320. FREEDOM OF SPEECH IN NONSCHOOL SETTINGS

1. Purpose
The Board 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.

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

- recognize that as an administrator his/her comments will be commonly viewed as representative of the district;
- state clearly that his/her expression represents personal views and not in any way indicates the view of the school district;
- 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;
- refrain from making public expressions which s/he knows to be false or made without regard for truth or accuracy; and not make threats against co-workers, supervisors or district officials.

Violations of these guidelines may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.