

Appendix M: Student Organizations, Policy IGDA

Policy IGDA

It is the policy of the school division to permit the organization and operation of student organizations in the secondary schools and to permit such organizations to meet on school premises during non-instructional time. The purpose of this policy is to establish criteria and procedures governing the operation of student organizations.

Curriculum-related student organizations must:

- Serve as an extension of the regular school curriculum;
- Enhance the participants' educational experience;
- Supplement the course materials within the educational program of the schools; and
- Bear a clear relationship to the regular curriculum.

The principal shall determine whether the organization meets the above criteria. The principal shall approve organizations that meet the above criteria and officially recognize them as school-sponsored student organizations.

Student-Initiated Organizations

Secondary school students are also permitted to organize and conduct meetings of non-curriculum related student organizations to pursue activities outside of the school curriculum, subject to the provisions of this policy. Such organizations must be student initiated and directed, and school personnel, parents, and any other persons who are not students enrolled in the division are prohibited from directing, controlling, conducting, or regularly attending the meetings of such organizations except that the faculty supervisor, appointed by the principal, must attend all meetings. Non-curriculum-related student organizations shall not be deemed to be school-sponsored or endorsed. The fact that such organizations are permitted to conduct meetings under this policy shall not constitute an expression of school division support for the purposes of such organizations or the content of any meetings thereof.

Membership

Membership in all student organizations shall be open to and limited to all students currently enrolled in the sponsoring school on a voluntary basis. Student organizations may establish academic qualifications for membership where necessarily related to the purposes of the organization. Student organizations shall not deny a student membership on account of his or her race, color, national origin, or religion. An organization may only impose membership qualifications based on sex where based on competitive athletic skill or where the activity involved is a contact sport. However, membership shall not be denied solely on the basis of gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation.

Faculty Supervision

The principal shall appoint one or more members of the school faculty to sponsor and supervise each curriculum-related student organization. Faculty sponsors shall participate in the supervision and direction of all activities of the organization and shall attend all meetings.

Non-curriculum-related student organizations that are student-initiated shall not have a faculty sponsor. However, a member of the school's professional staff shall attend every meeting or activity of such organizations in a non-participatory capacity for purposes of general supervision. The organization shall be responsible for assuring the presence of a staff member for its meetings.

ACPS shall not compel any school employee to attend a meeting of any student organization if the content of such meeting is contrary to the beliefs of that school employee. School employees present at any meeting of a non-curriculum-related student organization which includes religious worship, prayer, or practice or is identified as having a religious purpose shall attend in a non-participatory capacity only.

Meetings of Student Organizations

All student organizations shall have the right to meet on school premises during non-instructional time as designated by the school principal. ACPS shall not deny any student organization equal access to school facilities during designated meeting times on the basis of the religious, political, philosophical, or other content of the speech at the meetings of such organization. ACPS shall not extend any public funding or support to any non-curriculum-related student organization other than the opportunity to meet on school premises on an equal basis as other student organizations.

The principal of each school shall develop guidelines and rules concerning the procedure for scheduling meetings of student organizations and setting the times and facilities which are available for such meetings. Meeting times shall be limited to non-instructional time before or after regular classroom hours or during established activities periods. These guidelines and rules shall be made available to all students. Student organizations wishing to conduct meetings under this policy must make application to the principal for permission in accordance with division procedures.

Compliance with Law and Policy

Student organizations shall not engage in any activity which is contrary to law, division policy, or school rules; which disrupts or clearly threatens to disrupt the orderly operation of the school; or which would adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of any students or staff members. Failure to comply with these provisions shall be grounds for disciplinary action.