Extra-Class Activities: Closed Forum

The Board of Education establishes a closed forum for the district's high school student organization and requires such organizations to be directly related to the curriculum. Membership in all student organizations is open to all students of the school without regard to race, color, sex, religion, handicap, creed or national origin. Such organizations will operate within the framework of state and federal law, statutes, Board policy, administrative rules and the parameters of the learning program.

Each Principal will develop general guidelines for the establishment and operation of student organizations within the school. Such guidelines will include the approval of the Principal prior to the formation of any club or organization, the assignment of at least one Faculty Advisor to each student organization, and compliance with the provisions of Board policy.

The formation of any student organization that may engage in activities of an apparently controversial nature that may, in the opinion of the Principal, interfere with the legitimate educational concerns of the school will require approval by the Board. All student organizations are required to open membership to all interested and/or eligible students. Additionally, fraternities, sororities and/or secret societies will not receive recognition in any manner.

A Faculty Advisor must attend every meeting of the student organization whether conducted on school premises or at another location.

The Principal is authorized to deny all requests for forming an organization where the requirements of this policy and Board policy are not met. When the Principal denies the request of students desiring to form an organization in a particular school, the Principal will inform the students of the reasons for the denial. The students may submit a written request to the Superintendent or his/her designees within ten (10) days of the denial for a review of the Principal's decision. The decision of the Superintendent or his/her designee after review of the denial will be final.

Criteria for Curriculum Related Groups

- 1. Is the subject matter of the group actually taught, or will it soon be taught, in a regularly offered course?
- 2. Is the subject matter of the group concerned with the body of course as a whole?
- 3. Is participation in the group required for a particular course?
- 4. Does participation in the group result in academic credit?

Attention is directed to the Extra-Curricular Student Handbook for rules and regulations for student participation in extra-curricular activities.

Legal Reference: Westside Community Board of Education v. Mergens

Equal Access Act, 20 U.S.C. §4071 et. seq.

Policy adopted: October 15, 2007 THOMASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Thomaston, Connecticut

Interscholastic/Intramural Athletics

The Board of Education believes individual students will benefit from opportunities to grow physically and intellectually through experiences that provide the opportunity for self-discipline and team efforts made possible through competitive interschool and intramural team and individual sports activities.

District participation in interscholastic athletics will be subject to approval by the Board. This shall include approval of membership in any leagues, associations, or conferences, of rules for student participation, and of annual sports schedules.

It is the Board's policy to provide students interscholastic athletic competition in a variety of sports. Students will be allowed to participate in individual sports on the basis of their physical condition and desire. Qualified personnel shall be provided for coaching and supervising individual sports. In addition, it is the policy of the Board to provide intramural athletic activities as an outgrowth of class instruction in physical education commensurate with the grade level of the students involved.

Each student who chooses to participate in an interscholastic athletic program is required to have on file, in the offices of the building administrator and the Athletic Director, a certificate of consent which is signed by the parent or legal guardian. No student may start practice for any athletic team until he or she has been examined and approved by a medical doctor. This certificate of consent shall be in effect for each student for each sports season.

The purpose of school athletics is both educational and recreational. The athletic program should encourage participation by as many students as possible and should be carried on with the best interests of the participants as the prime consideration. Participation should be without unreasonable interference with other obligations in the school, community and home.

It is recognized that a well-organized and well conducted athletic program is a potent factor in the morale of a student body and an important phase of good community-school relations.

Representing one's school and town through athletics is a privilege. This privilege may be denied to the student athlete for violation of school policies, CIAC policies, or by conduct unbecoming a student representative of the Thomaston Public Schools.

Every possible effort shall be made to offer equal opportunities for both sexes in sports and activities which shall include life sports that a student can carry through adulthood.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-149 Qualifications for coaches of intramural and interscholastic athletics. *Stratton, PPA v. St. Joseph's High School*, Bridgeport Superior Court, June

4, 1986 (12 CT 26)9/87.

Policy adopted: October 15, 2007 THOMASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Thomaston, Connecticut

Interscholastic/Intramural Athletics

Sunday Play of Postponed Friday and Saturday Games

The Board of Education endorses the allowance of Sunday play of postponed Friday and Saturday games under the guidelines as stipulated in the C.I.A.C. policy.

