

## **Community Relations**

### **MEDIA RELATIONS**

The Governing Board respects the public's right to information and recognizes that the media significantly influences the public's understanding of school issues and can greatly assist the district in informing the community about school programs and issues. Media representatives are welcome at all Board meetings and shall receive meeting announcements and agendas upon request.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop a plan for proactive communications with the media. The Superintendent or designee and principal or designee of each school may provide the media with information related to district programs and needs, student awards, school accomplishments and events of special interest. All media inquiries shall be routed to the Superintendent or designee. Spokespersons designated to speak to the media on behalf of the district include the Board president, Superintendent and public information officer. Other Board members and 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 and their communications skills. The district shall not release information which is private or confidential as identified by law and Board policy or administrative regulation.

During a disturbance or crisis situation, the first priority of school staff is to address the situation. Media inquiries shall be routed to the Superintendent or designee, who shall make an official statement at his/her discretion.

To ensure the safety of students and staff and avoid potential disruptions, media representatives must first register at the school office immediately upon entering any school building or grounds when school is in session. The time of entry and exit are required to be noted on the sign-in sheet. In addition, each school visitor must receive a badge/button to wear to identify him/her as a visitor until he/she leaves the campus.

Media representatives who wish to interview or photograph students during instructional time must make prior arrangements with the principal, to avoid disruption of the educational program.

The district shall not impose restraints on students' right to speak freely with media representatives at times which do not disrupt the educational program. At their discretion, parents/guardians may instruct their children not to communicate with media representatives.

#### Legal References:

##### EDUCATION CODE

- 32210 Willful disturbance of public school or meeting
- 32211 Threatened disruption or interference with classes
- 32212 Classroom interruptions
- 35144 Special meetings
- 35145 Public meetings

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35145.5 Agenda; public participation

35146 Closed sessions

35160 Authority of governing boards

35172 Promotional activities

PENAL CODE

627-627.10 Access to school premises

ATTORNEY GENERAL OPINIONS

79 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 58 (1996)

Policy Adopted: March 15, 2001

**WESTMINSTER SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Westminster, California