

**FRESNO COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
FRESNO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION****Community Relations
MEDIA RELATIONS**

The County Superintendent and County Board respect the public's right to information and recognize that the media significantly influence the community's understanding of school programs. In order to develop and maintain positive media relations, the County Superintendent and County Board desire to reasonably accommodate media requests for information and to provide accurate, reliable, and timely information.

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

Media representatives, like all other visitors, shall register immediately upon entering any school building or grounds operated by the County Superintendent when school is in session and/or during business hours.

The County Superintendent and County Board are committed to protecting the privacy of students and their families. The County Superintendent and County Board shall not release information that is private or confidential as required by law or policies of the County Superintendent and County Board. Media requests relating to County Superintendent employees or to student information, including, but not limited to, the name of a student, school of attendance, grade level, honors, and activities, shall be referred to the County Superintendent or designee.

Interviewing and Photographing Students

The County Superintendent and County Board 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 County Superintendent or designee. At their discretion, parents/guardians may instruct their children not to communicate with media representatives.

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 County Superintendent 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.

Media Communications Plan

In order to help develop strong relations with the media, the County Superintendent or designee may develop a proactive media communications plan. This plan may include,

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but not be limited to, information related to programs operated by the County Superintendent and needs, student awards, accomplishments, and events of special interest.

The Communications & Public Relations Officer shall be the primary media contact to whom all media inquiries shall be routed. Spokespersons designated to speak to the media on behalf of the County Superintendent include the County Superintendent, the Communications & Public Relations Officer, and other designees as may be designated by the County Superintendent. Other County Superintendent staff may be asked by the County Superintendent or designee to speak to the media on a case-by-case basis, depending on their expertise on an issue. If authorized by the County Board, the Board President may speak on behalf of the County Board, unless the County Board has authorized another Board member to speak on the County Board's behalf regarding a specific issue.

Crisis Communications Plan

During a disturbance or crisis situation, the first priority of the County Superintendent and County Board is to ensure the safety of students and County Superintendent staff. However, the County Superintendent and County Board recognize the need to provide timely and accurate information to parents/guardians and the community during a crisis. The County Superintendent and County Board also recognize 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 the County Superintendent and County Board work together effectively, the County Superintendent or designee may develop a crisis communications plan to identify communication strategies to be taken in the event of a crisis. The County Board shall refer media inquiries during a crisis to the County Superintendent or designee.

Adopted: 11/18/2010

Amended: 10/18/2018

Legal Reference**Education Code**

1011 Time and place of meetings

1012 Special meeting

1040-1042 Duties and responsibilities of county boards

35160 Authority of governing boards

Evidence Code

1070 Refusal to disclose news source

Penal Code

627-627.10 Access to school premises

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Court Decisions

Lopez v. Tulare Joint Union High School District (1995) 34 Cal.App.4th 1302

Attorney General Opinions

79 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 58 (1996)

Management Resources

CSBA Publication

911: A Manual for Schools and the Media during a Campus Crisis, 2001

Web Sites

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>