

Community Relations

News Media Relationships

Because schools are public institutions serving the educational needs of the community, it is important that information be disseminated concerning programs, activities, and significant school events. To ensure that this publicity be given wide coverage and coordinated with a common effort and purpose, the following procedures shall be followed with news media:

1. The Board of Education Chairperson shall be the official spokesman for the Board. The Superintendent of Schools may report on actions of the Board.
2. News releases of a systemwide nature, or which pertain to established school system policy, are the responsibility of the Superintendent and will be issued through his/her office.
3. News releases which are of concern to only one school, department, or organization of one school, are the responsibility of principals or appropriate administrators after consultation with the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee.

Board meetings to which the public has access may be photographed, broadcast, or recorded for broadcast by any newspaper, radio broadcasting company, or television broadcasting company, subject to the following guidelines:

1. News media personnel who intend to photograph, broadcast, or record for broadcast the proceedings of any public meeting of the Board of Education shall provide appropriate identification to the Superintendent of Schools, if requested by the Superintendent, prior to said meeting of the Board.
2. Any news media personnel employed by a newspaper, radio or television broadcasting company, or personnel of a recognized student news medium assigned to cover the proceedings of a Board of Education public meeting shall be permitted to photograph, broadcast, or record for broadcast, such proceedings as inconspicuously as possible and in such a manner which doesn't disturb proceedings.
3. If, in the judgment of the Chairperson of the Board of Education, the presence at a Board meeting of any photographer, broadcaster, or news journalist causes such disruption that orderly conduct of the public business at such meeting becomes unfeasible, access by these individuals may be limited to the extent necessary to eliminate the disruption.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

1-21a Recording, broadcasting, or photographing meetings.

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HAMDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Hamden, Connecticut

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Recognizing that an open relationship should exist between school administrators who are charged with the responsibility of conducting public business, and the news media who has the responsibility of reporting the actions of government to citizens, the Superintendent of Schools is authorized to provide to the members of the press information which is a matter of record and public information.

Members of the press, television and radio stations will be directed by the Superintendent of Schools to the administrator directly responsible for the information they seek.

Information released to the media shall be that which is public information as covered by statute. It is recognized that there is information of a confidential nature which shall not be released, such as information concerning personnel, grievances, negotiations, court actions and special placement of students. Information provided to the media should be factual and should not involve speculation or assumptions.

Administrators may release any information which has been previously generated. This does not include, however, generating new information at the request of a member of the press. All communications by school officials to the press shall be "on the record." Press releases are to indicate the administrator's name and title.

The administrator has the right to restrict interaction between media personnel and students on school property if he/she deems it interferes or disrupts the educational process.

The administrator has the responsibility to inform the Superintendent of all interactions with the media in a timely manner.