

Scenario #3

A UniServ Director receives a call from her local president. One of his members has been put on leave because they allegedly hosted a drag show on campus. Pictures and videos from the show have been posted on social media, including by the teacher now on leave. In these posts, it is clear that at least one of the performers is wearing apparel that allows their buttocks to be fully visible. Additionally, the teacher reminded their students to bring small bills to tip the performers, if they wish, and posted the social media handles of the performers on their Schoology site.

After speaking with the member, the UniServ Director learns that the member, who is also the Gay-Straight Alliance Advisor, obtained permission from the HS administrator for the GSA to host the event which included a drag show component and an anti-bullying Q&A session. This is the third year that the show has been held, with both components. The five performers signed in at the office. The apparel of one of the dancers was more revealing than it had been in the past; however, it was visible to the office staff and principals upon check-in. The only significant difference between this show and the two prior are that the timing of the show was closer to dismissal; as such, the performers were seen by more parents and non-GSA students. The member also feels it is important to know that they are not paid for their advisory work and that the club always meets after hours.

A local government official picks up the story and runs it on his social media as “appalling” and “wildly inappropriate.” The District, large and suburban, becomes the target of anti-LGBTQ hate, from the community, parents, and even teachers.

For what issues presented can/should the union expect reasonable discipline for the teacher, if any?

What messaging should be used with the community?

How can this become an issue that unifies versus divides?

From: Communications Office <communications@hempfieldsd.org>
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 2:51 PM
To: District Staff <district@hempfieldsd.org>
Subject: District Message to Parents/Guardians

Good afternoon,

As an FYI, the message below is being sent to all district parents/guardians this afternoon in an email and will be posted on all school blogs and the website.

The Hempfield School District administration was made aware of a serious situation that took place at the high school on Monday, April 25, after school hours. Administration was notified of a concerning social media post and photo, and later videos, of a performance that occurred during an after-school event for GSA (Gay Sexuality Alliance) Club students. Immediately following the notification, an investigation into the incident began.

First and foremost, the administration team apologizes to students, parents, and the community on behalf of those involved in this event. We are appalled at what took place and in no way condone this type of activity in our schools. Neither the dress of the invited guests nor the performance was appropriate in our school setting.

We are taking the incident seriously in our ongoing investigation and follow-up actions. It is important to district administrators that the district has the trust and confidence of the community, and we realize that an incident such as this completely undermines that trust. We commit to completing a thorough investigation and holding those involved accountable, up to and including disciplinary action that is commensurate with any findings. Currently, an individual has been placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation. Since this is a personnel issue, there will be certain information the district is unable to share with the public.

We respectfully request that while the appropriate district personnel investigate and address this serious matter, individuals refrain from speculation and furthering currently circulating misinformation that can get in the way of a thorough and accurate investigation.

