



## **FHM CSN Facebook Group Guidelines**

1. The “Free Horizon Montessori CSN” closed Facebook group is administered by the Community Support Network (CSN), which acts as the parent organization at Free Horizon Montessori School (FHM). The CSN, officially Free Horizon Montessori Foundation (FHMF), is an independent 501(c)(3) non---profit organization that coordinates fundraising, community building, and volunteerism at Free Horizon Montessori School. The CSN Facebook group is not administered by FHM staff, although many staff members freely participate on the page.
2. The intent of the CSN Facebook page is for FHM parents and guardians to connect outside of school. The Facebook page serves as a virtual method for our FHM community to connect about play dates, community resources, community events, fundraising events, summer camps, and more.
3. Some FHM staff members participate on the CSN Facebook group, but there is no expectation from the CSN Board, FHM Board of Directors, or FHM administration that FHM staff members monitor the page or answer questions or concerns that arise on the page.
4. The official communication channels for the school (Fox Flash, Horizon Line, and teacher newsletters) take precedence over CSN Facebook page information. The Free Horizon Montessori website ([www.freehorizonmontessori.org](http://www.freehorizonmontessori.org)), your child(ren)’s classroom teacher(s), FHM’s front desk staff, and FHM administrative staff are the best methods for seeking school---related information. Consult FHM’s communications policies in the Student and Parent Handbook for communications guidance:  
<http://goo.gl/zwppII>
5. CSN community information, activities, and fundraising information are available at [www.fhmcsn.org](http://www.fhmcsn.org).
6. The CSN Board can only allow photos that you post of your own child(ren) on the Facebook page. Please do not post photos that include other people’s children, as the CSN has no permission to do so.
7. The CSN Board requests that when you participate in the Facebook group, you do so in a respectful manner that honors the different opinions or world views that others may hold.
8. The CSN Board reserves the right to remove posts on the page that are outside the intent, purpose, or scope of the group. However, in the spirit of transparency and openness, we prefer not to do this, and prefer that the community participate in respectful conversations.
9. The CSN Board reserves the right to remove participants from the Facebook group who engage in disrespectful dialogue or who posts inappropriate information or spam.
10. Political---related postings: CSN’s Bylaws and the Internal Revenue Code governing 501(c)(3) organizations specifically prohibit the CSN from having a “substantial part of the activities” devoted to influencing legislation or directly or indirectly participating in any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office. The CSN respects many political positions but does not feel that this subject matter is appropriate for the CSN Facebook group.



*Finalized and Approved by the CSN Board 09/18/2015*

Excerpts taken from: <http://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/limits-political-campaigning-501c3-nonprofits-29982.html>

IRS Guidelines for 501c3 Organizations: [http://www.irs.gov/irb/2007-25\\_IRB/ar09.html](http://www.irs.gov/irb/2007-25_IRB/ar09.html)

## What Does "Participating in a Political Campaign" Mean?

Organizations with 501(c)(3) status cannot participate in political campaigns.

**What is a political campaign?** In general, the IRS rule refers to campaigns between people who are running for offices in public elections. These can include: candidates running for president of the U.S.; candidates running for governor; candidates running for mayor; and also candidates for lower elected offices such as school board officials, city supervisors, and county trustees.

**What is "participating?"** Your organization cannot participate in a campaign, directly or indirectly, on behalf of or in opposition to a candidate. If your organization takes a stand in any campaign, supporting or opposing one or another candidate, this violates the prohibition.

## The IRS Rule

The IRS uses what is called a "facts and circumstances" test to help it determine whether an organization has violated the prohibition on political campaigning. This means that the IRS will evaluate any potential misconduct within the context of the organization's other activities and the current political climate. So, an activity might be considered political campaigning two weeks before an election, but not two years before an election.

Some activities that the IRS has found to violate the prohibition on political campaigning include:

- inviting a political candidate to make a campaign speech at an event hosted by the organization
- using the organization's funds to publish materials that support (or oppose) a candidate
- donating money from the organization to a political candidate
- any statements by the organization's executive director, in his or her official capacity, that support a candidate
- criticizing or supporting a candidate on the organization's website
- inviting one candidate to speak at a well-publicized and well-attended event, and inviting the other candidate to speak at a lesser function
- inviting all candidates to speak at an event, but arranging the speaking event or choosing the questions in such a way that it is obvious that the organization favors one candidate over the others
- conducting a "get out the vote" telephone drive in a partisan manner by selecting caller responses for further follow-up based on candidate preference, and using the organization's website to link to only one candidate's profile.