

## 682 GALLERY AND PERFORMANCE POLICIES BY ART AREA

### I. Music Department

#### A. Controversial Issues

##### 1. General Philosophy:

a) Building trust is the responsibility of both teachers and students and happens through clear and honest communication. The music department handles controversial matters on an individual basis with regard to content, intended purpose and audience. Performances in class and only for other music students are viewed differently than pieces intended for a larger audience. Pieces for public performance, while not censored according to absolute criteria, must approach potentially controversial issues with sensitivity. Issues that must be handled with EMPATHY are: gender, race, age, disability, ethnicity, sex and sexuality, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, violence, religion, reference to individuals, profane language and politics. Pieces that deal with these topics are potentially controversial and may be placed at the end of the concert following an intermission. An explanation will be printed in the program alerting the audience to the nature of the works. In some instances, portions of pieces will not be allowed in performance, as determined by the music faculty and school administration.

##### 2. General rules that apply to everyone:

- a) All pieces need to be auditioned exactly as they are to be performed.
- b) Additions or changes of a potentially controversial nature during performances may result in termination of the performance. Further consequences may include exclusion from future music performances, written apologies and community service.
- c) References to specific current or alumni students, staff or administration of the Perpich Center could potentially be viewed as harassment and therefore are not allowed.
- d) Clothing appropriate for public situations, including shoes, must be worn at all performances.

##### 3. Communication:

a) The music department asks students to explain their use of potentially controversial content or intended purpose and to evaluate the appropriateness of their work for specific audiences. Program notes that address artistic and aesthetic choices made in the evolution of the artwork are a necessary part of dealing with controversial issues. In a public school setting, handling

controversial issues is seen by the public as being ultimately the responsibility of the teachers and administrators of the arts high school. However, we feel that it is also the students' responsibility to address the consequences of performing such material, and, when possible, to handle directly any comments from audience members.

## II. Dance

### A. Touch

1. The body is the essential instrument in the teaching of dance. Touch has been a traditional method of teaching in dance in order to facilitate learning through the kinesthetic and tactile channels. The teacher in this class will use touch on occasion to help facilitate alignment, quality of movement or other curricular outcomes. If you have problems with this method of teaching please contact the teacher immediately so he or she may find some alternatives for you. Please note that these alternatives may not produce the same results.
2. Often in dance we expect our students to have body contact with another student. This touch may range from a simple handhold to full body, physically risky partnering. Please be aware that in class the teacher will use safety guidelines and methods to incrementally achieve results. Be careful in any rehearsals outside of a class time that you use safe guidelines for partnering. If you feel that the partnering or touching is uncomfortable on any level, please talk to the instructor. You have a right to a physically and emotionally safe place to dance.

### B. Controversial Issues

1. We encourage free expression and experimentation in the classroom. It is a laboratory to explore new thoughts and ideas, to create a new voice for you as a dancer. However, when we produce works in a public venue we have different concerns and expectations. We are a publicly funded institution with many different audiences. Therefore there are certain controversial areas that we need to be aware of and treat with respect and empathy in our performances. These include but are not exclusive to sexuality, nudity, profanity, language, violence, drugs, religion and politics. This includes material pertaining to individuals with disabilities. Any work produced by the dance department in a public venue will be subject to the department's discretion on these subjects.
2. As the dance faculty, our responsibilities as producers are infinite and varied. Our responsibilities to the students include creating a safe atmosphere for all performers, maintaining a high standard of excellence both in choreography and performance, encouraging creativity within the classroom and on stage. Our responsibilities to our audience include creating a safe atmosphere for all members, being empathetic to the diverse constitution of our audience and being aware of our role as a publicly funded institution.

3. There are certain non-negotiable areas for the dance department. There will be no nudity in any dance performance that is produced by the arts high school. There are many reasons for this rule and the staff would be happy to discuss this with you at any time. Also profane language and the overt depiction of sexual acts is prohibited.
4. It is the policy of the dance department that the instructors make final decisions as to the appropriateness of material for public presentation, based on the instructor's perception of the artistic works' defensibility with regard to pedagogical, developmental and ethical concerns. As faculty we encourage open discussion about these issues. We may be willing to assist you in finding other venues for material not appropriate for the school.

### III. Media Arts Program

#### A. Controversial Issues

1. Media arts students must be aware that many issues may be of a sensitive nature to audience members or fellow class members. Issues that may be reviewed include: gender, race, ethnicity, sex, drugs, violence, religion, language and politics. Nudity may not be represented in the media arts classroom or labs regardless whether it is exhibited or not.
2. The policy of the media arts department with regard to student-generated material that deals with these or other potentially controversial topics is to promote understanding, a sense of safety and a sense of community. We want to avoid offending people. All topics are open for discussion and possibly for presentation. Occasionally, an alternative venue may be sought for work deemed artistically and educationally valid, but inappropriate for the more general audience we usually serve. Our student body has varying levels of comfort in viewing gallery works that investigate the above topics and varying levels of comfort in voicing their concerns about those topics.
3. It is important for students to evaluate the appropriateness of their own work for specific arts high school audiences, but teachers and administrators will make final decisions.
4. The Chair of the of the media arts department, in conjunction with the Perpich Arts High School director, and controversial committee make final decisions as to the appropriateness of materials for presentation to the public, based on their perception of the artistic works in regard to pedagogical, developmental and ethical concerns.
5. The overall intention is that students and adults, from within a sense of shared community and safety, will handle the preceding issues with empathy and dialogue.

### IV. Literary Arts

#### A. Controversial Issues

1. Although we are very interested in and strongly encourage risk-taking and exploration in our in-class writing, any writing that is published or made public in school-sponsored readings is subject to the approval of your teacher. We recognize that each piece of writing has a separate existence and what is potentially objectionable in one piece may be appropriate in another, so each piece will be considered on an individual basis. The issues that can be sensitive and need to be considered carefully by both the writer and teacher include issues such as: gender, race, ethnicity, disabilities, sex, sexuality, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, violence, religion, language and politics. Please know that such consideration is not made with the intent to inhibit student writing. Rather, we are making every effort we can to be aware of and respect the sensitivities of the community and audience that we, as a public school, serve.

## V. Theater Program

### A. Sensitive/Controversial Issues

1. Issues that generally must be handled with attention to the sensibilities of our audience and fellow class members, to developmental issues related to students and to instructor responsibility for class content--issues that must be handled with EMPATHY (the watchword for drama), are:
  - a) Gender,
  - b) Race, ethnicity,
  - c) Persons with disabilities,
  - d) Sex and sexuality,
  - e) Drugs, alcohol, and tobacco,
  - f) Violence,
  - g) Religion,
  - h) Language,
  - i) Nudity, and
  - j) Politics.
- B. The policy of the theater department with regard to student or faculty-generated material that deals with these or other potentially controversial topics is to promote understanding, a sense of safety and a sense of community. We avoid offending or gratuitously titillating people--this is a taxpayer supported, educational institution. All topics are open for discussion and usually for presentation; manner of presentation has generally shown itself to be the sticking point in the past. Occasionally, an alternative venue may be sought for work deemed artistically and educationally valid, but inappropriate for the more general audience we usually serve. Students need to keep in mind when creating pieces for performance and in classroom improvisations, that not only are they creating work for a particular audience, but they are also asking other students to perform in that work, and people have varying levels of comfort in performing scenes treating the above topics and varying levels of comfort in voicing their concerns about those topics.

- C. It is also important to note that we occasionally employ professional artists to teach in the program. These people are not as attuned to the rhythms of public school life as are your full-time instructors; professional artists are used to working in professional venues with adults. We feel that interactions with professionals form a valuable part of your education about the world you are shortly to enter; however, if your sensibilities are in some way challenged by work with a guest instructor, you may feel more comfortable voicing your concerns to one of the full-time teachers in the program. Please feel free at any time to do so.
- D. It is also the policy of the theater department that the full-time instructors make final decisions as to the appropriateness of material for presentation to the public, based on the instructor's perception of the artistic works' defensibility with regard to pedagogical, developmental and ethical concerns. We feel it is important for students to evaluate the appropriateness of their work for specific audiences, and we are willing and eager to listen to students and to consider the work they submit, but because, in a school setting, the teacher has the final responsibility for defending work out before the public, final decisions about work intended for public presentation rest with the teacher

## VI. Visual Arts

### A. Gallery Policy: Regarding Presentation & Sensitive Issues

1. A liberal approach to subject matter in the studios and classrooms of the arts high school visual art department is the norm and the forum for process defined as: wide debate, exploration, experimentation and dialogue within legal boundaries.
2. Consideration must be given to the wide audience that views art products displayed in the galleries on the arts high school campus. The following criteria are considered: audience, intent, concept, and presentation.
3. All formally presented work must have written support. Clarification is especially important when the intent of the artist is to challenge social perception.
4. Institutions reflect the process that our lives are a series of decisions about what information we can accept and what does not fit with our life and world-view.
5. The artist is constantly called upon to authenticate creative direction. In the world of art the challenge is constantly to refine and redefine work and direction.
6. An artist cannot ask an audience to accept work without taking responsibility for the ideas and concepts put forth in the work. An artist finds venues to show work by presenting it, historically supporting it and authenticating it.
7. It is important for students to evaluate the appropriateness of their own work for specific arts high school audiences, but teachers and administrators will make final decisions.

8. The department policy is to promote understanding regarding student or adult generated material that deals with: Gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, drugs, disabilities, violence, religion, nudity, language, denigration and politics that can constitute potentially sensitive issues.
9. Photographic nudity and explicit depiction of sexual acts in verbal description or written and visual imagery will not be displayed.
10. Content in web-based graphics and artwork used in arts high school exhibit presentations must conform to current arts high school guidelines represented in the student handbook.
11. The emphasis within the department has been on integrity of intent, serious exploration, encouragement of creative thought and problem solving.
12. Integrity of intent in work, whether displayed in the gallery or not, will elicit department support. Other venues for presentation may be explored when appropriate and available.
13. The overall intention is that students and adults, from within a sense of shared community and safety, will handle the preceding issues with empathy and dialogue.

## VII. Academic Departments

### A. Reevaluation Policy

1. Art making of all kinds, including creative writing, is the hallmark of the academic curriculum at the arts high school. It is used to help students learn and to assess that learning. Since we value both individual voice and community health, risk taking and responsibility, trouble making and speaking truth to power, artwork can often be challenging to the viewer, especially if the viewer has not been a part of the class where the artwork was generated. It is important for students to use their critical thinking skills and to consider message, audience and purpose when making artistic choices and creating art for their classes. They must recognize, also, that when an art piece is to be shown in a public place, the audience must be especially carefully considered. Ultimately, your teacher will determine what is appropriate in either setting, the laboratory of the classroom or the viewing space of the gallery/performance area.
2. There are a number of considerations we expect students to take into account when creating art for their classes. Each artist is encouraged to speak his or her truth while also being sensitive and responsible for artistic choices around cultural appropriation, representations of marginalized individuals and groups, the objectification of individuals, gratuitous sex, drugs and violence and respect for differing points of view. In particular, depictions of drug or alcohol use and gratuitous or excessive nudity are not permitted.

RELATED POLICIES

- 680 REEVALUATION AND RECONSIDERATION POLICY (107.11)
- 682 GALLERY AND PERFORMANCE POLICES BY ART AREA – (107.13)