- 1. The postponement must be due to severely adverse weather conditions.
- 2. The two competing schools must agree to Sunday play of a postponed game.
- 3. No Sunday game may start before 1:30 p.m.
- 4. A postponed Friday game may be played on Sunday only if a site is not available on Saturday or if severely adverse weather conditions exist on Saturday.

The Principal, in making the decision to postpone, will consult with the Athletic Director.

Interscholastic/Intramural Athletics

Sportsmanship

The Board of Education believes that sports programs serve educational purposes in the lives of the district's students. One of these purposes is the development of good sportsmanship. The primary focus of the challenge of achieving good sportsmanship is on the student, but others are involved.

The Board believes that administrators must insist that good sportsmanship is the goal. Athletic directors must also realize the value of sportsmanship and set the tone for the implementation of its good practice.

The coaches must accept the responsibility of making each athletic contest a showcase for education. They are expected to be models of self control and dignity for players and spectators.

The players must be taught to handle themselves in a sportsmanlike way; they are also expected to project good sportsmanship in the activities in which they participate. Student fans must be reminded that their conduct reflects on their school and that poor sportsmanship will not be tolerated.

Adult spectators must realize that they also must exhibit good sportsmanship at athletic events. Spectators serve as a model for their own children and for other young people in the community. Spectators also need to demonstrate self control and dignity while participating in athletic events.

Good sportsmanship practices will be practiced by administrators and coaches. Students will be taught good sportsmanship and be held accountable for their actions. Spectators will be reminded and encouraged to be appropriate role models for young people. The Board will support staff and administrators who enforce sportsmanship rules at athletic and other competitive events, including evicting students or adults who violate the District policy.

Interscholastic/Intramural Athletics

Gender Equity

This policy is enacted by the Board of Education in compliance with Title IX of Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. Section 1681, et seq. (Title IX) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities.

It is the intent of the Board of Education to provide equal athletic opportunities for members of both sexes. The Superintendent of Schools is directed to insure that similar athletic programs are offered to both sexes in proportion to the enrollment of the District. In the event that participation in athletics is disproportionate (boys more active in sports than girls), the Superintendent will ensure that District policies procedures or administrative regulations do not singly or in combination, act to discourage or prevent females from athletic participation.

(cf. 0521 - Nondiscrimination)

(cf. 0521.1 - Grievance Procedure)

(cf. 4000.1 - Title IX)

(cf. 6121 - Nondiscrimination in the Instructional Program)

(cf. 6145.2 - Interscholastic/Intramural Athletics)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-15 Towns to maintain schools

10-15c Discrimination in public school prohibited.

10-226a Pupils of racial minorities

10-220 Duties of boards of education, as amended by PA 97-290, An Act Enhancing Educational Choices and Opportunities Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C., 1681 et seq.

Section 504, U.S. Rehabilitation Act, 1973, 29 U.S.C. 791

Policy adopted: October 15, 2007 THOMASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Thomaston, Connecticut

Publications

Student publications are important elements of the instructional program and contribute directly to the accomplishment of the school's goals. The Board of Education shall encourage the development of school newspapers, annuals, and magazines.

Freedom of speech and of expression in student publications as guaranteed by the First Amendment is to be observed scrupulously by the administration, faculty and students.

(cf. 5145.2 – Freedom of Speech/Expression) (cf. 6144 – Controversial Issues)

Legal Reference: Eisner v Stamford Board of Education, 440 F. 2d 803 (2nd Cir 1971)

Trachtman v Anker, 563 F. 2d 512 (2nd Cir. 1977) cert. denied, 435 U.S.

925 (1978)

Hazelwood School District v. Ruhlmeir, 484 U.S. 260 (1988)

Student Publications

Purposes of Official Student Newspaper

- 1. Teaching writing and other journalistic skills;
- 2. Providing a forum for opinions of students, school staff, and members of the community;
- 3. Serving the entire school by reporting school activities.

