



ADMINISTRATION: Administrative Operations

Distribution of Non-School Materials

I. Purpose

- A. The purpose of this rule is to implement Board of Education of Baltimore County (Board) Policy 2361.
- B. This rule also serves to inform the public and Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) staff about the criteria for posting or distributing materials and announcements in schools, whether sent home to or through students, or displayed within the school or during any school-sponsored activity.

II. Definitions

- A. *Distribution* – The delivery to students, staff, and/or parents one or more copies of a publication, the posting of a copy of the publication in one or more locations on school property, or the communication through the school’s public address system or via a school’s telecast.
- B. *Materials* – Published information, including, but not limited to, flyers, pamphlets, leaflets, magazines, or newspapers from school-sponsored established business partnerships, entities of federal, state, and local government, and parent-teacher associations.
- C. *School-Sponsored Activity* – Activities that are sponsored, approved, conducted, planned, and/or supervised by school personnel regardless of whether they take place on or off school property or occur during normal school hours.

III. Approved Materials and Organizations

- A. Distribution and display of materials and announcements shall be limited to the following entities and organizations:
  - 1. Federal, state, and local governmental entities.
  - 2. Parent-teacher Associations (PTA) and Parent-teacher (student) Associations as defined in Superintendent’s Rule 1210.
  - 3. Booster clubs affiliated with a BCPS school.
  - 4. Established school business partnerships.
  - 5. The BCPS Education Foundation.

- B. The distribution of flyers, posters, and handbills on school property in the context of electioneering on primary or election days shall be governed by the Baltimore County and State Boards of Elections and the election law article.

IV. Approval Criteria

- A. The principal or office head will grant or deny approval based on the following criteria:
  - 1. Distribution of materials cannot be denied based on the viewpoint expressed.
  - 2. Materials that can reasonably be predicted to cause substantial disruption of, or material interference with, school activities will not be approved for distribution.
  - 3. Materials that violate this rule, Board Policy 2361, or any Board policy or Superintendent's rule will not be approved for distribution.
  - 4. Materials that do not include the required disclaimer (refer to Section V.C.) will not be approved for distribution.
  - 5. Materials may only be approved by the principal or office head for distribution at the requested school or office.

V. Procedures

- A. In accordance with this rule and Board Policy 2361, the school principal or office head will approve or deny all requests to distribute materials in schools or offices.
- B. A request to distribute materials must be submitted in writing to the school principal or office head at least twenty (20) school days prior to the requested distribution date. The requested materials must be included with the written request.
- C. All materials to be distributed must include the name of the sponsor, organization or business, and include the following disclaimer: "This organization and its materials are not affiliated with, sponsored by, or endorsed by Baltimore County Public Schools, the Superintendent, or this school or office."
- D. Within five (5) school days of the written request the school or office will inform the organization in writing whether the materials have been

approved (see Approval Notice: Form A) or denied (see Denial Notice: Form B) for distribution.

- E. Organizations may only distribute materials after obtaining written approval from the school principal or office head. Materials may only be distributed on the date(s) stated on the approval notification.
- F. Following approval, organizations must deliver the materials to the school or office at least ten (10) school days prior to the intended distribution date.
- G. Schools and offices may reasonably define the size of the space and location for the display of materials.
- H. Materials may be removed from display areas periodically as determined by the principal.
- I. Materials must not be political in nature.
- J. Materials may not advertise, sell, or promote a product.

VI. Review Process

The group or organization seeking to distribute or display materials shall:

- A. Complete the *Request for Approval to Distribute Non-School Materials* form, Rule 2361, Form A.
- B. Include a copy or example of the information intended for distribution and any dates requested, if applicable.
- C. Submit the approval form and sample material(s) to the school principal or office head for approval.

VII. Compliance

- A. The principal or office head shall ensure that materials and announcements disseminated comply with Board Policy 2361 and this rule.
- B. No materials will be distributed that are defamatory, obscene, lewd, encourage criminal behavior, or are not age appropriate.

Related Policies: Board of Education Policy 1210, *Relationship with Parent-Teacher (Student) Association*  
Board of Education Policy 1300, *Use of School Facilities*  
Board of Education Policy 3160, *School-Sponsored Activities*  
Board of Education Policy 8363, *Conflict of Interest – Prohibited Conduct*

Rule

Superintendent of Schools

Approved: 04/21/09

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