

INTERSCHOLASTIC / EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Organized extracurricular activities shall be open to all students in good standing and shall be voluntary. The justification for such activities rests upon the extent to which they contribute to the fulfillment of the educational objectives of the School Division. Extracurricular activities include student organizations, athletics, and other interscholastic competitions. All of these groups are required to follow all School Division policies, guidelines, and rules. No activities may be in conflict with State accreditation standards.

I. Athletics

Interscholastic athletic programs approved by the School Board shall be available to all eligible secondary students. Interscholastic athletic activities shall be conducted in accordance with the rules of the Virginia High School League, as approved by the Board.

Students attending middle school shall not be permitted to participate in any activity or sport at the secondary level except that eighth grade students may try out and/or participate on high school athletic teams at the subvarsity level, if they meet the following requirements:

1. Parental permission
2. Middle school principal permission and continuous review
3. Appropriate physical examination with specific consideration for physical maturity and appropriateness for collision sports when applicable, specifically, greater than Tanner Stage III or its equivalent
4. High school principal permission and continuous review
5. Meets all Virginia High School League qualifications, rules, and regulations to include academic standing

In no case shall eighth grade participation result in high school students being eliminated from a team.

Transportation of eighth grade students to the high school in order to participate in subvarsity sports is the responsibility of the individual student.

II. Other Interscholastic Competition

All other competition between secondary schools governed by the Virginia High School League shall be conducted in accordance with its rules. The Board encourages this type of competition and will support it within the financial limits of the budget.

III. Student Organizations

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the School Division to permit the organization and operation of student organizations and to permit such organizations to meet on school premises during noninstructional time. The purpose of this policy is to establish criteria and procedures governing the operation of student organizations.

Student-Initiated Organizations

Curriculum-related student organizations serve as an extension of the regular school curriculum. Their function is to enhance the participants' educational experience and supplement the course materials within the educational program of the schools. The activities of these organizations should bear a clear relationship to the regular curriculum. Student organizations meeting these criteria and approved by the principal will be deemed to be officially recognized, school-sponsored student organizations.

Students are also permitted to organize and conduct meetings of noncurriculum-related student organizations to pursue activities outside of the school curriculum, subject to the provisions of this policy. Such organizations must be student initiated and directed, and school personnel, parents and any other persons who are not students enrolled in the School Division are prohibited from directing, controlling, conducting or regularly attending the meetings of such organizations except for the purpose of supervision. Noncurriculum-related student organizations shall not be deemed to be school sponsored or endorsed. The fact that such organizations are permitted to conduct meetings under this policy shall not constitute an expression of School Division support for the purposes of such organizations or the content of any meetings thereof.

Membership

Membership in all student organizations is voluntary and shall be open to and limited to all students currently enrolled and in good standing in the sponsoring school. Student organizations may establish academic qualifications for membership where necessarily related to the purposes of the organization. No student shall be denied membership on account of his/her race, color, national origin or religion. Qualifications based on gender may be imposed only where necessary to preserve the health, safety or welfare of students, or where gender is a bona fide and integral qualification for the activities of the organization.

Faculty Supervision

Curriculum-related student organizations shall be sponsored and supervised by one or more of the members of the school faculty, approved by the principal. Faculty sponsors shall participate in the supervision and direction of all activities of the organization and shall attend all meetings.

Noncurriculum-related student organizations shall not have a faculty sponsor. However, a member of the school's professional staff shall attend every meeting or activity of such organizations as a monitor for purposes of general supervision. The organization shall be responsible to assure the presence of a staff monitor for its meetings.

No school employee shall be compelled to attend a meeting of any student organization if the content of such meeting is contrary to the beliefs of that school employee. School employees present at any meeting of a noncurriculum-related student organization which includes religious worship, prayer or practice or is identified as having a religious purpose shall attend in a nonparticipatory capacity only.

Meetings of Student Organizations

All student organizations shall have the right to meet on school premises during noninstructional time as designated by the school principal. No student organization shall be denied equal access to school facilities during designated meeting times on the basis of the religious, political, philosophical or other content of the speech at the meetings of such organization. No public funding or support shall be extended to any noncurriculum-related student organization other than the opportunity to meet on school premises on an equal basis as other student organizations.