Communications Department
(717) 898-5539



1:27



Done

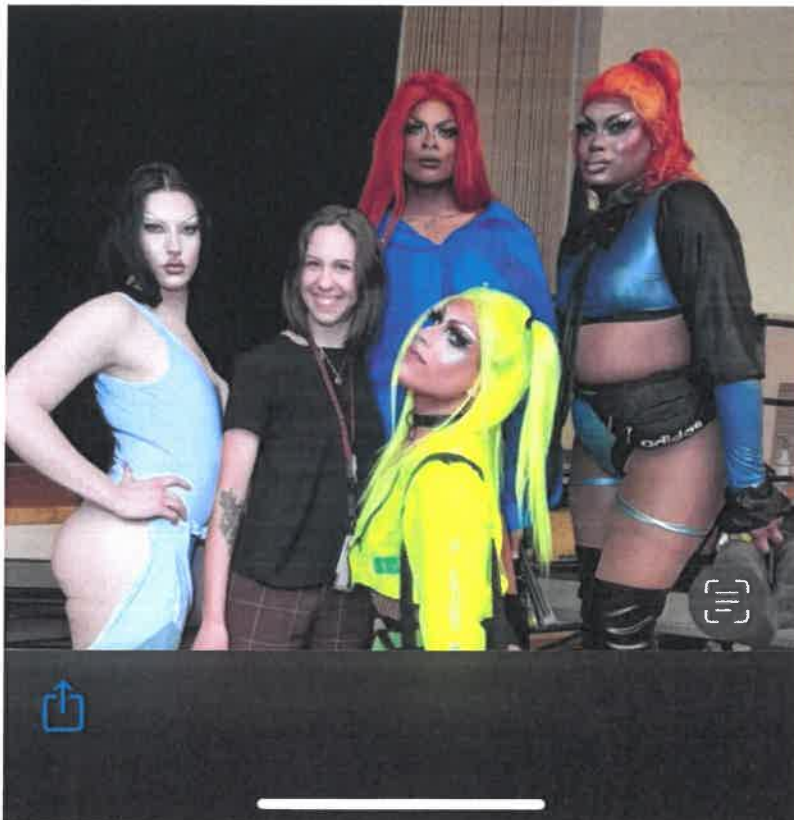
11 of 93



2 mins • 👤



I don't know how to explain the sheer joy i feel in my bones when these queens come take time out of their busy schedules to perform for us (year 3!) and to be with my students. as GSA co-advisor and a queer teacher, it makes me emotional to think of this space we have created-- I would have loved nothing more than to have a space like they have, an opportunity to attend their own drag show... and to have these beautiful role models to support them. to model kindness. acceptance. perseverance. confidence. community. my closeted high school self finds so much healing in days like today. we all want permission to be ourselves. for some of us, we have to be the ones to celebrate ourselves. days like today are my why. je vous aime tous.



https://lancasteronline.com/news/local/gay-sexuality-alliance-club-event-at-hempfield-high-school-draws-backlash-investigation/article_93f7dd8c-c7fe-11ec-a55d-57efdd80e58e.html

Gay Sexuality Alliance Club event at Hempfield High School draws backlash, investigation



CARTER WALKER | Staff Writer

Apr 29, 2022



HEMPFIELDSD.ORG

A Hempfield High School club hosted a dance show at an after-school event for students earlier this week, prompting a strong rebuke and an investigation from the district.

Hempfield School District said in a statement Friday that it had been made aware of a "serious situation" at the district during an after-school event for the Gay Sexuality Alliance Club.

"First and foremost, the administration team apologizes to students, parents, and the community on behalf of those involved in this event," the statement said. "We are appalled at what took place and in no way condone this type of activity in our schools. Neither the dress of the invited guests nor the performance was appropriate in our school setting."

The event, first reported by Harrisburg 100, an online-only news site, featured dancers in tight-fitting and revealing clothing with exposed buttocks. Parents reported that the event was advertised as a drag show.

LNP | LancasterOnline was not immediately able to authenticate photos and videos posted online as being from the Monday after school event.

The club's adviser, French teacher Kelly Tyson, did not immediately return a call or email seeking comment. Another adviser to the club, English teacher Carla Vicidomini also did not return a call seeking comment.

"We commit to completing a thorough investigation and holding those involved accountable, up to and including disciplinary action that is commensurate with any findings," the school district's statement said.

"Currently, an individual has been placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation. Since this is a personnel issue, there will be certain information the district is unable to share with the public."

State senator Ryan Aument, R-West Hempfield, also weighed in on the event on Facebook, saying he had spoken with Hempfield School District Superintendent Mike Bromirski twice via phone.

Aument currently has a bill in the state legislature seeking to identify and notify parents of what he has described as sexually explicit books in public schools.

Meridith Hilt, whose post about the event in a community Facebook group first drew attention to the event, said her frustration with the event has nothing to do with the sexual orientation or identity of the performers, but rather the performance itself.

"It has nothing to do with them as an LGBT community," Hilt, who has two children in the district, said. "It wouldn't make a difference to me if it was a woman doing this. It's irrelevant that they are drag queens, it's the type of the performance at the school."

Hilt says the exposed buttocks, form fitting clothing and type of dance is what she considers age inappropriate. She hopes that at an upcoming school board meeting, there will be more transparency about how the event came together and how the schools dress code is implemented for visitors.

Melissa Taylor, another parent of students in the district, said she feels some parents in the district are asserting themselves into an issue that does not involve them to the detriment of the community which it affects.

"All they are doing is hurting the kids in that club and the teacher," she said. "if you kids aren't involved in and you're not giving your permission, why are you getting involved? ... They are hyper focused on this teacher now when this teacher was just trying to provide a safe environment for these kids."

