

GREENWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Greenwich, Connecticut

Policy E-002 – WHOLE STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

Procedure E-002.8 - Student Activities

Extra-Curricular Activities

The Greenwich Public Schools sponsor three categories of extra-curricular activities: 1) interscholastic sports teams, 2) intramural sports programs, 3) other clubs and activities including both sports-related (Downhill Demons ski club, etc.) and non-sports related (Habitat for Humanity, etc.).

Adherence to guidelines, policies and procedures is based on the premise that parents, students, policymakers, Town and District employees, etc. need to know which extracurricular activities are officially sanctioned and sponsored by the school system. Among other reasons, sanctioned activities are covered under the Town's excess liability and catastrophic event insurance policies. Further, District employees who serve as advisors for the activities need to know whether or not their involvement is considered an extension of their employment, for purposes of workers' compensation coverage, professional liability, etc.

In general, building principals have primary responsibility for making decisions about which school-sponsored extra-curricular activities their school will offer. Among other things, these decisions are informed and impacted by collective bargaining agreements including Schedule C of the GEA contract. While building principals may approve school-sponsored clubs and activities (per the terms and conditions described below), only the Board of Education can approve positions covered under Schedule C. They are also subject to standard District personnel policies and practices. All schools must maintain a current list of school sponsored extra-curricular activities and their faculty advisors.

Students or faculty may seek school sponsorship of students groups or associations by written application to the building principal or headmaster. School-sponsored extra curricular activities must meet the following minimum standards:

1. Designated faculty advisor, a school system employee, who agrees to assume responsibility for all aspects of the program/activity (with or without compensation). While parents and other community members may volunteer to provide additional adult leadership, only a District employee can serve as a faculty advisor. Schools may engage the services of someone who is not currently a District employee to serve as an advisor. However in these situations the individual must in fact go through the process of becoming an employee (fingerprinting, application form, etc.) in order to serve as an advisor. Policies and procedures that govern hiring of interscholastic athletic coaches also

- apply to non-athletic extra curricular activities. District employees may not delegate responsibility for supervision and leadership to other individuals or organizations.
2. Any activity which involves the regular use of an off-site facility must first seek prior approval from the District business office to determine whether or not the arrangement requires a formal contract.
 3. Any and all financial transactions related to the activity must be handled through the school or District student activity account. Procedure E020.2 provides more detail about student activity accounts.
 4. Student participation in an extra-curricular activity cannot be based on an expectation of “pay to play.” When there are costs associated with the activity, the faculty advisor must assist the students with appropriate fundraising activities to defray most if not all of the costs. Students may be charged a nominal amount for some activities, but it cannot be the sole basis for the club’s existence or participation in its activities.
 5. Funding must be available to support participation by any student who needs financial assistance to participate in a school-sponsored activity.
 6. School administrators may not enter into or endorse informal partnership arrangements with outside organizations which seek to have their programs and activities considered “school-sponsored.” This includes allowing the school name to be used for any activity other than those that are school-sponsored, or the tacit endorsement by any other means for any purpose.
 7. Only those clubs and activities on a school’s updated list are covered under the Town/District insurance policies.

The school administration may discipline or ban a student organization that fails to abide by its original statement of purpose or otherwise fails to follow school rules or laws. A student group shall be provided with a hearing prior to such disciplinary action.

Equal Access for Non-School Sponsored Groups

At Greenwich High School, student groups without formal sponsorship may meet on school premises during non-instructional time. Such groups may meet during non-instructional time regardless of religious, political or philosophical content of the speech or conversation at such meetings. However, such groups must not break laws or school rules, adversely affect the health and safety of students, faculty or staff, or materially and substantially interfere with the academic process.

The administration reserves the right to assign appropriate times, spaces and staff supervision. By assigning staff, the school does not imply sponsorship of the student group. School employees or agents may be present at student religious meetings only in a non-participatory capacity. No school employee or agent may be required to attend a meeting if the content of the speech or conversation is contrary to the employee’s beliefs. Non-school persons may not direct, conduct, control or regularly attend activities of such groups.

The school may not promote the activities of student groups without formal school sponsorship; such groups are responsible for their own promotional activities. Non-school sponsored groups

will have the same access to the school newspaper, bulletin boards and public address system as sponsored groups and will meet on the same terms and conditions as sponsored groups, except that school employees as agents may not participate in their meetings.

LEGAL REFERENCE:

Pa 98-377 Title VIII Equal Access Act

Procedure Revised - December 2006