

216 MEDIA RELATIONS/PUBLIC INFORMATION

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a positive relationship with the news media to enable and assist them to provide accurate and timely information to the public about our schools.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Because the schools are public institutions endeavoring to serve the educational needs of the community, it is important that information be disseminated concerning their activities and problems. Efforts will be made to provide objective school news and information reporting, free from slanting or editorial comment which may destroy public confidence in and support for schools. Good working relationships should be developed and maintained with persons representing the various news media to provide a cooperative atmosphere for news reporting.

III. PROCEDURE

- A. The Board chairperson will be the official spokesperson for the School Board, except if this duty is delegated to the superintendent.
- B. News releases, which are of a district-wide nature or pertain to established district policy are the responsibility of the superintendent or a designated member of the administrative staff.
- C. News releases, which are of concern to only one school, or to an organization of one school, are the responsibility of the principal of that particular school. In crisis situations in order to have clear communications to protect students and inform parents, all statements made to the press by other staff members of the particular school should first be cleared with the principal.
- D. Copies of agendas and supporting materials for School Board meetings which are open to the public will be supplied to all news media that have filed a request for notice, at the same time they are made available to School Board members or at least 24 hours before the meeting.
- E. Public information that is not personal or confidential should be made available to all news media upon their request.
- F. While it is impossible to know how news and information releases will be treated by the media, every possible effort should be made to obtain coverage of school activities which will create and maintain a dignified and professionally responsible image for the school system.

Adopted: 7/15/96

Reviewed: 3/00, 6/03, 3/13, 11/19