Hilt and Taylor, who both do not have kids in the club, said they had heard differing things about if permission slips were required for the event. Bromirski did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Taylor said she hopes that the board will reinstate Tyson and allow her to continue leading the club.

Hempfield School District holds its next meeting May 10 at 7 p.m. in Landisville.

This story will be updated as more information become available.

https://lancasteronline.com/news/local/the-latest-heres-what-we-know-about-hempfield-high-drag-show-fallout/article_3e552d1a-d156-11ec-8199-3f166cd14c92.html

The latest: Here's what we know about Hempfield High drag show fallout

LANCASTERONLINE | Staff

May 11, 2022



Community members rally before the Hempfield School District board meeting on Tuesday, May 10, 2022. Connor Hollinger | LNP Correspondent

Residents of Hempfield School District had their first opportunity Tuesday to speak to the school board since a controversy erupted over an April 25 after-school event during which professional drag queens performed at Hempfield High School.

Upset about the Gay Sexuality Alliance Club event arose on social media days after it took place.

The school district's administration issued a statement April 29 indicating that it had launched an investigation and that one person had been put on administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation.

Here's what we know and don't know about the fallout.

What new came up at the school board meeting?

Two new developments came to light during the meeting, which was attended by a total of more than 400 in person and online.

1 — School board President Grant Keener said that two more individuals have now been placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of an investigation being led by Superintendent Mike Bromirski and Karen Hall, executive director of human resources and business operations. That means a total of three people are on administrative leave. Keener declined to identify the individuals.

"We understand that in the absence of being able to provide additional information during an accurate investigation, sometimes people rush to judgment or draw their own conclusions without facts, speculate and/or share misinformation," Bromirski said during the school board meeting. "We will not respond to these claims as it could hamper the investigation."

2 — There was confirmation during the meeting that similar events have been held at the high school in the past. Student and Gay Sexuality Alliance Club Vice President Miguel Angel Rosado spoke during the school board meeting. Rosado attended the event and said it has been held for three years without complaint. Rosado said the event was educational and hopes the drag shows will continue at the school in the future.

What happened at Hempfield High School to spark this controversy?

A performance by drag queens took place after school at Hempfield High School on April 25. The performance occurred at an event for Gay Sexuality Alliance Club students.

Drag queens associated with entertainment company Depiro's Divas were at the performance, according to company owner Michael Depiro. Although a report published April 29 by Harrisburg 100 included a link to the Depiro's Divas website when it mentioned the event "featured professional dancers," Depiro said his company wasn't involved in the event, the dancers participated on their own and they had agreed to appear for free.

Performers contacted by LNP | LancasterOnline did not immediately respond to request for comment.

What's next?

In the district's statement, it said it will complete a "thorough investigation" and hold those involved accountable with disciplinary action equivalent to the findings of the investigation.

How long that will take and what, if anything, the district will report back to the community is not clear.

What permissions were sought, if any, to host this event and have students in attendance?

The district has not confirmed if permission was sought by the club to host the event and have students in attendance.

A student who attended the event and a parent of a student who attended the event have told LNP | LancasterOnline that filled out parental permission slips were not required to attend.

At least two district policies might apply to organizing the event.

Policy 907 indicates those wishing to visit a school should make arrangements with the school principal no less than 48 hours in advance. Visitors are required to state, in writing, the nature and purpose of their visit.

The policy also states that only entrances "monitored and capable of controlling visitor entry" should be used by visitors while all other entrances should be locked. Visitors must register at the office when they arrive.

It is unclear if this policy applies to after-school events.

Under Policy 122, "extracurricular activities shall not be organized or instituted without the approval of the administration."

What is the purpose of the club that hosted the event?

The Gay Sexuality Alliance club "brings together LGBTQIA+ and straight students to support each other, provide a safe place to socialize, and work together to improve school climate for all students, regardless of sexual orientation, gender or identity expression," according to a description of the club on the district's website.

Kelly Tyson, a French teacher at Centerville Middle School and Hempfield High School, and Carla Vicidomini, an English teacher at Hempfield High School, are advisors for the club, according to the district website.

There's a video circulating on social media that supposedly shows the event. Has that video been verified?

District officials have not verified that any posts circulating on social media are connected to the event.