The principal of each school shall develop guidelines and rules concerning the procedure for scheduling meetings of student organizations and setting the times and facilities which are available for such meetings. Meeting times shall be limited to noninstructional time before or after regular classroom hours or during established activities periods. These guidelines and rules shall be made available to all students. Student organizations wishing to conduct meetings under this policy must make application to the principal for permission in accordance with School Division procedures.

Compliance with Law and Policy

Student organizations shall not engage in any activity which is contrary to law, School Division policy, or school rules; which disrupts or clearly threatens to disrupt the orderly operation of the school; or which would adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of any students or staff members. Student organizations shall comply with the purchasing policy of the School Division and may not extend the credit of the School Division. Failure to comply with these provisions shall be grounds for revocation of the right to continue to conduct meetings under this policy.

Adopted: July 1, 1993
Amended: July 12, 1999

Legal Ref.: 20 USC Section 4071 et seq - Equal Access Act
Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972, 34 C.F.R. Parts 101 and 106 - Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex
Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, Sections 22.1-16, 22.1-19, and 22.1-253.13:3
Board of Education Regulations, 8VAC20-131-200, Extracurricular and Other School Activities

EXTRACURRICULAR CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Procedures

A. Establishing a Program

1. Early in the school year the principal shall notify students regarding opportunities to participate in the extracurricular program of the school.
2. Students and faculty have the right to suggest and organize any extracurricular club or activity for which there is sufficient interest and support and whose activities are not unlawful nor contrary to the policies of the Albemarle County Public Schools.
3. The total program of extracurricular activities in the school should be comprehensive and well-balanced, providing many and varied opportunities for all students.
4. All activities should be established on the basis of educational merit, need, and interest from within the school.
5. All activities shall be open to all students without discrimination on the basis of race, religion, sex, or handicap, subject only to those qualifications necessary to fulfill the special aims of the organization.

B. Administering the Program

1. The participation of students in the extracurricular program should be based upon sound guidance rather than upon a set of rules and regulations formulated to control membership. Students should be encouraged to participate in activities which satisfy current needs and interests, as well as to explore activities which would broaden their interests and experiences. Some students need encouragement to participate more fully; however, others may need to be counseled against over-participation. In all cases participation is a matter of voluntary choice by each student.
2. The principal, in consultation with the students involved, where such consulting is appropriate, appoints faculty sponsors for all school-sponsored extracurricular activities.
3. The role of the faculty sponsor is a various and changing one, depending upon the nature of the activity. The sponsor may instruct, coach, supervise, administer, or advise at various times. In general, however, the sponsor represents the principal in carrying out the overall responsibility for the activity program.

4. All activities for which the faculty sponsor is paid a stipend must be approved by the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction/Designee in advance.
5. In those activities where faculty supervision is not a clearly defined student need, it may be appropriate for the principal to appoint adult supervisors who are neither faculty members nor employees of the school system. The principal retains overall responsibility for the selection of the sponsor and for monitoring the activities under nonschool adult supervision. In such cases these sponsors would not be eligible for stipend benefit from the School Division.
6. The scheduling of the student activity program is a function of the individual school. Schools with a large number of students transported by bus may find it necessary to schedule most extracurricular activities during the school day. Other schools, serving communities of high population concentration, may decide that afterschool student activities are better suited to their total population.
7. The principal may refuse to permit a student to participate in an extracurricular activity if the student has an unexcused absence on the same day as the activity.
8. Student organizations shall comply with the purchasing policy of the School Division and may not extend the credit of the School Division.
9. The factor of cost should not determine a student's participation in any activity or membership in any organization.

C. Evaluating the Program

1. Each year the principal, in cooperation with the faculty and students, evaluates the extracurricular program to determine whether the activities are sufficiently meeting the needs of the students.
2. All rights and responsibilities of students, such as equal opportunities to participate, shall be carefully reviewed during the annual evaluation of the program.
3. All opportunities for the participation of professional personnel in a stipend activity shall be reviewed during the annual evaluation of the program.

Adopted: July 12, 1999