



Superintendent's Circular

NUMBER:
LGL-14
Version 01

GATHERINGS ON SCHOOL GROUNDS AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS IN SCHOOLS

This circular will remain in effect unless rescinded or superseded by a subsequent version.

It is permissible for schools to regulate the time, place, and manner of any demonstration to avoid disruption of classes or the orderly entrance and departure of students into and out of the building. Accordingly, principals and heads of school are advised that gatherings of three (3) or more people or distribution of leaflets shall be regulated as follows:

1. All gatherings or demonstrations should be viewed as a legal expression of First Amendment rights. If a building administrator questions whether the material being distributed is protected by First Amendment rights, the Office of the Legal Advisor should be contacted immediately at 617-635-9320.
2. All gatherings or demonstrations shall not disrupt school classes or the orderly entrance and departure of students into and out of the school building.
3. The Students' Freedom of Expression Law (G.L. c. 71, §82) permits students to plan peaceable assemblies on school property for the purpose of expressing their opinions. Building administrators may designate the time and place

for such demonstrations to avoid disruption of classes and disorder in the school.

4. All other gatherings or demonstrations which are not planned by students shall be restricted to areas off school property and in such areas as not to restrict the flow of traffic and school buses. The building administrator may designate such areas.
5. All gatherings or demonstrations shall be reported to the Boston Police Department (at 911), the operational leader, and the Department of Safety Services as soon as possible after the gathering and/or demonstration is organized.
6. Gatherings in school buildings may be limited if school is being conducted remotely. Any in-person gatherings or demonstrations will comply with public health guidelines including those that mandate group size limits, physical distancing, and the wearing of masks, as well as BPS policies regarding access to buildings.
7. Materials and/or announcements of a public interest nature must be submitted to the administrator in charge two school days (at least 48 hours) prior to distribution for review and approval in order to be distributed in a school or a school-sponsored forum. In addition, there should be no cost accrued by the BPS in the distribution of materials/announcements requested by external organizations. The following materials shall be prohibited from circulation in schools or school-sponsored forums:
 - Advertisements of for-profit and political organizations and/or events sponsored by said organizations (including political and commercial flyers)

- Materials including those promoting anything illegal or immoral and/or are otherwise pervasively indecent or vulgar
 - Materials which include false and/or misleading information and/or which interfere with the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school
8. Requests for collections and donations, which do not have the authorization of the School Department, shall be prohibited.
9. The sale of merchandise, products, etc. by a recognized school/parent organization may be authorized with the prior approval of a building administrator.
10. The sale and/or promotion of merchandise, products, etc. by an external organization/agency will not be authorized unless the proceeds are used for the support of educational programs and prior approval has been given.
11. The sale of lottery tickets and/or other games of chance shall be prohibited.
12. Distribution process:
- Outside groups' literature should not be distributed to students during instructional time and, if possible, should not be intermingled with official school notices, but may be posted on a bulletin board used for such materials.
 - Students should not be compelled to take home or read any outside group's literature.
 - School newsletters and notices to parents may not recruit members for outside groups.

For more information about this circular, contact:

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