Rights of Student Journalists

- 1. To print factual articles dealing with topics of interest to the student writers; and
- 2. To print, on the editorial page, opinions on any topic, whether school related or not, which students feel are of interest to themselves or to the readers.

Responsibilities of Student Journalists

- 1. To submit copy that conforms to good journalistic writing style;
- 2. To rewrite stories, as required by the journalism advisor, to improve journalistic structure, sentence structure, grammar, spelling and punctuation;
- 3. To check facts and verify quotes;
- 4. In the case of editorials on controversial issues, to provide space for rebuttals, in the same issue if possible, but otherwise no later than the following issue; and
- 5. Subject to the specific limitations in these guidelines, to determine the contents of official student newspapers.

Material Not Permitted in Official School Newspapers

- 1. Material which is libelous or which violates the rights of privacy;
- 2. Profanity, hereby defined as the language which would not be used in The Hartford Courant or the New York Times;
- 3. Material which criticizes or demeans any race, religion, sex or ethnic group;
- 4. Ads for cigarettes, liquor, or any other product not conducive to good health;

Student Publications (continued)

Material Not Permitted in Official School Newspapers (continued)

- 5. Any material, the publication of which would cause substantial disruption of the school. Substantial disruption is hereby defined as the threat of physical violence in the school or nearby community and/or the disruption of the school's educational program; and
- 6. Endorsements of political candidates or ballot measures, whether such endorsements are made via editorial, articles, letter or photograph cartoon. The newspaper may, however, publish "fact sheet" types of articles on candidates and ballot measures, provided such articles do not endorse any person or position, and provided equal space is provided for all candidates for a particular office or both sides of a ballot measure.

Determination of Appropriateness

The newspaper advisor shall review each article prior to publication to determine if it satisfies conditions of these guidelines. The school Principal or his/her designated representative other than the newspaper advisor may also review copy prior to its publication. However, such copy must be returned to the student editors within 72 hours after it is submitted for review. No copy may be censored except for reasons specifically listed in these guidelines. Nothing in these guidelines is intended to allow censoring of any article merely because it is controversial or because it criticizes a particular school, a school procedure, or the school system itself.

Resolution of Differences

In the event of disagreement as to whether an article should be printed, each school shall have a publications Board, which shall meet within 48 hours to submit its opinion. The publications Board shall consist of the Principal or his/her designated representative; the journalism advisor.

If the publications Board cannot solve the dispute, then an appeal shall be made to the Superintendent who shall seek advice from the Board's legal counsel in making his decision. The Superintendent shall act on the appeal within 48 hours.

Legal Reference: Eisner v Stamford Board of Education, 440 F.2d 803 (2nd Cir 1971)

Trachtman v Anker, 563 F.2d 518 (2nd Cir 1977), cert. denied, 354 U.S. 925

(1978)

Hazelwood School District v. Ruhlmeir, 484 U.S. 260 (1988)

Regulation approved: October 15, 2007 THOMASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Thomaston, Connecticut

Student Performances

Television and Radio Broadcasts

The Board of Education states as a matter of general principle that television and radio broadcasts of public performances by students--including athletic events--are approved only when such telecasts and broadcasts are in the public interest. All such rights shall be granted in accordance with procedures to be established by the Board of Education and the school administration. Under no circumstances is there to be a fee charged for the granting of television or radio rights.

All requests for the right to televise a school event are to be approved by the Principal or designee.

The Board of Education delegates to the Superintendent of Schools, and to whomever he might designate, the authority to act on all requests for permission to broadcast school events over radio and television.

In either instance--that is, for television or radio broadcasts--it is essential that school authorities reserve the right to approve all sponsors to make certain that sponsorship does not include firms supplying goods or services inappropriate to school events.

Policy adopted:

October 15, 2007

THOMASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Thomaston, Connecticut

School Productions

Student productions are important elements of the instructional program and contribute directly to the accomplishment of the school's goals. The Board of Education shall encourage the development of school theatrical productions.

The Board recognizes that students have rights to free expression in student theatrical productions. Consequently, student speech shall be limited in officially sponsored student theatrical productions only if there is a legitimate pedagogical reason to do so. The administration shall develop regulations to provide guidance on such legitimate pedagogical reasons.

