

Policy 1112: Media Relations

The ~~Board of Education~~ **Governing Board** respects the public's **desire for and** right to information and recognizes that the **news** media significantly influence the community's understanding of school programs, **student achievement, and school safety**. In order to develop and maintain positive media relations, the Board and the ~~Superintendent~~ **Superintendent shall** reasonably accommodate media requests for information and ~~to~~ provide accurate, reliable, and timely information.

In conjunction with the Superintendent or designee, the Board shall at least annually ~~periodically~~ establish priorities and key messages for proactively communicating with the news media regarding current district matters ~~issues~~, activities, or needs.

News Media representatives are welcome at all **public** Board meetings and shall receive meeting agendas upon request in accordance with Board policy.

News Media representatives, like all other visitors, shall register immediately upon entering any school building or grounds when school is in session **in accordance with Board Policy 1250**.

Staff may ~~provide the media with student directory information, including, but not limited to, the name of a student, school of attendance, grade level, honors, and activities as identified in AR 5125.1 Release of Directory Information, unless the student's parent/guardian has submitted a written request that such information not be disclosed.~~ The district shall not release **to the news media other student records or personally identifiable** information that is private or confidential as required by law, Board policy, or administrative regulation. No other ~~access to student records or personally identifiable student information may be provided without written parent/guardian permission.~~

Interviewing and Photographing Students

The district shall not impose restraints on students' right to speak freely with media representatives ~~at those times which do not disrupt a student's educational program. However, interviews of students may not create substantial disorder or impinge on the rights of others. Therefore, in order to minimize possible disruption.~~ **However, interviewing and photographing students shall not create substantial disruption to the orderly operation of the school or impinge on the rights or safety of others students.** Therefore, the district shall encourage media representatives who wish to interview **or photograph** students at school ~~are strongly encouraged to make prior arrangements with the principal. At their discretion, parents/guardians may instruct their children not to communicate with media representatives.~~ ¶

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~~In order to protect the privacy and safety of students, a media representative who wishes to photograph students on school grounds should first make arrangements with the principal or designee. Students whose parent/guardian have submitted a written request that their student be excluded from media coverage shall not be photographed.~~

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~~When interviewing or photographing a special education student, he/she shall not be identified as a special education student without prior, written parent/guardian permission.~~

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~~Media Communications Plan~~

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~~In order to help develop strong relations with the media, the Superintendent or designee shall develop a proactive media communications plan. This plan may include, but not be limited to, information related to district programs and needs, student awards, school accomplishments and events of special interest.~~

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~~The plan shall specify~~

Media Contacts/Spokespersons

The Superintendent or designee shall identify the district's and/or site's primary media contact to whom all media inquiries shall be routed. Spokespersons designated to speak to the media on behalf of the district include the Board president, Superintendent or designee, public information officer, or district communications director. Other Board members and/or staff may be asked by the Superintendent or designee to speak to the media on a case-by-case basis, depending on their expertise on an issue. Only a designated district spokesperson should express viewpoints on behalf of the district. If a district employee speaks to the media as a private citizen, he/she must make clear that he/she is not speaking as a representative of the district.

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The Superintendent or designee shall provide training on effective media relations to all designated spokespersons.

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Crisis Communications Plan

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During a disturbance or crisis situation, the first priority of school staff is to assure the safety of students and staff. However, the Board recognizes the need or appropriateness given a particular situation.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide training on effective media relations to all designated spokespersons.

Crisis Communications Plan

The Superintendent or designee shall develop strategies for working with the media to provide timely and accurate information to students, parents/guardians, and the community during a crisis. The Board also recognizes that the media have an important role to play in relaying this information to the public. In order to help ensure that the media and district work together effectively, the Superintendent or designee shall develop a crisis communications plan to identify communication strategies to be taken in the event of a crisis.¶

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or natural disaster. The crisis communications plan may include, but shall not be limited to, identification of a media center location, development of both internal and external notification systems, and strategies for press conference logistics, strategies for press conference logistics, and development and integration of both internal and external notification systems, including mass notifications systems (such as robocalls, emails, text alerts), website postings, public address systems, and social media, web site postings, and text alerts.

The Superintendent or designee shall include local law enforcement and, media representatives, and district technology personnel in the crisis planning process.