However, the district's statement does note that it "was notified of a concerning social media post and photo, and later videos, of a performance that occurred during an after-school event."

https://lanasteronline.com/news/local/hempfield-high-school-student-sheds-light-on-april-25-drag-show-event/article_d8ca0204-d263-11ec-9bbc-0394161264c1.html

Hempfield High School student sheds light on April 25 drag show event



ASHLEY STALNECKER | Staff Writer

May 12, 2022



Community members rally before the Hempfield School District board meeting on Tuesday, May 10, 2022.

Connor Hollinger | LNP Correspondent

What happened, exactly, at the afterschool drag show event at Hempfield High School that has raised questions and spurred controversy?

Several weeks later, that answer is still not clear.

However, through one eyewitness account and photographs and videos reviewed by LNP | LancasterOnline, some details have surfaced.

A student member of Hempfield High School's Gay Sexuality Alliance club has stepped forward to defend the April 25 after-school drag show that sparked an uproar and led to an ongoing investigation.

Hempfield junior and GSA Vice President Miguel Angel Rosado spoke to the school board during the public comment portion of Tuesday's board meeting, which drew hundreds of people online and in person.

"Please listen to what I have to say, as I was physically present at this event," Rosado said during the public comment portion of the meeting. "First and foremost, I feel as if a lot of retaliation has come from a lack of education and context."

At first glance, Rosado said, the event seems like something the school shouldn't allow, but Rosado contends that drag shows hold value, particularly for members of the LGBTQ+ community. Drag shows are an integral part of the LGBTQ+ community and its history, Rosado said.

He regrets that the event, through the lens of social media, has turned into something different and, in his public comment, said "I wish things hadn't turned out the way they did."

So far, the district has placed three individuals, who it has not named, on administrative leave. At Tuesday's meeting, board President Grant Keener said an investigation is still ongoing and that the district couldn't share any further details at the time.

Superintendent Mike Bromirski urged residents to refrain from speculating about the nature of the event in the absence of information released by the district. However, photos and videos allegedly taken at the show, as well as speculation and commentary, have already circulated on social media platforms like Facebook.

How did the queens dress and perform?

LNP | LancasterOnline viewed a few photos and brief portions of videos confirmed to be of the April 25 performance. The viewing was permitted for a short time, and all of the images showed the same drag queen. A drag queen is a man who dresses in women's clothes, typically for entertainment purposes.

The videos viewed by LNP | LancasterOnline did not show the queen dancing in a manner that simulated sexual activity, as has been the case in some videos alleged to be from the event and posted online.

The queen was wearing a short blue dress that fell to mid-thigh and an orange-colored wig. In a Live Photo, the queen was shown dropping down in a semi-squat from a standing position. Live Photos are a feature of iPhones that record what happens 1.5 seconds before and after taking a picture.

One of the concerns voiced about the drag show is the attire of the performers. In a statement issued by the district on April 29 announcing that it was investigating what happened, it wrote that "Neither the dress of the invited guests nor the performance was appropriate in our school setting."

The dress, Rosado told the school board on Tuesday, wasn't different from that of many other extracurriculars, though.

"Yes, some of the outfits showed a little more skin," Rosado said during the public comment period of the board meeting, noting that the performers were not nude. "But, the performers were all wearing bathing suits, leotards, jumpers, skirts or dresses." The photos and videos viewed by LNP | LancasterOnline matched these descriptions.

"Heteronormative" activities, such as wrestling, cheerleading, swimming, homecoming and prom allow similar outfits, Rosado said. Things that are described as heteronormative are considered to denote a world view that promotes a female to male relationship as the preferred sexual orientation.

And, in some fashion design classes taught in the high school, Rosado claimed, students can design and make the outfits a drag queen performers would normally wear.

Aside from dress, another point of contention has been the nature of the performance, which some parents have described as “sexual.”

“I feel like we’re promoting sexually explicit behavior,” parent William Crawford said during the public comment portion of Tuesday’s board meeting.

Rosado sees it differently.

Drag shows, Rosado said, showcase dancing – a form of art – not stripping or a “sex show.”

“It doesn’t seem fair to condemn this medium of art, deeming it inappropriate and sexualizing when the school allows students to submit actual (depictions of) nudity for art assignments in art classes,” Rosado said to the board.