Definition

School productions shall refer to any performance involving student participants and prepared for an audience, either within or outside the regular school day. Productions shall include, but not be restricted to, concerts, plays, variety shows and exhibits.

Requirements

School productions involving students shall meet the following criteria:

- 1. Performances and productions shall contribute to educational goals and objectives and shall not substantially disrupt regularly scheduled school activities or classes.
- 2. Include content that adheres to constitutional requirements for separation of church and state.
- 3. Encourage inclusiveness and reflect sensitivity to diversity, race, religion, disability and ethnicity.
- 4. Consideration by the faculty of the maturity levels of students and appropriate standards of theatrical taste.
- 5. Performances shall be approved in advance by the principal.
- 6. Sponsors shall avoid the extended use of a particular student group.
- 7. Arrangements shall be made to provide proper supervision and to assure that participating students conduct themselves in a way that brings credit to the school.
- 8. Performances that are scheduled outside school hours are preferred.

School Productions (continued)

Student productions shall not contain speech which:

- 1. is vulgar, indecent or obscene;
- 2. contains libelous comments, personal attacks or abusive language such as language defaming a person's character, race, religion, ethnic origin, gender, family status, or disability;
- 3. causes or clearly threatens to cause a material and substantial disruption of normal school functions or school activities;
- 4. encourages the commission of unlawful acts or the violation of lawful school rules; or
- 5. promotes any product or service not permitted to minors by law.

Students may appeal a faculty advisor's or principal's decision to restrict production.

(cf. 6145.3 - Publications) (cf. 6145.4 - Student Performances)

Legal Reference: Eisner v Stamford Board of Education, 440 F. 2d 803 (2nd Cir 1971)

Trachtman v Anker, 563 F. 2d 512 (2nd Cir. 1977) cert. denied, 435 U.S. 925 (1978)

Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeir, 484 U.S. 260 (1988)

Policy adopted:

October 15, 2007

THOMASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Thomaston, Connecticut

Organizations/Associations

Student organizations contributing to learning shall be encouraged. Such organizations shall operate within the framework of the law, Board policy, administrative rules, and the parameters of the learning program. When such organizations are truly contributive, their establishment and operation shall be facilitated in reasonable ways by district staff and through utilization of district resources.

The Superintendent shall develop general guidelines for student organizations. Among other provisions, such guidelines shall require the assignment of at least one faculty advisor to each student organization and the approval by the Board of Education of any student organization.

This policy applies to in-school organizations only. It is not intended to restrict the organization of students into groups which function apart from the school.

Student Government

In order to encourage student participation in the various activities of school life and to provide opportunity for training in democratic processes, the elementary and secondary schools may maintain and operate student councils.

Student government shall be of the students, by the students, for the students, representing all students in the school in communications with the administration and in the organizations of student activities.

The Student Council shall assist in improving the general welfare of all students and shall give students the opportunity to participate in the orderly workings of the democratic process.

Members of the Student Council shall be elected democratically. The rights and responsibilities of the Council shall be clearly set forth. Faculty advisors for Student Council will be recommended for appointment by the administration.

The Student Council shall not have authority to make policies for the district or regulations for the school. Nor shall they have any disciplinary authority, except for recommending removal from the Council of one of their members unless a duly authorized student court system is established and properly monitored by a faculty advisor. However, a Council may make recommendations to the administration on any topic of student concern.

The administration and Student Council shall keep channels of communication open, not only between themselves, but between all students, the Council, and the Board of Education.

Organizations/Associations (continued)

Non-School Organizations

All organizations not specifically authorized and organized by the school are considered to be non-school organizations and beyond the jurisdiction and responsibility of school authorities.

However, should these groups conduct activities on school property, at school-sponsored activities or as a carry-over into the school day or reflect on the reputation of the school, the Superintendent is authorized to develop procedures concerning disciplinary action to be taken.

