A. Posting at a designated bulletin board or other location within the building or on school grounds for such time period as is reasonable.

- B. Making materials available for students/parents to pick up at a central location, such as the front office or the school's resource center.
- C. Designating one or more dates throughout the year when such materials will be sent home directly with students.
- D. Permitting such materials to be distributed at Back-to-School Night or other community events, provided that persons or organizations that seek to distribute materials are not entitled to participate in any program of speakers or other school activities at such events, unless requested to do so by the principal or designee. Approved school-sponsored organizations, as defined in Section IV. A. of this regulation, may distribute materials and participate in such events as the principal deems appropriate.
- E. Materials may not be distributed directly to students in classrooms or other locations without the prior approval of the principal or designee.

In no circumstances shall such materials be distributed during instructional time, nor shall individuals or organizations be permitted to leave materials on cars, in locations not designated by the principal, or in such a manner as to litter school buildings or property.

The Associate Superintendent for Communications and Technology Services (or designee) is responsible for implementing and monitoring this regulation.

The Associate Superintendent for Communications and Technology Services (or designee) is responsible for reviewing this regulation in 2018.