

POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

A. Political Activity in School Buildings

No political activity is to be conducted within any school facility under the jurisdiction of the Tewksbury School Committee without the express approval of the Tewksbury School Committee. Material including but not restricted to posters, handbills, cards, placards, pictures, circulars, any literature, buttons, signs, and/or stickers intended to influence any person within the school facility may not be exhibited, circulated or distributed.

The Tewksbury School Committee reserves the right to preserve order and take the necessary steps needed to avoid interruptions and disturbances of school related activities in any school facility.

B. Political Activity on School Grounds

No person shall loiter or gather within 150' (feet) of the any entrance to a School Facility under the jurisdiction of the Tewksbury School Committee without the express approval of the Tewksbury School Committee. Material including but not restricted to posters, handbills, cards, placards, pictures, circulars, any literature, buttons, signs, and/or stickers intended to influence any person may not be exhibited, circulated or distributed within 150' (feet) of the any entrance to a School Facility under the jurisdiction of the Tewksbury School Committee without the express prior approval of the Tewksbury School Committee.

The Tewksbury School Committee reserves the right to preserve order and take the necessary steps needed to avoid disturbances on school grounds that may impede school related activities.

C. Conduct of Concerning Elections and Town Meeting

The Tewksbury Town Clerk will prescribe the appropriate conduct of elections and town meeting procedure pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws and the Town of Tewksbury By-Laws.

D. Students Right of Freedom of Expression

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71:82 guarantees the right of students to freedom of expression provided that such right shall not cause any disruption or disorder within the school. Some examples of substantial disrupted behavior are physically stopping other people from entering the school or classroom, holding a demonstration that is so noisy that it interferes with classes in session, or leading a protest walk out of school.

Students have the right to speak freely, in and out of class, subject to the limitations on obscenity, defamation, fighting words, incitement, and disruption.

No expression made by students in the exercise of such right shall be deemed to be an expression of school policy and no school officials shall be held responsible in any civil or criminal action made or published by the students.

Any assembly planned by the students during regularly scheduled school hours that will not substantially disrupt the educational process shall be held only at the time and place approved in advance by the school principal or his/her designee and the Superintendent.

E. Teaching In The Classroom

Institutions of public education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of any specific political philosophy, party or candidate. The right of teachers in institutions of public education to freely study, discuss and investigate controversial political issues is also essential to the advancement of truth and its free exposition. The teacher has a professional obligation and responsibility to present differing political opinions in order to promote the common good which is essential to these purposes.

SOURCE: Tewksbury