

**Student Expression
of Religious
Viewpoints**

The District shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the District treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and shall not discriminate against the student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

**Student Speakers at
Nongraduation
Events**

The District hereby creates a limited public forum for student speakers at all school events at which a student is to publicly speak. For each speaker, the District shall set a maximum time limit reasonable and appropriate to the occasion.

For purposes of this policy, a "school event" is a school-sponsored event or activity on school grounds and/or under the control of the District that does not constitute part of the required instruction for a segment of the school's curriculum, regardless of whether the event takes place during or after the school day. A "school event" does not include athletic contests or other extracurricular or school-sponsored activities that occur at and/or are under the control of another school district.

For purposes of this policy, "to publicly speak" means a scheduled, formal speech made to an audience at a school event in which the student uses his or her own words, but does not include speeches made in connection with UIL academic competitions or the preparation for such competitions. A student is not using his or her own words when the student is reading or performing from an approved script, is delivering a message that has been approved in advance, or is making brief introductions or announcements.

**Introductory
Speakers**

The limited public forum contemplated by this policy shall consist of student speakers giving the introduction at school events at which a student is to publicly speak. Only one student speaker will introduce each such school event.

The forum shall be limited in the manner provided by this section on nongraduation events.

*Eligibility and
Selection*

Students are eligible to use the limited public forum if they:

1. Are in the highest two grade levels of the school and hold one of the following positions of honor based on neutral criteria:
 - a. Student council officers,
 - b. Members in good standing of the National Honor Society,
 - c. Class officers of the highest grade level in the school,

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- d. Valedictorian, salutatorian, or member of the top ten percent of the senior class,
 - e. Captains of the specific teams or clubs being honored, and
 - f. Officers of the specific team or club being honored;
2. Volunteer;
 3. Have not received an out-of-school suspension or been expelled from school at any time during the school year;
 4. Have not been in a disciplinary placement on more than one occasion during the school year; and
 5. Are not in a disciplinary placement or suspended from any extracurricular activity at the time of the speaking event.

For purposes of this policy, "disciplinary placement" shall mean in-school suspension (ISS), disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP), juvenile justice alternative educational program (JJAEP), out-of-school suspension, and expulsion.

Eligible students who wish to volunteer shall submit their names to the campus principal during the first full week of instruction each semester (the "submission period"). Students are not eligible to volunteer if they are in a disciplinary placement during any part of the first full week of instruction. If there are no student volunteers, the District shall seek volunteers again at the beginning of the next semester.

Following the submission period, all of the names of the students who are eligible and volunteer to speak shall be randomly drawn and the names shall be set forth in a list (the "student speaker list") in the order drawn.

*Assignment of
Introductory
Speakers*

Student speakers shall be selected from the student speaker list in the order in which their name appears on the list until each school event is assigned one introductory student speaker. Each selected student shall be matched chronologically to the single event for which the student shall give the introduction. The list of student speakers shall be chronologically repeated as needed, in the same order. If no students volunteer or if the selected speaker for an event declines or becomes ineligible and there are no other eligible students, no student introduction will be made at the event.

The District shall repeat the selection process at the beginning of each semester.

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*Content of
Student
Introductions*

The subject of the student introductions shall relate to the purpose of introducing the designated event. The student must stay on the subject. The student may not engage in speech that:

- Is obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd, or indecent;
- Creates reasonable cause to believe that the speech would result in material and substantial interference with school activities or the rights of others;
- Promotes illegal use of drugs, alcohol, or other controlled substances;
- Violates the intellectual property rights, privacy rights, or other rights of another person;
- Contains defamatory statements about public figures or others; or
- Advocates imminent lawless action and is likely to incite or produce such action.

The District shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the District treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and shall not discriminate against the student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

Disclaimer

For as long as there is a need to dispel confusion over the fact that the District does not sponsor the student's speech, at each event in which a student shall deliver an introduction, a disclaimer shall be stated in written or oral form, or both, such as, "The student giving the introduction for this event is a volunteering student selected on neutral criteria to introduce the event. The content of the introduction is the private expression of the student and does not reflect the endorsement, sponsorship, position, or expression of the District."