Activities which are contrary to the best interests of the school and reflect on the reputation of the school are forbidden, including:

- 1. Initiation and hazing on the school grounds or at school-sponsored events.
- 2. Indulging in or promoting group functions that violate federal, state or city laws or county ordinances. (i.e. gangs)

Legal Reference: Public Act 98-377 Title VIII, Equal Access Act

Organizations/Associations

Voting Rights

School personnel who represent the Thomaston Board of Education on associations¹ for which the Board of Education pays the membership fee, shall consult with the Superintendent of Schools prior to any vote taken by the organization. The vote cast is that of the school system and not the individual representative, or if an election involves an item which involves money, the issue must be presented to the Board of Education prior to the casting of the ballot This includes approval by the Board of Education of a vote on by-laws which may have a financial impact in the future.

¹New England Association of School and Colleges/Berkshire League Connecticut Association of Secondary Schools Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Council Connecticut High School Coaches' Association

Regulation approved:

October 15, 2007

THOMASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Thomaston, Connecticut

Travel and Exchange Programs

Foreign Exchange Students Attending Local Schools

The Board of Education recognizes the value of a foreign exchange for students. This unique opportunity to experience the culture of another country can be an effective and memorable learning experience for a student. Personal contact promotes global awareness and international understanding. To that end, the Board welcomes the enrollment of international exchange students and further encourages District students to take any opportunities that they may have to participate in such programs and study in another country.

With Board approval, a District school may establish a sister-school relationship with a school in another country.

In order to insure that students coming into the local school system from another country have a positive experience, as a foreign exchange student, the following guidelines will be distributed to all concerned sponsoring agencies and families.

- 1. The Board of Education reserves the right to determine, on an individual basis, if a foreign exchange student may or may not attend public school.
- 2. Advance notice must be provided to the school prior to the finalization of arrangements to accept an exchange student.
- 3. The decision to accept a foreign exchange student into a district public school shall rest with the building Principal who will take into account such factors as space, appropriateness of placement, etc. (cf. 5111 Admission/Placement).
- 4. It is understood that foreign exchange students shall not be eligible for a District high school diploma, but may be given a certificate of attendance (or an honorary diploma) for the period of time in the District and may participate in graduation ceremonies if appropriate.
- 5. Agencies, groups and/or families sponsoring foreign exchange students in town should submit health and educational records to the school they would like the student to attend as early as possible. These records will be a factor in the decision regarding attendance. All international exchange students shall meet state and District immunization requirements.
- 6. The name and telephone number of the sponsoring agency/representative must be on file in the school before the school year begins.

Travel and Exchange Programs

Foreign Exchange Students Attending Local Schools (continued)

- 7. All living arrangements for foreign exchange students are the responsibility of the sponsoring agency and families. This includes changes in living arrangements after the student has arrived and throughout his/her stay. Neither the Board of Education nor any of its employees will assume responsibility in this area.
- 8. Foreign exchange students are subject to the same academic and behavioral standards as all other students while enrolled in District schools.
- 9. The Board of Education will provide the most appropriate program available for each foreign exchange student, but should not be expected to offer English as a Second Language services.
- 10. No foreign exchange student will be accepted who has already completed secondary education.
- 11. This program is designed for foreign students who enter the country on one-year J-I visas through established exchange programs designated by the United States Information Agency and the Department of State and officially recognized by the Board, such as Youth for Understanding, American Field Service and Rotary.
- 12. The student or sponsoring organization will provide all dues and fees.
- 13. Students entering the United States on F-I visas may attend schools in the district only upon full payment of tuition before entering the United States. This tuition fee may not be waived due to federal legislation. Students attending school on an F-I visa are limited to a period of attendance not to exceed 12 months.
- 14. The District shall not incur any financial obligations when sending and/or receiving international exchange students. Program sponsors shall provide assurance of their responsibility for health/accident/liability insurance, the student's home placement, and the resolution of any related personal difficulties which may arise.

District Students Participating in Foreign Exchange Programs

Any district student, planning on going to a foreign country as an exchange student, shall, prior to leaving, request permission from the school Principal to have course work completed in the foreign country applied to his/her high school educational record. The Principal shall notify the Board of Education of his/her decision.

