



Provo City School District

Policy Series 7000: Community

Policy 7070 P1

Media Access to Students

Communications Office

The District Communications Office of the Provo City School District retains responsibility for, and direct authority over, the public information program of the entire district as authorized and instructed by the Superintendent. However, recognizing the complexities involved in disseminating information in a timely manner, specific responsibilities will be assigned, as the need arises, to those individuals best equipped to handle them. Cooperation with members of the media is expected of all staff members.

Procedures

The principal is the media contact for the individual school. All media inquiries to the District Communications Office pertaining to a specific school will be coordinated through the appropriate principal. Conversely, the principal is expected to coordinate requests for media coverage through the District Communications Office.

Principals should be adequately prepared to discuss their school's policies and programs when called upon to do so. Principals are not, however, expected to address matters pertaining to District office administration. If such inquiries are made during an interview, a principal should not hesitate to send the reporter back to the District Communications Office for further referral.

Requests from Reporters

When a request is initiated by a media representative to enter the school as a result of an independent, school-related story on which the reporter is working, the media representative will first contact the District Communication Office and the District Communications Office will notify the principal. The District Communication Office, working with the media representative and the principal, will attempt to work out a schedule agreeable to all concerned for a school visit and interview.

If a principal has not received prior notification from the District Communication Office that a reporter will be contacting them, the principal should refer the inquiry back to the District Communication Office immediately.

It is important to remember that the school district is a public institution, and it is inherent in the responsibilities of school administrators to cooperate with those who want to know what is going on in the schools. A school representative's reaction to a reporter is as important to the outcome of the story as is the material gathered for the news story.

Three guidelines will be followed when working with the media:

1. All visitors, including media representatives, are required to check in at the front office. This is necessary to ensure student safety. When any media representative checks in, he or she

will be escorted by the principal or the District Communication and Public Relations Coordinator at all times while on school property.

2. The press does have a right to request to visit our schools, but there are restrictions. They do not have a right to interrupt class, and no staff member, student, or parent is ever required to talk to the media. The media and the general public do not require permission, however, to be on the public sidewalks at schools.
3. The media may take overall/general shots of students without permission slips, so long as the students are not identified or singled out.
4. If a media representative would like to speak with a student on camera, a media permission slip must be filled out and signed by the student's parent or guardian prior to the interview.
5. Media inquiries about specific students, including inquiries in police-related matters or activities that have taken place off school grounds and not during the regular school day, should be referred to the District Communication Office.

Approved by Board of Education: January 14, 2014