

Policy

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AND GOVERNMENT

Student Government

The Little Silver Board of Education recognizes the importance of offering students the opportunity to participate in representative self-government and to develop leadership skills. Students shall have the right to organize, conduct meetings, elect officers and representatives, and petition the board.

The board recognizes the student council as the official voice of the student body for students, provided the constitution and bylaws of that organization have been duly approved by the students it represents and by the board and provided that all students have equal access to their student government and an equal opportunity to vote and hold office.

The board shall appoint a qualified teaching staff member to serve as advisor to student government activities.

The board directs that, decisions made, and actions duly taken, by the official student government, in accordance with and within the scope of its constitution and bylaws, may not be voided or vetoed by any staff member.

Secret Societies

The board affirms the legislative prohibition of student organizations with closed membership practices as hostile to the democratic ideals of public education.

No social organization of students will be granted the use of school facilities or permitted the use of the name of the school or this school district unless that organization has first been approved by the principal. The application for such approval will set forth the purposes, constitution, and bylaws of the organization; its membership qualifications; and the process by which a person becomes a member.

No organization will be approved if its purposes conflict with the authority and goals of this board or the best interests of the students of this district; if membership is drawn from outside the currently enrolled student body; if membership qualifications are based on considerations of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, affectational or sexual orientation or sex, social or economic status, disability or political beliefs, or any other consideration not appropriate to the purpose of the organization; or if any qualifying student who applies may be denied membership.

Nothing in this policy shall prevent or otherwise deny participation in constitutionally protected prayer consistent with protections of the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.

A student who seeks to form or is a member of a fraternity, sorority, or other secret organization formed in whole or in part of students enrolled in this district may be disciplined by this board. The board reserves the right to require that any student attest as to his/her membership in a secret organization.

Equal Access of Student Organizations

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AND GOVERNMENT (continued)

The board will permit the use of school facilities by student-initiated organizations for non-curricular student activities. A student-initiated organization, regardless of the size of the group, will not be denied an opportunity to meet and use school facilities on the basis of the religious, political, philosophical, or other content of the speech at their meeting.

An application for permission to meet on school premises shall be made to the principal, who shall grant permission provided that he/she determines that:

- A. The activity has been initiated by students;
- B. Attendance at the meeting is voluntary;
- C. No agent or employee of the district will promote, lead, or participate in the meeting;
- D. The meeting is for a lawful purpose;
- E. The meeting does not materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of instructional activities in the school;
- F. Nonschool persons do not direct, conduct, control, or regularly attend the activity; and
- G. The activity is adequately supervised by appropriately certified school district staff.

A student-initiated group granted permission to meet on school premises shall be subject to the same rules and regulations that govern the meetings of student organizations sponsored by this board, except as provided by this policy. Participation in a student-initiated meeting must be available to all students who wish to attend and cannot be denied on the basis of a student's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, affectational or sexual orientation or sex, social or economic status, or disability. The board will not permit the organization of a fraternity, sorority, or secret society. A student-initiated meeting may be attended by no more than two outside resource persons.

Nothing in this policy shall prevent or otherwise deny participation in constitutionally protected prayer consistent with protections of the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.

An appropriately certified staff member shall be assigned to attend a student-initiated meeting in a custodial capacity and shall not participate in the activity while serving in this custodial capacity. No teaching staff member shall be compelled to attend a student-initiated meeting if the content of the speech at the meeting is contrary to his/her beliefs.

The building principal may take such actions as may be necessary to maintain order and discipline on school premises and to protect the safety and well-being of students and staff members.

Adopted:	October 8, 2009
NJSBA Review/Update:	May 2023
Readopted:	August 24, 2023

Key Words

Student Councils, Student Government, Secret Societies

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AND GOVERNMENT (continued)

Legal References: N.J.S.A.18A:42-5 Certain student organizations
N.J.S.A.18A:42-6 Organizations forbidden in high schools; rules; exceptions

Possible

Cross References: *1140 Distribution of materials by students and staff
1210 Community organizations
*1230 School-connected organizations
1314 Fundraising by outside organizations
*1330 Use of school facilities
*3400 Accounts
*3450 Money in school buildings
*3453 School activity funds
3571 Financial reports
*3571.4 Audit
*6145 Extracurricular activities

*Indicates policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual.