

# Policy on Political Activities on Campus

Milton Academy recognizes, as one of its educational goals, the advancement of student knowledge and appreciation of various social, cultural and political occurrences in society, represented by free and open discussion of ideas and opinions. As part of its dedication to active citizenship, Milton encourages faculty, staff and students to exercise their civic rights to participate as individuals in the political process. At the same time, no member of the school community should feel any institutional pressure to support a particular candidate or position.

As a tax-exempt entity, Milton Academy is prohibited by federal law from participating in or attempting to influence campaigns for any elective public office or any political initiative (such as a public referendum). The Academy may not endorse a candidate or ballot proposal, provide or solicit financial or other support for candidates or political organizations, or establish political action committees.

This policy is adopted by the Academy in an attempt to balance these competing considerations, based on advice of counsel and prevailing practices in the academic community.

**Individual Involvement in Campaigns by Faculty and Staff.** Faculty and staff who engage in political campaigns should do so in their individual capacity. If a faculty or staff member is listed as a supporter of a political campaign or initiative, it should be without mention of institutional affiliation. Academy staff and faculty should not engage in political activity at Milton Academy functions or through official school publications. No employee should feel pressured by colleagues to contribute to, or perform tasks in support of, a political campaign.

If a member of the faculty or staff is running for political office, no campaign activities can be conducted on campus, to avoid the appearance of an Academy endorsement.

## Use of Facilities and Resources

Use of Academy facilities and resources in support of a political candidate, party, referendum or political action committee (PAC) that could give the appearance that the Academy is supporting one candidate or position over another is not permitted.

### *Prohibited uses*

- Using official Academy stationery, wordmark, seal, email, telephones, fax machines, computers, printers and copiers.
- Providing mailing lists, office space or other facilities, office supplies, telephones, cell phones, photocopying, computers or other institutional resources.
- Posting information on an Academy-administered website (i.e., a website with a milton.edu extension) that is favorable to one candidate or issue, or posting a hyperlink

on an Academy-administered website to a candidate or campaign site (unless reviewed and approved by the Upper School Principal and Campus Services Director)

- Placing posters, bumper stickers or yard signs on any Academy property that supports a political campaign, referendum, etc.
- Using Academy facilities, including but not limited to meeting spaces and parking spaces for the purpose of political campaign activities.

This list is only a sample of the type of uses that are prohibited. Requests for use of Academy resources for activities involving political candidates, speakers, parties, referendums or PACs must be submitted to the Campus Services Director for approval at least two weeks prior to the proposed event.

### *Approved Uses*

- If an appearance by a declared candidate for public office or a group supporting a public referendum is broadly publicized to nonmembers of the Milton Academy community or is co-sponsored or paid for by outside organizations, the sponsors must rent the space from the school on the same terms that are available to any group wishing to use such space as established by the Campus Services office. If space is rented to a candidate in an election, any competing candidate would be able to rent space on the same terms.
- A presentation promoting genuine curricular activities aimed at educating students with respect to the political process.
- Candidates may be invited to appear on campus in a non-candidate capacity, e.g., to participate in a class, provided that no campaigning or fundraising is done at the event and a non-partisan atmosphere is maintained.
- If an appearance by a political activist supporting a public referendum is broadly publicized to nonmembers of the Milton Academy community or is sponsored or paid for by outside organizations, the sponsors must rent the space from the school on the same terms that are available to any group wishing to use such space as established by the Campus Services office. Milton Academy does not co-sponsor these types of events. Events such as these that wish to include the Milton Academy community will do so without requiring admission fees or the purchase of merchandise.
- Candidate forums or debates may be held on campus as part of the school's educational mission, as long as all qualified candidates (as determined by the Upper School principal) are invited to participate.
- A teacher may invite political speakers to speak with their class providing the topic relates to the course material and is not for the purpose of advancing one political candidate over another. For example a teacher who invites a Republican legislator to speak to a class on the history of the Republican party is not obligated to invite the legislator's Democratic opponent.
- Administration and faculty should take special care in relation to any above-described activities, to avoid the appearance of institutional endorsement.

**Fundraising.** Funds or contributions for political candidates or campaigns may not under any circumstances be solicited in the name of Milton Academy or on its campus, and school resources may not be used in soliciting such funds. If Milton Academy students, faculty or staff make political contributions, they must do so as individuals.

**Student Publications.** Student publications may run editorials expressing the editors' views on candidates for public office, provided that the publication's editorial policy is free of editorial control by the school's administrators or faculty advisors. A statement on the editorial page must indicate that the views expressed are those of the student editors and not those of the school.

**Voter Registration.** Voter registration and "get out the vote" drives by school-sponsored organization must be done on a non-partisan basis (i.e., they may not focus on a particular party).

**Gifts and Lobbying.** Federal and Massachusetts laws prohibit gifts and honoraria for public officials, including meals and tickets to sporting events.

Any lobbying on behalf on the school must be approved in writing by the head of school or chief financial officer.

Faculty and sponsors of clubs with questions relating to this policy should contact the Upper School principal.

Requests from outside sponsors should be directed to the business services director.

This policy only provides basic information regarding political activities. It is strongly advised that you seek guidance before you sponsor a political event.