

Series 1000 – School/Community Relations

Policy Title: News Media Relations

Policy Code No. 1001.2

The board recognizes the value of and supports open, fair and honest communication with the news media. The board will maintain a cooperative relationship with the news media. As part of this cooperative relationship, the board and the media will develop a means for sharing information while respecting each party's limitations.

Members of the news media are encouraged and welcome to attend open board meetings. The board president is the spokesperson for the board, and the superintendent is the spokesperson for the school district. It is the responsibility of the board president and superintendent to respond to inquiries from the news media about the school district.

Members of the news media seeking information about the school district will direct their inquiries to the superintendent. The superintendent will accurately and objectively provide the facts and board positions in response to inquiries from the news media about the school district.

The superintendent, on behalf of the board and the school district, may hold a news conference or respond to a request for an interview with the news media.

The superintendent will respond accurately, openly, honestly, and objectively to inquiries from the news media about the school district.

News conferences and interviews planned or pre-arranged for school district activities will include the board and the superintendent. News conferences for issues requiring an immediate response may be held by the superintendent. It is within the discretion of the superintendent to determine whether a news conference or interview is held to provide an immediate response to an issue.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent to keep the board apprised of news conferences and interviews.

Releases About Internal School Matters

It is the policy of the Board of Directors to have news releases prepared about internal matters of the school(s), and to disseminate such releases to news media in the area.

The superintendent will determine when a news release about internal school district and board matters will be issued. In making this determination, the superintendent will strive to keep the media and the school district community accurately and objectively informed. Further, the superintendent will strive to create and maintain a positive image for the school district. It is the responsibility of the superintendent to approve news releases originating within the school district prior to their release.

Information that is not personal or confidential shall be made available to news media upon their request. In order to establish and maintain a cooperative atmosphere in our public relations program, close ties should be kept with persons representing the various news media.

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Releases About Board Matters

It shall be the policy of the Board of Directors to have news releases prepared about Board matters and to disseminate them to news media in the area.

Copies of agendas for regular Board meetings shall be supplied to news media that have filed a request for notice, at the same time they are made available to Board members, or at least 24 hours before the meeting begins.

The superintendent of schools or designee shall be available to media representatives to answer any questions that may arise concerning Board matters.

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Review Date 01/10/2011

Revision Date

Legal Ref.: Iowa Code §§ 21.4, 22.2, 279.8 (2009)
Widmer v. Reitzler, 182 N.W.2d 177 (Iowa 1970).
Dobrovolny v. Reinhardt, 173 N.W.2d 837 (Iowa 1970).
1980 Op. Att'y Gen. 73.
1952 Op. Att'y Gen. 133

Cross Ref.: Board Policy
204.6 Notice of Meetings
805.1 Board of Directors Records
1001.4 Board Proceedings