Travel and Exchange Programs

Foreign Exchange Students Attending Local Schools (continued)

If permission is granted, the following guidelines shall apply:

- 1. If an English speaking student attends school in a non English speaking country for a full year, upon return from that country, no credits will be accepted from that country with the exception of that country's language credit. (2 credits)
- 2. If a student attends school in an English speaking country, the student must present a transcript from the school upon his/her return. The transcript will be evaluated in terms of credit to be granted by the high school Principal. The decision of the high school Principal in such cases shall be final.

Students who do not bring a transcript with them at the time they register for their courses upon their return will resume their education at the grade level/graduation requirement status at which they were on their departure.

(cf. 5145.1 – Foreign Exchange Students) (cf. 6146 - Graduation Requirements)

Legal Reference: Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act of 1996

Connecticut General Statutes

10-27 International studies, exchange programs. Advisory committee. (amended by PA 04-153, An Act Encouraging International Students Programs)

School Events/Meetings

The Board believes that social activities in school life assist students in learning how to enjoy worthwhile group events, how to conduct them, and how to contribute to the enjoyment of others. Therefore school groups and classes may hold social events for their membership under authorization and staff supervision, using school facilities.

Proper chaperoning shall be provided under the direction of the Principal.

School organizations holding dances and other social functions will provide for adequate police and fire protection to control traffic, to protect assigned areas during the function, and to be on call as necessary for guarding the welfare of the guests.

Activity Funds Management

School activity funds may be expended only for purposes which may benefit the student body of the school. All rules, regulations, and procedures for the conduct, operation and maintenance of extracurricular accounts, and for the safeguarding, accounting and auditing of all monies received and derived from those accounts are to contribute to that objective.

The accounting system for managing student activity funds shall be designed to encourage the largest possible educational return to students without sacrificing the safety of funds or exposing students to undue responsibility or unnecessary routine.

(cf. 3454 - School Activity Funds)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-237 School activity funds.

Activity Funds Management

Solicitation by Students

At times it may be appropriate for students to solicit fellow students and the general public for funds for specific projects or activities. The purpose of any solicitation must be very clear and specific.

The best fund-raising projects are those that grow out of a student activity or program on the school grounds. Examples of such activities by classes or clubs would be car washes, school dances, flea markets, sales at athletic events, etc. Generally, solicitation using commercial products, i.e. candy, magazines, is discouraged. Fund-raising is viewed as a secondary activity of a student organization. The funds raised should not be for routine organization expenses.

Solicitation of the community in general should be generally restricted. Door to door sales are not encouraged and solicitation of the public should be for a clearly identified goal which may be attained in one fund-raising event, i.e. scholarship or memorial fund.

Fund-raising activity limited to the students of a given school, at the school, needs the approval of the school Principal. Where the fund-raising activity goes beyond the local school to other schools or the general public, it requires the approval of the Superintendent.

All student groups and organizations shall make application for approval of a fund raising event on the form attached. Approval of the Advisor, school Principal, and where necessary, the Superintendent of Schools.

Clubs and organizations may need to raise funds to support specific projects. Funds raised should not be for routine organization expenses.

Fund-raising activities which are for less than \$300 and restricted to the school needs the approval of the Advisor and the school Principal.

Clubs and organizations which desire to undertake fund-raising activities to raise in excess of \$300 and require general solicitation of the public beyond the school grounds requires the specific approval of the Advisor, school Principal, and the Superintendent of Schools.

Regulation approved:

October 15, 2007

THOMASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Thomaston, Connecticut

THOMASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF FUND RAISING ACTIVITY

The following information needs to be completely furnished ten (10) school days in advance. One (1) original is to be submitted. Copies of approved requests will be sent to (1) copy to school Principal, (1) copy club Advisor, (1) copy to person making request if different from club Advisor.

Person making request:	
Club/Organization:	
The event or activity which will generate funds: _	
Period of time for fund raising:	
Date to begin	Date to end
The anticipated gross amount to be collected:	
The anticipated net (profit) amount to be raised: _	
Purpose for which funds are being raised:	
Is this an in-school, or out-of-school	, both
fund raising activity?	
Approvals required:	
Date	Club Advisor
Date	School Principal
Date	Superintendent (if required)