

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

SECTION: EMPLOYEES

TITLE: Freedom of Speech in Non-school
Settings

ADOPTED: April 27, 1981

REVISED: June 27, 1994

320FREEDOM OF SPEECH IN NON-SCHOOL SETTINGS

Purpose

The Board acknowledges the right of its professional 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 interest of this district.

Guidelines

The following guidelines are adopted by the Board to help clarify and therefore avoid situations in which the employee's expression could conflict with the district's interests. In situations in which the teacher is not engaged in the performance of professional duties s/he should:

1. state clearly that his/her expression represents personal views and not necessarily those of the school district
2. not direct his/her expression toward any individual(s) with whom s/he would normally be in contact in the performance of duties in order to avoid the disruption of cooperative staff relationships
3. refrain from expressions that would interfere with the maintenance of discipline by school officials
4. refrain from making public expressions which s/he knows to be false or made without regard for truth or accuracy
5. not make threats against co-workers, supervisors or district officials