

Community Relations

BP 1112 (a)

MEDIA RELATIONS

The Board of Education respects the public's ~~right~~ **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 ~~desire to~~ **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.

*(cf. 0400 - Comprehensive Plans)
(cf. 0450 - Comprehensive Safety Plan)
(cf. 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan)
(cf. 0510 - School Accountability Report Card)
(cf. 1100 - Communication with the Public)
(cf. 1160 - Political Processes)*

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

*(cf. 9321 - Closed Session)
(cf. 9322 - Agenda/Meeting Materials)*

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

*(cf. 1250 - Visitors/Outsiders)
(cf. 3515.2 - Disruptions)*

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.

*(cf. 1340 - Access to District Records)
(cf. 4119.23/4219.23/4319.23 - Unauthorized Release of Confidential/Privileged Information)
(cf. 5125 - Student Records)
(cf. 5125.1 - Release of Directory Information)
(cf. 9010 - Public Statements)
(cf. 9324 - Minutes and Recordings)*

~~The Superintendent or designee and principal or designee of each school may provide the media with information related to District programs and needs, including information about student awards, school accomplishments and events of special interest. All media inquiries shall be routed to the Superintendent or designee.~~

MEDIA RELATIONS (continued)

~~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 communication skills.~~

~~The District shall not release information which is private or confidential as identified by law and Board Policy or Administrative Regulation. No other access to student records or personally identifiable student information may be provided without written parent(s)/guardian(s) consent.~~

~~(cf. 1340—Access to District Records)~~

~~(cf. 4119.23/4219.23/4319.23—Unauthorized Release of Confidential/Privileged Information) (cf. 5125—Student Records)~~

~~(cf. 5125.1—Release of Directory Information) (cf. 9010—Public Statements)~~

~~(cf. 9321.1—Closed Session Actions and Reports)~~

Crisis Communications Plan

~~During a disturbance or crisis situation, the first priority of school staff is to ensure the safety of students and staff. However, the Board recognizes the need to provide timely and accurate information to parents/guardians and the community during a crisis. The Board also recognizes that the media have an important role in relaying this information to the public. Media inquiries shall be routed to the Superintendent or designee, who shall make an official statement at his/her discretion and assign someone from the District Office to meet the media representative and accompany them onto the campus, thus relieving the school staff of this responsibility when their first priority must be the students.~~

~~(cf. 0450—Comprehensive Safety Plan)~~

~~(cf. 3516—Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan)~~

~~Media representatives shall register immediately upon entering any school building or grounds when school is in session.~~

~~(cf. 1250—Visitors/Outsiders)~~

Interviewing and Photographing Students

~~Media representatives who wish to interview or photograph students at school are strongly encouraged to make prior arrangements with the principal so as to facilitate smooth operations, prevent delay and preclude the possibility of disturbances on campus. This also allows the principal to arrange for interview times that will not interfere with students' class attendance.~~

~~However, if the student declines an interview or photograph, the principal and other school personnel will support that decision.~~

The District shall not impose restraints on a student's 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.**

MEDIA RELATIONS (continued)

Therefore, the district shall encourage media representatives who wish to interview or photograph students at school to make prior arrangements with the principal. ~~at times which do not disrupt the educational process. If parents/guardians do not wish their children to communicate with media representatives, it is their responsibility to instruct their children not to do so.~~

(cf. 5145.2 – Freedom of Speech/Expression: Publications Code)

~~The crisis communications plan may include but not be limited to identification of a media center location, development of both internal and external notification systems, and strategies for press conference logistics.~~

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

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.

(cf. 9240 - Board Training)

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.

(cf. 0450 - Comprehensive Safety Plan)

(cf. 1113 - District and School Web Sites)

(cf. 1114 - District-Sponsored Social Media)

(cf. 3516 - Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness Plan)

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

Legal References:**EDUCATION CODE**

32210-32212 Willful disturbance of public school or meeting

35144 Special meetings

MEDIA RELATIONS (continued)

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

95 *Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen* 509 (1996)

Management Resources:

CSBA PUBLICATIONS

~~911: A Manual for Schools and the Media During a Campus Crisis, 2001~~

WEB SITES

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

Policy amended: November 5, 2020

Policy amended: June 26, 2008

Policy adopted: May 3, 2001

ALVORD UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Riverside, California