

STUDENT SPEECH AT ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS

The Westfield Public Schools recognizes its responsibility to create an educational environment that encourages appropriate student expression and speech. In order to promote an educational atmosphere conducive to learning, and which balances student rights against the need to maintain an orderly and efficient school environment, the school district reserves the right to regulate student speech during the school day, on school grounds and at school-sponsored activities and events. Any regulation of student speech will be done in accordance with state and federal law. Students who engage in activities that violate any district rule, regulation or policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary consequences.

For purposes of this policy, speech includes any form of expression that communicates a message or idea, whether expressed verbally, symbolically, in writing or by other means.

The school district will not tolerate any speech that is disruptive of the normal operation of the school or that violates any other district policy, rule or regulation. Examples of such speech include, but are not limited to expressions that: 1) contain libelous, vulgar or obscene language; 2) advocate illegal actions; 3) would subject any person to hatred, ridicule, contempt; 4) advocate actions that would threaten the health or safety of others; and 5) encourages the violation of school rules.

Adopted: October 7, 2003