

Student Clubs: Equal Access

The Board of Trustees regards student clubs and organizations as an important part of the education and development of students.

Definitions

As used in this policy:

1. "School" shall mean any school in the North Gem School District #149;
2. "Club" shall mean a sponsored club or a non-sponsored or non-curriculum group of students of the school who wish to organize and meet to form common goals, objectives, or purposes, but do not include school activities;
3. "Sponsored Club" shall mean a club which is directly under the sponsorship, direction, and control of the school;
4. "Non-sponsored or non-curriculum club" shall mean a student initiated club which is not under the sponsorship, direction, or control of the school or any student initiated club that does not directly relate to the body of courses offered by the school;
5. "Non-participating capacity" shall mean a person may not promote, lead, or participate in any meeting.

The school within the District shall provide equal access and a fair opportunity for clubs to organize and to meet on school premises during the times established for such meetings.

Sponsored clubs shall be sponsored by a member of the faculty, staff, or administration of the school. The District shall not sponsor clubs which advocate particular religious or political beliefs or ideas. Any such clubs shall be non-sponsored or non-curriculum, and must engage a school employee to monitor their activities while on the premises. The school and the School District shall not be identified or associated with the goals, objectives, activities, beliefs, or opinions of any non-sponsored or non-curriculum clubs or its members. Any club whose activities are deemed by the principal to be disruptive of the everyday operations of the school will not be allowed to initiate meetings, nor continue to meet on school premises.

Equal Access Regulations

The following general guidelines will be observed in approving, establishing, and operating student clubs at North Gem School District #149 schools.

1. Each proposed club must complete and submit a request form to the principal or designee stating the name, specific purpose of the club, the membership requirements, the activities of the club, and meeting dates and times. Each proposed club shall have the student group perform a risk management assessment of the proposed club activities. The principal or designee will forward the request to the School District. The District with Board approval shall respond to the request, accept or reject the application, and designate the club as either a sponsored club or non-sponsored or non-curriculum club.
2. Student participation in club activities and attendance at club meetings shall be voluntary and shall be limited to those students who are currently enrolled in the School District. All student groups meeting on school premises are required to open membership to all interested and/or eligible students. Clubs shall be allowed to meet on school premises from 7:00 AM to 8:00 AM, during the noon hour, and from 3:30 PM to 5:00 PM on days when school is in session. The time and place of all club meetings shall be subject to available space, conflicting activities and programs, and the availability of the faculty sponsor or monitor. Students shall be responsible for ensuring the presence of a faculty sponsor or monitor prior to every meeting. Clubs will be allowed to meet on school premises during other times of the day only in extraordinary or exceptional circumstances as may be determined by the principal or designee.
3. All clubs must comply with the provisions of the school's student constitution, if applicable.
4. No hazing of students shall be permitted.
5. The principal or designee may deny the opportunity of any club to meet on school premises, and may deny permission of any non-school person to meet with or speak to a club on school premises, when there exists a substantial likelihood of material and substantial interference with the orderly conduct of educational activities within the school, or if the meeting or activities in the meeting are, or will be, in violation of any law or ordinance.
6. The principal, designee, or student council (if appropriate) may temporarily or permanently terminate the opportunity of any club to meet on school premises in the future if the club has materially or substantially interfered with the orderly conduct of educational activities within the school, if the activities of the club have violated any law or ordinance, or if the club has violated any provision of this policy.

For sponsored clubs, the following guidelines will apply:

1. Each sponsored club will have a faculty or staff member appointed as sponsor. The sponsorship shall be approved by the principal or designee;
2. All activities of the club must have prior approval of the sponsor;
3. Club funds shall be subject to deposit, audit, and disbursement in accordance with the regulations of the District; and

4. The content and placement of club posters or advertisements shall be approved by the club sponsor.

For non-sponsored or non-curriculum clubs, the following guidelines will apply:

1. The formation of non-sponsored or non-curriculum clubs shall be student initiated. Non-school persons may not direct, conduct, control, or regularly attend activities;
2. Recognition by the North Gem School District #149 of a non-sponsored or non-curriculum club is not an endorsement of the aims, policies, or opinions of the student organization or its members;
3. The school or District's name will not be identified with the aims, policies, or opinions of the student organization or its members;
4. Notices of meetings of non-curricular student organizations may be posted only on a designated bulletin board used by all nonschool-sponsored organizations. No announcements shall be made over the public address system or in any school-sponsored publications;
5. No funds will be expended by the school for any such meeting beyond the incidental cost associated with providing a meeting place;
6. Every club must have a District employee volunteer as a monitor to the club. The monitor shall be responsible for monitoring the meetings to assure that attendance at the meetings is voluntary, to assure that the meetings do not materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of educational activities within the school, and to assure that order and discipline are maintained. Monitors shall attend the meetings of non-sponsored or non-curriculum clubs that are political or religious in nature in a non-participatory capacity;
7. No school employee shall be compelled to be a monitor of a non-sponsored or non-curriculum club;
8. Club posters or flyers need to have a disclaimer, and poster content and placement shall be approved by the principal or designee; and
9. The North Gem School District #149 shall not be identified or associated in any way with the goals, objectives, activities, or opinions of any non-sponsored or non-curriculum clubs to raise money.

Legal Reference: 20 U.S.C. §§ 4071-4074 Equal Access Act

Policy History:

Adopted on: July 17, 2019

Revised on:

Reviewed on: