

**A. Purpose**

To provide guidance on the formation, organization, and operation of student clubs.

**B. Background**

Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS) recognizes that student clubs offer students an opportunity to learn and expand their knowledge and develop leadership skills by working in a group. FCPS permits the organization and operation of student clubs, inclusive of meeting on school premises during designated times as designated by the principal, in accordance with the following provisions.

**C. Definitions**

1. “Non-school sponsored clubs” is defined to mean clubs at the secondary level which are student initiated and generally governed by the Equal Access Act which allows clubs based on religious, political or philosophical content.
2. “Non-school person(s)” is defined to mean any person who is not enrolled as a student in or employed by FCPS.
3. “Principal” is defined as the principal or designee for the purposes of this regulation.
4. “School sponsored clubs/elementary schools” is defined to mean clubs at the elementary level are based on interest of students and/or staff and may be presented to the principal for review and approval.
5. “School sponsored clubs/middle and high schools” is defined to mean clubs which are generally related to a body of courses or curriculum objectives offered at the secondary school level. School sponsored clubs may also include noncurricular related clubs based on interests and approval by the principal.

**D. Procedures**

1. **Design Process**
  - a. In-class and extra-curricular programs and activities must be designed to provide opportunities for cross-cultural and cross-racial interactions to foster respect for cultural and racial diversity. (See [Policy 117, Anti-Racism](#)).
  - b. There should be opportunities to share perspectives and promote interactions among students participating in student clubs.
2. **Approval Process**

- a. The principal shall approve both school and non-school sponsored clubs within their school.
- b. Students desiring to form a student club shall submit a request form to the principal stating the recommended name and the purpose of the club and anticipated activities.
- c. The principal shall review the request and provide a written response within thirty (30) days of the submitted request.
- d. If approved, the principal shall advertise the position among faculty/staff and compensation may be allocated as identified in the Activity Compensation Scale pursuant to the [Negotiated Agreement](#) between the Frederick County Teachers Association (FCTA) and the Board of Education of Frederick County (Board).

### 3. **Criteria**

- a. Membership must be voluntary, open to all students, and comply with Board policies and/or FCPS regulations. *Note: Some exceptions may be imposed for eligibility criteria associated with academic clubs or honor societies.*
- b. Participants are expected to abide by school rules and shall not conspire or engage in hazing, bullying or intimidation of any form.
- c. The principal may suspend and/or terminate the operation of the student club to maintain order and discipline and/or protect the well-being of others.

### 4. **After-School Activity/Club Permission Form.** If a club meets beyond the regular school day, the “[After-School Activity/Club Permission Form](#)” is provided for schools to use with students as they deem appropriate.

### 5. **The Equal Access Act (EAA) – Secondary Schools Only**

- a. The EAA ensures that if noncurricular clubs are offered at secondary schools, a student group may not be denied the opportunity to request a club due to religious, political, philosophical or other content of speech associated with the club. Pursuant to the EAA, and subject to certain exceptions, public secondary schools that receive federal aid and have a least one student-led non-curriculum club that meets outside of class time must allow additional such clubs to be formed and must give said clubs equal access to meeting spaces and school publications.
- b. In addition to the provisions outlined in section D(1)-(4), the following provisions apply to noncurricular secondary student clubs in accordance with the EAA:
  - i. The club must be initiated by a student or group of students currently enrolled at the school where the club seeks to meet.
  - ii. The principal will advertise the position among faculty/staff to serve as a monitor for the club, who shall be responsible for monitoring the meetings to assure that the club and its members comply with this regulation and to assure that order and discipline are maintained. Monitors shall act in a non-participatory capacity.
  - iii. The principal shall not compel any employee to be a monitor for a non-sponsored club if the content of the speech at any meeting of the club is contrary to the beliefs of the employee.
  - iv. Non-school persons may not organize, direct, conduct, control or regularly attend activities or meetings of a non-sponsored club. Subject to the preceding sentence, non-school persons may be permitted to attend a non-sponsored club meeting upon

invitation and with the prior approval of the principal. Visitors may not attend on a regular basis.

- v. The school and/or school system may not be identified or associated with endorsing the goals, objectives, activities or opinions of a non-sponsored club.

**6. Distribution of Student Club Information**

- a. Students may distribute or display club related information on school premises, subject to prior administrative review. Such review is to ensure time, place and manner criteria are evenly and consistently applied to all clubs, and that information is not deemed disruptive, contrary to the mission of the school system, violates the law or rights of others.
- b. Club information must include the name of the club, and students distributing the information are responsible for removing any litter associated with the distribution.
- c. Information distributed by non-sponsored clubs must include the following statement:  
*The views in this publication do not necessarily represent the views of FCPS.*

**E. Related Information**

**1. Board Policy**

- a. [Policy 117, Anti-Racism](#)
- b. [Policy 509, Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Activities](#)

**2. Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR)**

- a. COMAR 13A.08.01.09

**3. FCPS Regulations**

- a. [Regulation 500-24, Academic Standards for Participation in Extracurricular Activities in High School](#)

**4. FCPS Resources**

- a. FCPS [After School Activity/Club Permission Form](#)
- b. [FCTA Negotiated Agreement](#)

**5. Federal Law**

- a. Equal Access Act of 1984, 20 U.S.C. §§ 4071-4074

**F. Regulation History** (Maintained by Legal Services)

<i>Responsible Office</i>	Athletics and Extracurricular Activities
Adoption Dates	04/01/91
Review Dates	2019
Revision Dates	11/20/19, 08/08/23