



School Policies

IGDA - STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS MIDDLE SCHOOL POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of MSCS to encourage the organization and operation of student organizations in the middle school grades and to permit such organizations to meet on school premises during non-instructional time. Student organizations may be student initiated and led.

SCHOOL-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES School-sponsored activities in which students participate may be established at the discretion of MSCS. These activities are considered part of the school program and include, but are not limited to, Student Council and other middle school activities and organizations to which the associated staff member may be assigned.

SCHOOL-SPONSORED ACADEMIC ORGANIZATIONS

1. A student academic organization may be considered for school-sponsored status if one or more members of the school faculty, with the consent of the School Director, submit a written application to, and approval by, the School Director. The School Director may deem that Board discussion is necessary prior to approval. School-sponsored academic organizations must meet at least one of the following requirements:

- a. The organization serves as a direct extension of one or more classes actually taught at the organization's middle school (e.g., Future Business Leaders of America);
- b. The organization enhances the educational experience of participating students and supplements their course work within the educational program(s) of the middle school (e.g., a French Club); or
- c. The organization directly relates to the curriculum at its middle school. In order to satisfy this requirement, the School Director or designee must find that
 - i. the subject matter of the organization is actually taught in a regularly offered course at the school;
 - ii. the subject matter of the organization concerns the body of courses at the school as a whole;
 - iii. participation in the organization is required for a particular course at the school; or
 - iv. participation in the organization results in academic credit for a course at the school. An organization that relates to abstract educational goals in a tangential way (e.g., chess club) or relates only to topics that are discussed within the

broader curriculum (e.g., a student branch of a political party) is not sufficient to satisfy the criteria for school sponsorship.

- d. This policy shall not be construed to require MSCS to sponsor any particular academic organization even if the organization meets the foregoing criteria. Instead, MSCS retains the discretion to allocate resources among curricular offerings and organizations in a manner that best furthers the school's educational mission.

2. If an academic organization is approved for school-sponsored status, one or more faculty members shall be authorized to supervise the organization. Such faculty members shall teach in the core academic area relating to the subject matter of the organization, shall supervise or serve as advisor for the planning and direction of the organization, and shall attend all such meetings and activities.

3. Membership in school-sponsored academic organizations shall be voluntary and shall be open to but limited to all students currently enrolled at the sponsoring middle school. Such organizations may establish academic qualifications for membership where necessarily related to the purposes of the organization. No student shall be denied membership on account of their race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or disability (subject to the terms and limitations of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973).

4. The School Director or designee shall determine whether and the level at which each school-sponsored academic organization receives resources beyond meeting space and whether additional facilities, equipment and materials will be made available for such organization's use. The School Director retains the discretion to allocate resources among curricular offerings and school-sponsored organizations in a manner that best furthers the school's educational mission.

STUDENT-INITIATED AND LED ORGANIZATIONS

1. Middle school students shall be permitted to establish student-initiated and led organizations at their school upon the prior approval of the School Director. Such approval shall be conditioned on one or more students submitting a written application on an approved form and compliance with all governing laws, school discipline rules, and the terms of this policy.

2. The school shall not deny equal access to school facilities for meetings of student-initiated and led organizations, or otherwise discriminate against such organizations or their student members, on the basis of the religious, political, philosophical or other content of the speech of such organizations.

3. Membership in student-initiated and led organizations shall be voluntary and student initiated, and shall be open to but limited to students currently enrolled at the middle school.

4. Student-initiated and led organizations may conduct meetings on school premises as designated by the Director, but only during non-instructional time. "Non-instructional time" means time designated by the School Director before actual classroom instruction begins or after actual classroom instruction ends.

5. The meetings of student-initiated and led organizations shall not materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of educational activities within the school and shall not be directed, conducted, controlled or regularly attended by non-school persons. A member of the school staff shall serve as a monitor for purposes of general supervision at such meetings. School employees may be present at religious meetings only in a non-participatory capacity.

6. Student-initiated and led organizations shall not be deemed to be sponsored or endorsed by the school. The fact that such organizations are permitted to conduct meetings on school premises and to access school facilities under this policy shall not constitute an expression of MSCS support for the purposes of such organizations or the views expressed at any of their meetings.

7. Student-initiated and led organizations shall not engage in any activity that is contrary to law or school rules; that disrupts or clearly threatens to disrupt the orderly operation of the school; or that would adversely affect the health, safety or welfare of any student or school employee. Failure to comply with these provisions shall be grounds for revocation of the right to continue meeting under this policy.

8. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to require the school to expend funds beyond the incidental cost of providing space for student-initiated meetings. To the extent that school resources are available, they shall be available on a basis that does not discriminate against any organization on the basis of the content of the speech of the meeting.

9. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to authorize any school official to influence the form or content of any prayer or religious activity, to require any person to participate in prayer or religious activity, to compel any school employee to attend any meeting if the meeting is contrary to the beliefs of the employee, or to sanction meetings that are otherwise unlawful.

10. Student-initiated and led organizations must re-apply for continuing status each school year by written application submitted to the School Director or their designee.

Adopted by Board: October 10, 2017

Revised/Reviewed by Board: January 28, 2020

Reviewed by Board: October 26, 2021

(continue adding Revised/Reviewed dates)