

DISTRIBUTION AND DISPLAY OF MATERIALS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FILE: KJB

Purpose

To inform the public and staff about displaying and distributing printed and electronic informational materials and announcements.

Definitions

Business – an organization operating for profit, whether or not incorporated in the State of Maryland.

Community organization – a group operating for the purpose of providing a service to the community but that is not a nonprofit community organization.

Distribution and Display – The mass delivery of information to students or staff on school property or by display or use of electronic media including the ACPS internal mail, telecasts and email system.

Limited Public Forum– Public property which is not by tradition or designation a forum for public communication, but for which the ACPS has purposefully opened to the public or some segment of the public for expressive activity.

Nonprofit community organization – Organizations operating in Allegany County that provide documentation of tax exempt status under Section 501(c) (3) nonprofit status or a copy of a notarized letter on the organization's letterhead stating that the organization is a nonprofit organization.

School property – Any property owned or leased by the Allegany County Public School System. In addition, the concept of property shall extend to school activities such as field trips, use of parks and recreation facilities, proms at hotels, etc. This means that when a facility is scheduled by the school system for student use, it will be considered an extension of school property.

Policy Statement

The Board of Education of Allegany County recognizes the need to provide an appropriate mechanism for informing students and parents and staff about school and community activities and events in a manner that does not unduly burden school staff. The Board recognizes the responsibility of the school system to provide a learning environment free from disruption. In this regard, it is the intent of the Board of Education to maintain a limited public forum by designating appropriate materials for display and distribution at specified times and places. Mass use of the email distribution system for solicitation shall be restricted to recognized school purposes. Approval to disseminate or display materials in one or more public schools does not imply Board or school system endorsement of the organization or the information it disseminates. It is the Board's intention that the use of school time, personnel and resources to accommodate this service be kept to a minimum.

Legal Reference			
Policy History	Adopted	Reviewed	Revised Aug. 11, 2009, 1 st Reading Sept. 8, 2009, 2 nd Reading June 9, 2015, 1 st Reading July 14, 2015, 2 nd Reading

DISTRIBUTION AND DISPLAY OF MATERIALS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FILE: KJB-R1

- I. Approval to Distribute Information
 - A. Announcements, flyers, and other materials from organizations, groups, individuals or agencies may not be disseminated to or through students and staff without prior written approval in accordance with these procedures.
 - B. The dissemination of announcements, flyers or other materials shall be approved provided that such dissemination is in accordance with this policy and procedures, except that the ACPS retains the right to deny such dissemination if the content could reasonably be predicted to cause material disruption.
 - C. The superintendent shall ensure that this policy and procedures are applied in a viewpoint-neutral manner.

- II. Organizations
 - A. Display and Distribution of printed and electronic announcements, flyers, or other materials by Allegany County Public Schools (ACPS), Governmental Agencies, Certified Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), and School Sanctioned Parent-Teacher Organizations
 1. Printed informational materials and announcements from the following organizations shall be permitted to be distributed directly to students through take-home folders, backpacks, or similar manner or displayed on any tables, magazine racks, or similar areas, as designated by the school at any time during the school year:
 - a. ACPS;
 - b. Federal, state, or local governmental entities;
 - c. Nationally affiliated PTAs operating within ACPS and Allegany County Council of PTAs (ACCPTA); and
 - d. School sanctioned Parent-Teacher Organizations (PTO) or a recognized booster club affiliated with a school.
 2. Prior to dissemination, organizations and individuals must submit, at least ten business days in advance of the distribution, a copy of the announcement, flyer, or other material to the Public Information Officer for approval by the superintendent or designee.
 3. School staff may require organizations to deliver printed announcements, flyers, or other materials to school at least five business days prior to the day designated for distribution.
 4. All printed informational materials and announcements must be collated into stacks of 25 to minimize staff time necessary for the handling of materials.

DISTRIBUTION AND DISPLAY OF MATERIALS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FILE: KJB-R2

5. For the purpose of verifying approval and distribution, the Public Information Officer shall issue an approval sticker. A copy of the document with the approval sticker attached must accompany the printed material when it is delivered to the school for distribution.
- B. Display and Distribution of Announcements, Flyers and Other Material Provided by Others
1. Announcements, flyers and other materials from nonprofit community organizations, as defined in the policy, may be permitted to be distributed directly to students through take-home folders, backpacks, or similar manner or displayed on any tables, magazine racks, or similar areas, as designated by the school at any time during the school year in accordance with the approval procedures described herein. Each school shall have the authority to determine the most appropriate method of distribution. Materials may be removed from display areas periodically at the discretion of the principal or designee.
 2. Informational materials and announcements from other community organizations and businesses, as defined in the policy, shall be permitted to display, at any time during the school year, on tables, magazine racks or similar area as may be designated by the school. Materials may be removed from display areas periodically.
 3. Businesses maintaining a contracted service agreement with schools shall be permitted to distribute and display informational materials and announcements related to that agreement provided the principal has added the business to an approved list maintained by the Public Information Officer and a copy of the distributed and displayed material is sent to the Public Information Officer.
 4. Prior to distribution or display, all nonprofit community organizations, other community organizations or businesses must submit, at least ten business days in advance of the distribution or display, a copy of the announcement, flyer, or other material to the Public Information Officer for approval by the superintendent or designee. The Public Information Officer shall notify the organization of approval or disapproval of the materials.
 5. Announcements, flyers, and other materials provided by nonprofit community organizations, for distribution or display, and all materials provided by other community organizations or businesses for display must include the following disclaimer:

"These materials are neither sponsored nor endorsed by the Board of Education of Allegany County, the superintendent, or this school."

DISTRIBUTION AND DISPLAY OF MATERIALS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FILE: KJB-R3

6. Nonprofit community organizations may be asked to provide documentation verifying nonprofit status to the Public Information Officer at the time the request for approval is being made. This documentation must either be a copy of the letter from the Internal Revenue Service stating that the organization is considered tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) or a copy of a notarized letter on the organization's letterhead stating that the organization is a nonprofit organization.
7. School staff may require organizations to deliver printed informational materials and announcements to school at least five days prior to the day designated for distribution.
8. All printed informational materials and announcements must be collated into stacks of 25 to minimize the staff time necessary for the handling of materials at the schools
9. Materials will be distributed and/or displayed by the school as soon as possible after approval is received, however, schools shall distribute materials no more than once per month.
10. The deadline for approval and delivery of materials for monthly distribution is the 15th of the month. If the 15th of the month falls on a weekend or holiday the approval and delivery of materials must be by the school day prior to the 15th of the month.
11. For the purpose of verifying approval and distribution, the Public Information Officer shall issue an approval sticker. A copy of the document with the approval sticker attached must accompany the printed material when it is delivered to the school for distribution.

C. Compliance

1. The Public Information Office shall ensure that all organizations or businesses and individuals approved to distribute or display information in schools comply with this policy and related procedures.
2. Informational materials, flyers or announcements that violate law will not be distributed.

Board Reviewed 06/09/2015	Superintendent Approved 06/09/2015
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