And those pieces, Rosado said, can sometimes be found in art shows with students below the high school level.

Additionally, Rosado said that a dance or performance like the drag show is not much different from those of school-related extracurricular activities like gymnastics and musicals.

Students in attendance at the event were not brought onto the stage to dance with the performers, either, Rosado told the board.

An event three years running

The dress and dance moves at the April drag performance for the club were no different than they had been in the past three years that the event has been held, Rosado said. In previous years, no complaints or problems had arisen from the performance, either, he told the board.

“I don’t understand how the school said they were appalled at what took place when it’s been hosted for this long with videos and pictures being shared from previous events on the Schoology page, which is monitored by advisors and administrators,” Rosado said during public comment.

Schoology is a learning management system that Hempfield School District uses to create, manage and share assignments and resources in its schools. Students are only able to see posts by groups they belong to like the Gay Sexuality Alliance club or a specific class. Membership in groups is by invitation by an advisor, teacher or employee only.

One of the Gay Sexuality Alliance advisors, French teacher Kelly Tyson, shared a post on Schoology following the April 25 event thanking students for attending. And, a high school student involved with the club shared reminders about the upcoming event with members.

Several parents at Tuesday's school board meeting called for more accountability from the district and questioned how the event could have gone unnoticed or unapproved. In its initial statement, the district said it does not condone "this type of activity" in its schools.

"The school has a reputation to uphold and a moral high ground to set," parent Angela Hess said at Tuesday's meeting. "By allowing this to happen, it sets the tone that this type of thing is OK in school."

In an effort to "debunk some misconceptions about the event," for people who weren't there. Rosado explained at the meeting that the drag queens all wore visitor passes on their clothing.

And, Rosado continued, drag queens volunteered their time and didn't receive payment on the taxpayer's dime.

A form of gender expression

The event wasn't merely for entertainment purposes, according to Rosado.

To the LGBTQ+ community, Rosado said drag performance has historical value.

"Drag is a very big part of the community itself, but also its history," Rosado said in public comment, adding that, though the event was open to all students, it was mainly for students in the Gay Sexuality Alliance club or who belong to the LGBTQ+ community.

Drag dates back to the late 1800s, when anti-cross-dressing laws were used to enforce dress normative to one's gender at the time. And, drag had a start – out of necessity – in Shakespearean theater. Men had to dress as women to play female roles in the late 16th and 17th centuries, when women were barred from performing.

“Drag is a form of gender expression that can be expressed through performances,” Rosado said in public comment. “It is focused on blending, blurring or even erasing the boundaries of gender. And by condemning this event, we’re denying queer students of their own history.”



Hempfield School District places three individuals on administrative leave in drag show investigation

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HHS GSA



hello everyone! tomorrow, **MONDAY, APRIL 25TH from 3:00 to 4:30 in Hackman auditorium** will be our annual **drag show** meeting!!! feel free to bring some cash with you to tip the queens, who are coming all the way from pittsburgh! (NOT REQUIRED!) can't wait to see you there!!!

Apr 24 at 3:10 PM • Like 😊 5

Comment..

Post

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HHS GSA



thank you all for attending the show today! the Queens' interactions with you and their support of our GSA makes me emotional. what special humans! Here are the social media handles for our Queens. Go follow and support them!!! :)

Hexxa: @h

Majestee: @th

Enigma: @th

Nebula: @n

Apr 25 at 5:07 PM • Like 😊 3

Comment.

Post



1



Book	Policy Manual
Section	100 Programs
Title	Extracurricular Activities
Code	122
Status	Active
Adopted	October 11, 2005
Last Revised	November 10, 2020

Purpose

The Board believes that the district's goals and objectives are best achieved by a diversity of learning experiences, some of which are more appropriately conducted outside the regular curricular program of the schools.

All learning experiences offered by the schools, curricular and extracurricular, shall be planned and integrated toward attainment of the district's educational objectives.

Definition

Extracurricular Activities - Those activities that are sponsored by the Board, but are not offered for credit toward graduation; voluntary participation in an activity where students serve as leaders and representatives of the district, both within the school and in the community, and for which participation is not required as a condition of passing a graded course. Extracurricular activities are considered a privilege and not a right.

