

Prairie View High School

Policy for Student Assemblies

Adapted from articles by Mary Lynn Schaffer and David Cordts, *Leadership for Student Activities*

Rights and Responsibilities

The purpose of student assemblies is to present information, speakers, multimedia programs, and special events that would be difficult to conduct in a classroom situation. Assemblies also provide students with the opportunity to conduct themselves as a responsible, courteous audience.

Most assemblies will fit into one of the following functional categories:

- 1 To enhance school spirit and unity. Pep rallies fit in here, along with awards presentations for academics, sports or special achievements,
- 2 To inform. Many schools like to review policies and procedures with everyone at once. Vocational opportunity programs, health care sessions, and explorations of various political processes are all potential topics. There may even be curricular departments that want to share a learning experience with the entire school.
- 3 To add to the cultural awareness and to broaden the intellectual viewpoints of the student body. Choral, dramatic, dance, and band performances, seasonal celebrations, or explorations of contemporary issues fit into this goal.

Materials Not Permitted in School Assemblies

- 1 Material that is libelous or violates the right to privacy.
- 2 Material that is lewd, indecent, or obscene, according to current community standards.
- 3 Material that portrays or advocates breaking a law.
- 4 Material that portrays the use of tobacco, liquor, or any product not permitted teenagers.
- 5 Material that criticizes or demeans any group because of race, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, socioeconomic condition, handicapping condition or stereotype.
- 6 Material that would cause a substantial disruption of the school.

Appropriateness

The advisor of the sponsoring activity shall have the primary responsibility for seeing that appropriate educational standards are maintained.

The school principal or a designated representative may also review the script or text prior to its performance, if he/she so requests. Such copy must be returned to the student leaders within 24 hours after it has been submitted for review. No text or script may be censored except for reasons specifically listed above.

Resolution of Differences

In the event of disagreement as to whether a speech or script should be performed, a Student Assembly Advisory Board shall meet within 24 hours to mediate. The Advisory

Board shall consist of the principal, the activity sponsor, the student council president, a representative from the student council assembly committee, and other members as mutually agreed upon. If the Student Advisory Board cannot resolve the dispute, then an appeal may be made directly to the superintendent, who may seek advice from the Board of Education's legal staff in making his or her decision.

School Assembly Rules

Assemblies are co-curricular events that are sponsored by the Prairie View High School Student Council (StuCo) or by a school group for the purpose of enriching student life. Therefore, it is a privilege to participate in assemblies. Coordinators spend many hours in planning and preparation. Students, therefore, must show them respect and appreciation for their efforts.

- 1 When an assembly has been scheduled, students must report promptly and directly to their designated seating area at the assembly site - no loitering should occur.
- 2 Students may not leave campus during assembly time without appropriate passes.
- 3 During the assembly, all students should be seated in their designated area - no standing in entry area of the gym, and no walking around.
- 4 Cell phones and other electronic devices (Ipod's, MP3 players, handheld gaming devices) must be turned off and remain unused upon entering the gym.
- 5 Students should be respectful and attentive to the speakers - no heckling, booing, shouting, or throwing of objects.
- 6 Students must remain seated until they are dismissed by an administrator.

"Of all the good reasons for holding large group meetings in the course of an academic year the most notable is that no other vehicle provides the opportunity to teach correct 'large group behavior.' If there are no assemblies or large group gatherings except for athletic events and concerts, the only behavior norms our next generation will know will be those behaviors."

Mike Smith, *Leadership for Student Activities*, September 1999