FIRST AMENDMENT

The College District shall take no action respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Board for a redress of grievances. *U.S. Const. Amend. I*

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Students do not shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate. At school and school events, students have First Amendment rights, applied in light of the special characteristics of the school environment.

Student expression that is protected by the First Amendment may not be prohibited absent a showing that the expression will materially and substantially interfere with the operation of the school or the rights of others.

Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Cmty. Sch. Dist, 393 U.S. 503, (1969)

PROTECTED SPEECH

Activities such as distributing literature, displaying signs, petitioning for change, and disseminating information concerning issues of public concern are protected by the First Amendment. *Schenck v. Pro-Choice Network, 519 U.S. 357 (1997) (recognizing leafletting and commenting on matters of public concern as protected speech); Boos v. Barry, 485 U.S. 312 (1988) (recognizing public issue signs as protected speech); Meyer v. Grant, 486 U.S. 414 (1988) (recognizing the solicitation of signatures for a petition drive as protected speech)*

LIMITATIONS ON EXPRESSION

The College District may prohibit expression by students if:

1. It materially and substantially interferes with school activities;
2. It materially and substantially interferes with the rights of other students or teachers; or
3. The College District can demonstrate reasonable cause to believe that the expression would engender such material and substantial interference.

The College District shall not prohibit student expression solely because other students, teachers, administrators, or parents may disagree with its content.

TIME, PLACE, AND MANNER LIMITATIONS

The College District may limit student expression in manner, place, or time by means of reasonable and equally applied regulations.

Shanley v. Northeast Indep. Sch. Dist., 462 F.2d 960 (5th Cir. 1972)

[See also CHE for use of the College District's mail system]