

Community Relations

MEDIA RELATIONS

The Governing Board recognizes that the media significantly influences the public's understanding of school issues and can greatly assist the district in communicating with the community about school needs.

The Board respects the public's right to information and recognizes that the media has a legitimate interest in the schools and a responsibility to provide the community with accurate, reliable and timely information.

Media representatives are welcome at all Board meetings and shall receive meeting announcements and agendas upon request.

Like all other visitors, media representatives must register in the school office when coming on campus during schools hours.

(cf. 1250 – Visits to the School)

(cf. 3515.2 – Intruders on Campus)

The Superintendent or designee shall coordinate the release of information concerning the district and the actions of the Board. Members of the board, the Superintendent, administrators, and others as may be appropriate will normally be available for interview by news media representatives.

The principal or designee of each school shall provide the media with information relating to his/her school, including information about student awards, school accomplishments and events of special interest.

Staff may provide the media with student directory information, including, but not limited to, the name of a student, school of attendance, grade level, honors, and activities, unless the student's parent/guardian has submitted a written request that such information not be disclosed. The district shall not release information that is private or confidential as required by law, Board policy or administrative regulation. No other access to student records or personally identifiable student information may be provided without written parent/guardian permission.

(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)

District employees are encouraged to cooperate with members of the press, radio and television. Employees should always make it clear that they are expressing their own personal viewpoints when so doing. They should not express viewpoints behalf of the district until they have ascertained the district's official position on the matter involved.

Board Policy 1112(b)

During crisis situations, all media inquiries shall be routed to the Superintendent or designee, who shall:

1. Prepare an official statement responding to the particular situation.
2. Update the official statement as events unfold.
3. Keep staff and students well informed.

The district shall not release information, which is private or confidential as identified by law and Board Policy or Administrative Regulation.

(cf. 1340 – Access to District Records)

(cf. 5125 – Student Records; Confidentiality)

(cf. 9010 – Public Statements)

Legal Reference

EDUCATION CODE

32210 Willful disturbance of public school or meeting

32211 Threatened disruptions or interference with classes

35144 Special meetings

35145 Public meetings

35145.5 Agenda; public participation

35146 Closed sessions

35172 Promotional Activities

PENAL CODE

627.2 Necessity of registration by outsider

Interviewing and Photographing Students

The district shall not impose restraints on students' right to speak freely with media representatives at those times which do not disrupt students' educational program. However, interviews of students may not create substantial disorder or impinge on the rights of others. Therefore, in order to minimize possible disruption, media representatives who wish to interview students at school are strongly encouraged to make prior arrangements with the principal. At their discretion, parents/guardians may instruct their children not to communicate with media representatives.

(cf. 5145.2 - Freedom of Speech/Expression)

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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WEST SONOMA COUNTY UHSD

Sebastopol, California