Authority

Any activity shall be considered sponsored by the Board when it has been approved by the Superintendent or designee and reported to the Board for its information. A list of extracurricular activities is included in the Student Handbook and may be supplemented during the year, as approved by the Superintendent or designee and reported to the Board.[\[1\]](#)[\[2\]](#)[\[3\]](#)[\[4\]](#)

The Board shall maintain the programs of extracurricular activities in a fiscally responsive manner for participating students. Where applicable, a fee structure for supplies, participation, and/or necessary staffing shall carry the same exemptions as listed in the Board's policy on regular school activities.[\[5\]](#)

Students may assume all or part of the costs for travel and attendance at extracurricular events and trips.

Where eligibility requirements are necessary or desirable, the Board shall be informed and must approve the establishment of eligibility standards before they are operable.

Off-Campus Activities

This policy shall also apply to student conduct that occurs off school property and would violate the Code of Student Conduct if:[6]

1. There is a nexus between the proximity or timing of the conduct in relation to the student's attendance at school or school-sponsored activities.
2. The student is a member of an extracurricular activity and has been notified that particular off-campus conduct could result in exclusion from such activities.
3. Student expression or conduct materially and substantially disrupts the operations of the school, or the administration reasonably anticipates that the expression or conduct is likely to materially and substantially disrupt the operations of the school.
4. The conduct has a direct nexus to attendance at school or a school-sponsored activity, such as an agreement to complete a transaction outside of school that would violate the Code of Student Conduct.
5. The conduct involves the theft or vandalism of school property.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and disseminate procedures to implement the extracurricular activities program.

Extracurricular activities shall not be organized or instituted without the approval of the administration.

Announcements made by students, placed on public display, made as part of the daily news show, or sent via electronic media, must be approved by the building principal.[7]

Guidelines

Guidelines shall ensure that the program of extracurricular activities:

1. Assesses the needs and interests of and is responsive to district students.
2. Involves students in developing and planning extracurricular activities.
3. Ensures provision of competent guidance and supervision by staff who maintain appropriate clearances.
4. Guards against the exploitation of students.
5. Provides a variety of experiences and diversity of organizational models.
6. Provides for continuing evaluation of the program and its components.
7. Ensures that all extracurricular activities are open to all students and that all students are fully informed of the opportunities available to them.[8][9]

Students in the school buildings and on the school grounds must at all times be under the general supervision of the appropriate credentialed staff during the school day.

Students are expected to conform to the policies, rules, and regulations of the administration and the Board; obey instructions of staff; maintain proper conduct in school buildings and grounds; and refrain from use of improper language. Upon dismissal at the end of the day each student shall immediately leave school property unless they are waiting for transportation, are under the supervision of a teacher, or are attending a regularly scheduled event.

Students who go on school-sponsored trips must be accompanied by a sponsor teacher(s). Each student shall submit to the building principal's office written permission from his/her parent/guardian to be absent from school and to attend the school-sponsored activity where applicable.

Eligibility

Because participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, the school administration, together with the advisors, shall determine requirements for eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities.

A student who violates Board policy or school rules and regulations jeopardizes his/her opportunity to continue participation in an extracurricular activity.[6][10][11]

A student who has been prosecuted under Act 29 shall not be eligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for the following marking period.

Academic Eligibility

A student must meet basic academic requirements to be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities.

The school administration shall determine the academic requirements for participation.

Attendance Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in an extracurricular activity substantial attendance is required on the day of the activity. A student who is absent from school on Friday may participate in Saturday or Sunday activities only with a note from his/her doctor explaining the student's absence.

A student who has received a failing grade in any course as a direct result of the attendance policy shall not be eligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for the following marking period.

Equal Access Act

The district shall provide secondary students the opportunity for non-curriculum related student groups to meet on the school premises during non-instructional time for the purpose of conducting a meeting within the limited open forum on the basis of religious, political, philosophical, or other content of the speech at such meetings. Such meetings must be voluntary and student-initiated and not sponsored in any way by the school, its agents, or employees. Non-instructional time is the time set aside by the school before actual classroom instruction begins or after actual classroom instruction ends.[2]

The meetings cannot materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of the educational activities in the school.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish the necessary parameters of feasible operation.

The district retains the authority to maintain order and discipline on school premises in order to protect the well-being of students and employees and to ensure that student attendance at such meetings is voluntary.