

MEDIA RELATIONS

The Governing Board respects the public's desire for and right to information and recognizes that the 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 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 periodically establish priorities and key messages for proactively communicating with the media regarding current district issues, activities, or needs.

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

Media representatives, like all other visitors, shall register immediately upon entering any school building or grounds when school is in session.

Staff may provide the media with student directory information, 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 other student records or personally identifiable student information that is private or confidential as required by law, Board policy, or administrative regulation.

Other directory information including, but not limited to, photographs of individual students with their names may be published except when the student's parent/guardian has notified the district in writing to not allow the release of the student's photograph without prior written consent in accordance with BP/AR 5125.1 - Release of Directory information. Photographer of groups of students, such as at a school event, may be published provided that students' names are not included.

Interviewing and Photographing Students

The district shall not impose restraints on students' right to speak freely with media representatives. 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 students. Therefore, the district shall encourage media representatives who wish to interview or photograph students at school to make prior arrangements with the principal.

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.

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 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, 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 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 or natural disaster. The crisis communications plan may include, but not be limited to, identification of a media center, strategies for press conference logistics, and development and integration of both internal and external notification systems, including public address systems, social media, web site postings, and text alerts.

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

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

32210-32212 Willful disturbance of public school or meeting

35144 Special meetings

35145 Public meetings

35160 Authority of governing boards

35172 Promotional activities

48907 Freedom of speech and press

48950 Prohibition against disciplinary action for first amendment speech

49061 Definition of directory information

49073 Directory information

EVIDENCE CODE

1070 Refusal to disclose news source

PENAL CODE

627-627.10 Access to school premises

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1232g Family educational and privacy rights

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

99.3 Definition of directory information

COURT DECISIONS

Lopez v. Tulare Joint Union High School District, (1995) 34 Cal.App.4th 1302 ATTORNEY

GENERAL OPINIONS

79 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 509 (1996)

Management Resources:

WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>