

**280.22 Student exercise of free expression.**

1. Except as limited by [this section](#), students of the public schools have the right to exercise freedom of speech, including the right of expression in official school publications.

2. Students shall not express, publish, or distribute any of the following:

a. Materials which are obscene.

b. Materials which are libelous or slanderous under [chapter 659](#).

c. Materials which encourage students to do any of the following:

(1) Commit unlawful acts.

(2) Violate lawful school regulations.

(3) Cause the material and substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

3. There shall be no prior restraint of material prepared for official school publications except when the material violates [this section](#).

4. Each board of directors of a public school shall adopt rules in the form of a written publications code, which shall include reasonable provisions for the time, place, and manner of conducting such activities within its jurisdiction. The code shall incorporate all of the provisions of [this section](#). The board shall make the code available to the students and their parents.

5. Student editors of official school publications shall assign and edit the news, editorial, and feature content of their publications subject to the limitations of [this section](#). Journalism advisers of students producing official school publications shall supervise the production of the student staff in order to maintain professional standards of English and journalism and to comply with [this section](#).

6. Any expression made by students in the exercise of free speech, including student expression in official school publications, shall not be deemed to be an expression of school policy, and the public school district and school employees or officials shall not be liable in any civil or criminal action for any student expression made or published by students, unless the school employees or officials have interfered with or altered the content of the student speech or expression, and then only to the extent of the interference or alteration of the speech or expression.

7. A public school employee or official, acting within the scope of the person's professional ethics, if any, shall not be dismissed, suspended, disciplined, reassigned, transferred, subject to termination or nonrenewal of a teaching contract issued under [section 279.13](#) or an extracurricular contract issued under [section 279.19A](#), or otherwise retaliated against for acting to protect a student for engaging in conduct authorized under [this section](#), or refusing to infringe upon student conduct that is protected by [this section](#), the first amendment to the Constitution of the United States, or [Article I, section 7, of the Constitution of the State of Iowa](#).

8. "*Official school publications*" means material produced by students in the journalism, newspaper, yearbook, or writing classes and distributed to the student body either free or for a fee.

9. [This section](#) does not prohibit a board of directors of a public school from adopting otherwise valid rules relating to oral communications by students upon the premises of each school.

[89 Acts, ch 155, §1; 2021 Acts, ch 130, §6, 7](#)

Referred to in [§279.58](#)