*Other Student
Speakers*

Certain students who have attained special positions of honor in the school have traditionally addressed school audiences from time to time as a tangential component of their achieved positions of honor, such as the captains of various sports teams, student council officers, class officers, homecoming kings and queens, prom kings and queens, and the like, and have attained their positions based on neutral criteria. Nothing in this policy eliminates the continuation of the practice of having these students, regardless of grade level, address school audiences in the normal course of their respective positions. The District shall create a limited public forum for the speakers and shall treat a student's voluntary expression of

a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the District treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and shall not discriminate against a student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

**Student Speakers at
Graduation
Ceremonies**

Opening and
Closing Remarks

The District hereby creates a limited public forum consisting of an opportunity for a student to speak to begin graduation ceremonies and another student to speak to end graduation ceremonies. For each speaker, the District shall set a maximum time limit reasonable and appropriate to the occasion.

The forum shall be limited in the manner provided by this section on student speakers at graduation.

Eligibility

Only students who are graduating and who hold one of the following positions of honor based on neutral criteria shall be eligible to use the limited public forum: student council officers, class officers of the graduating class, and the top three academically ranked graduates. A student who shall otherwise have a speaking role in the graduation ceremonies is ineligible to give the opening and closing remarks. Students who are eligible shall be notified and given an opportunity to volunteer. Students are not eligible to volunteer if they were in a disciplinary placement during any part of the spring semester.

The names of the eligible students who volunteer shall be randomly drawn. The student whose name is drawn first shall give the opening and the student whose name is drawn second shall give the closing.

*Content of
Opening and
Closing Remarks*

The topic of the opening and closing remarks shall be related to the purpose of the graduation ceremony and to the purpose of marking the opening and closing of the event; honoring the occasion, the participants, and those in attendance; bringing the audience to order; and focusing the audience on the purpose of the event. Students providing the opening and closing remarks shall not engage in prohibited speech as described below.

Other Student
Speakers

In addition to the students giving the opening and closing remarks, the valedictorian and salutatorian may have speaking roles at graduation ceremonies. For each speaker, the District shall set a maximum time limit reasonable and appropriate to the occasion and to the position held by the speaker. For this purpose, the District creates a limited public forum for these students to deliver the addresses. The subject of the addresses shall be related to the purpose of the graduation ceremony, marking and honoring the occasion, honoring the participants and those in attendance, and

the student's perspective on purpose, achievement, life, school, graduation, and looking forward to the future.

The student shall stay on the subject, and the student shall not engage in speech that:

- Is obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd, or indecent;
- Creates reasonable cause to believe that the speech would result in material and substantial interference with school activities or the rights of others;
- Promotes illegal use of drugs, alcohol, or other controlled substances;
- Violates the intellectual property rights, privacy rights, or other rights of another person;
- Contains defamatory statements about public figures or others; or
- Advocates imminent lawless action and is likely to incite or produce such action.

The District shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the District treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and shall not discriminate against the student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

Disclaimer

A written disclaimer shall be read orally at the graduation ceremony and shall be printed in the graduation program that states, "The students who shall be speaking at the graduation ceremony were selected based on neutral criteria to deliver messages of the students' own choices. The content of each student speaker's message is the private expression of the individual student and does not reflect the endorsement, sponsorship, position, or expression of the District."

**Religious
Expression in Class
Assignments**

A student may express his or her beliefs about religion in homework, artwork, and other written and oral assignments free from discrimination based on the religious content of the student's submission. Homework and classroom work shall be judged by ordinary academic standards of substance and relevance and against other legitimate pedagogical concerns identified by the school. Students may not be penalized or rewarded on account of religious content of their work.

**Freedom to Organize
Religious Groups
and Activities**

Students may organize prayer groups, religious clubs, “see you at the pole” gatherings, and other religious gatherings before, during, and after school to the same extent that students are permitted to organize other noncurricular student activities and groups. [See FNAB] Religious groups shall be given the same access to school facilities for assembling as is given to other noncurricular groups, without discrimination based on the religious content of the group's expression. If student groups that meet for nonreligious activities are permitted to advertise or announce the groups' meetings, the school District may not discriminate against groups that meet for prayer or other religious speech. A school district may disclaim sponsorship of noncurricular groups and events, provided they administer the disclaimer in a manner that neither favors nor disfavors groups that meet to engage in prayer or other religious speech.