

**MEDIA RELATIONS**

The Governing Board respects the public's right to information and recognizes the importance of the media's role in communicating accurate and timely information about the district's school activities and programs to the community. In order to foster a cooperative relationship with the news media, the Board and the Superintendent desire to reasonably accommodate media requests for information in a reliable, timely manner while ensuring the continuance of orderly educational activities.

Media representatives are welcome to attend all meetings of the Governing Board. Meeting announcements and agendas shall be furnished to news media and will be posted on the district website.

*(cf. 9322 – Agenda/Meeting Materials)*

Media representatives, like all other visitors, shall register in the school office immediately upon entering any school building or grounds.

*(cf. 1250 – Visitors)*

*(cf. 2512.2 – Intruders on Campus)*

District staff may provide the media with student directory information, including, but not limited to, the name of a student, major field of study, photograph, date and place of birth, enrollment status, dates of attendance, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, most recent previous school attended, grade level, and degrees and awards received, unless the student's parent/guardian has submitted a written request that such information not be disclosed. District staff 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)*

**Interviews and Photographs**

The district shall not impose restraints on students' right to speak freely with media representatives at those times that do not disrupt students' educational program. However, interviews and photographs of students may not create substantial disorder or impinge on the rights of others.

**MEDIA RELATIONS** (continued)

Therefore, in order to minimize possible disruption and protect the privacy and safety of students, media representatives who wish to interview or photograph students on school grounds are strongly encouraged to make prior arrangements with the Public Information Officer who will choose the location of all interviews and photograph sessions being permitted on school grounds.

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

At their discretion, parents/guardians may instruct their children not to communicate with media representatives. If a student declines to be interviewed or photographed, district staff shall be made aware of this decision and staff will support the student's choice.

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.

The district reserves the right to refuse to register or revoke the registration of a media representative at any time for any legitimate reason within the principal or designee's discretion or if the principal or designee has a reasonable belief that the media's presence on campus could:

1. Be disruptive to or distract the school, its students, teachers or other employees
2. Interfere with the peaceful continuance of educational activities
3. Impinge on the rights of students, teachers or employees.

**Media Communications Plan**

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

*(cf. 0510 – School Accountability Report Card)*

*(cf. 1100 – Communication with the Public)*

*(cf. 1160 – Political Processes)*

The plan shall specify the district'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 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.

**MEDIA RELATIONS** (continued)

The Superintendent or designee shall provide training on effective media relations to all designated spokespersons.

**Crisis Communication 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 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 to play in relaying this information to the public. In order to help ensure that the media and district work together effectively, the Superintendent or designee shall develop a crisis communication plan to identify communication strategies to be taken in the event of a crisis.

*(cf. 3516 – Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness Plan)*

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.

*Legal Reference:*EDUCATION CODE

34172 Promotional activities

35144 Special meetings

35145 Public meetings

35145.5 Public participation in school district board meetings

35146 Closed sessions

PENAL CODE

627-627.10 Access to school premises

COURT DECISIONS*Lopez v. Tulare Joint Union High School District (1995) 34 Cal. App. 4<sup>th</sup> 1302*ATTORNEY GENERAL OPINIONS*95 Ops. Cal. Atty. Gen. 509 (1996)*

## Policy

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**MURRIETA VALLEY USD**

Murrieta, California