



Book	Policy Manual
Section	ALL EMPLOYEES
Title	Freedom of Speech in Nonschool Settings
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Purpose

The Board of School Directors ("Board") of Springfield School District ("District") acknowledges the right of its employees as citizens in a democratic society to speak out on issues of public concern. When those issues are related to the school system and its programs, however, the employee's freedom of expression must be balanced against the interests of this District.

An employee should recognize that the employee's comments will often be viewed as representative of this District. The following examples are provided to help clarify and therefore avoid situations in which an employee's expression could conflict with this District's interest. These examples are not intended as an exclusive list of expressions that may adversely affect this District's interests, nor do these examples purport to circumscribe the freedom of employees to comment on issues of public interest in ways that do not interfere with this District's interests:

1. Statements directed at individuals with whom the employee has regular contact in the performance of duties, which statements are disruptive of cooperative staff relationships.
2. Expressions disruptive of student discipline.
3. Expressions which the employee knows to be false or which are made without regard to truth or accuracy.
4. Threats against co-workers, supervisors, or District officials.

These examples are illustrative only, and if an employee is uncertain about the legal effect of any expression, the employee may wish to seek the advice of his/her counsel. This District reserves the right to impose discipline up to and including dismissal for expression that interferes with its legitimate interests.[1]

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