



NEWMAN LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY

The Board of Directors respects the public right to information and recognizes that the media significantly influence the community's understanding of school programs. In order to develop and maintain positive media relations, the Board and the Executive Director/Principal desire to reasonably accommodate media requests for information and to provide accurate, reliable, and timely information.

Media representatives are welcome at all Board meetings and shall receive meeting agendas upon request. Media representatives, like all other visitors, shall register immediately upon entering any school building.

The school 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.

Interviewing and Photographing Students

The school 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 must make prior arrangements with the Executive Director/Principal.

At their discretion, parents/guardians may instruct their children not to communicate with media representatives.

In order to protect the privacy and safety of students, a media representative who wishes to photograph students, must first make arrangements with the Executive Director/Principal. 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.

Media Communications Plan

In order to help develop strong relations with the media, the Executive Director/Principal shall develop a proactive media communications plan. This plan may include, but not be limited to, information related to school programs and needs, student awards, school accomplishments, and events of special interest.

The plan shall specify the schools' primary media contact to whom all media inquiries shall be routed. Spokespersons designated to speak to the media on behalf of the school include the Board president and Executive Director/Principal. Other Board members and staff may be asked by the Executive Director/Principal to speak to the media on a case-by-case basis, depending on their expertise on an issue.

The Executive Director/Principal shall provide training on effective media relations to all designated spokespersons.

Crisis Communications Plan

During a disturbance or crisis situation, the first priority of school staff is to assure the safety of students and staff. However, the Board of Directors recognizes the need to provide timely and accurate information to parents/guardians and the community during a crisis. The Board of Directors also recognizes that the media have an important role to play in relaying this information to the public. In order to help ensure that the media and school work together effectively, the Executive Director/Principal shall develop a crisis communications plan to identify communication strategies to be taken in the event of a crisis.

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 Executive Director/Principal shall include local law enforcement and media representatives in the crisis planning process.