

**Activities and Athletics****Student Publications****Purposes Of Student Publications**

The publications fulfill a vital role within the school community in providing a means by which students, faculty, administrators, and community can communicate with other students, faculty, administrators and community members. The publications serve as a forum for the constructive expression of ideas, opinions, plans for innovation, events, etc., in a factually informative, interpretive, and entertaining manner, thereby providing primarily the students but also the faculty and administrators with an instrument of constructive leadership for influencing the school and community.

Student publications offer students an opportunity for practical and legitimate journalistic experience in terms of writing, editing, organizing, administering, financing and budgeting, etc. Assuming a position of leadership on the student publication signifies the student's acceptance of responsibility. The acceptance of this responsibility also provides the student with the opportunity to develop the potential which he/she possesses.

**Standards**

In fulfilling their roles as participants in the community media, students must demonstrate their maturity and dependability, and must show that they are capable of analyzing problems and making sound judgments. The following statement is adapted and modified from the Canons of Journalism by the American Society of Newspaper Editors.

1. Responsibility - The welfare and the best interests of school and community members must be the guideline for the publication of all material.
2. Freedom -With every freedom of speech and of the press there is a corresponding responsibility. No freedom, not even that of speech and of the press, is absolute. Student publications must be free to print what has been responsibly considered, researched and written. The staffs must demonstrate objectivity, but at the same time must be free to express viewpoints after presenting all sides of an issue. This policy should not rule out articles marked as news analysis advocating a particular point of view.
3. Accuracy - Thorough research of all materials -- news, editorials, features and sports -- will be conducted and the facts presented in an objective, balanced and truthful manner. The facts will be verified; the reporter will present them in the proper perspective; and the publications will print only that which is based on fact after careful research and investigation.

4. Fairness - Student publications will not make unjust or undue attacks on any individual group or person, and will provide an open forum for any viewpoints which are opposed to those of the publication.
5. Decency - Material published -- language, pictures and artwork -- will not be offensive, obscene, pornographic or injurious to any person or group.

### **Objectives and Responsibilities of the Publication Staff**

In student publications, staff members must assume the following responsibilities:

1. To make a concerted effort as a staff to learn and to apply correct journalistic techniques of writing, editing, advertising and to seek the aid of professional journalists and responsible adults when and where necessary.
2. To assume obligations of a journalist in being responsible, honest, sensitive, fair, impartial, decent and dedicated to the necessity of a free and responsible press.
3. To be open-minded and representative of all feeling and ideas within the community, not only their own.
4. To plan each issue of the paper in order to provide a balance of informational, interpretive and entertaining material (all factually based); to give consideration to the importance, significance and value of each article and to the possible effect each article will have on the general welfare of the readers.
5. To research and verify all story ideas and related material and to refuse to publish any material until it has been verified as truthful and accurate.
6. To set priorities for material covered in the newspaper based on the importance, significance and interest of the material to the majority of the readers.
7. To develop a keen sense of observation and awareness about school, student and community activities and to report these accurately.
8. To establish a schedule of deadlines and to meet those deadlines as professionals.
9. To correct promptly all errors of fact for which the newspaper is responsible.
10. To develop faculty and administrative confidences and to keep those confidences.

11. To be supportive of the total school community and its activities and personnel.  
(Supportive - defined as praise, comment, or constructive criticism based on the offering of alternative suggestions and plans. It also involves the inclusion of names in the news in order to promote a sense of personal involvement on the part of the readers.)
12. To encourage intelligent thought and action from the readers.

### **Coverage of Material**

News stories in student publications will be objective - free from opinion and bias. Stories will be based on facts obtained through thorough research and investigation. An emphasis will be placed on previewing upcoming events and activities to create interest. Newsworthy occurrences will receive attention in coverage articles. The stories will be presented on the pages of the paper in such a way that undue attention will not be given to articles of lesser value, interest or significance.

The primary function of features or special-interest articles is informational and entertainment. A special emphasis will be placed on in-depth coverage of material deemed to be of significant interest to the readers.

Sports articles will provide accurate description and records of athletic activities. Individual athletes will not be revered as stars or heroes, but proper credit for outstanding records, honors or performances will be given when due. The sports section of the paper will carry advance information to create interest in upcoming events as well as coverage articles for events. Material on the page will be varied to appeal to all readers, not just athletes and their avid fans. Proper coverage will be given to all teams and athletic activities, male and female, varsity and sub-varsity.

### **Responsibility for Handling Materials to be Published**

#### **Unchallenged Material**

1. Writer directed to submit article and/or picture to editors to whom reporter is immediately responsible.
2. Material reviewed by editors responsible to determine if it meets standards for publications.
3. Material reviewed by Faculty Advisor.
4. Material reviewed by Principal and Superintendent.

5. Material published.

**Challenged Material**

1. If material submitted to the editor(s) is rejected the writer may appeal to the faculty advisor for review. A conference will be held with writer, editor(s) and advisor to discuss article submitted. If advisor warrants further action, the advisor will take article to Principal for further discussion. Principal may review article with Superintendent and make a decision based on policy to have writer rewrite article or decide to print. The writer and editor(s) may be called in to talk to Principal at any time for more conferences.

2. Building Principal Level

The building principal/designee may delay or stop distribution of any materials proposed for printing or that have been printed which may be reasonably forecast to cause substantial and material disruption or obstruction of any lawful mission, process or function of the school.

The building principal/designee must forward a copy of the material to the Superintendent and a statement of reasons for delay or stoppage. The Superintendent shall schedule a hearing with all parties immediately to determine if the delay or stoppage was warranted.

**Editorial Page Policy**

Editorial ideas are presented to the publications class for consideration. Editorials in the school publication will only be printed after all sides of an issue are considered and researched. The staff should consult with their advisor before printing issues which have a controversial connotation. The principal may also be consulted at the staff's discretion.

1. Letters to the Editor: Letters to the editor shall be accepted from any reader so long as those letters are signed and are in keeping with the policy of the student publication. The staff reserves the right to edit any letter after consulting with the author. The staff may refuse any letters which it feels are malicious, libelous, or irresponsible. Any letter that criticizes an individual or group shall be presented to that individual or member of that group before the letter is published so that the individual or group being attacked may make a response or reply if they so desire. The two letters shall then be published simultaneously. If the writer of any letter to the editor presents a good cause, his name may be withheld. This shall be so designated in the publication by "Name withheld upon request." The name of the writer may be available to legitimate authority for legitimate reasons if the student publication faculty advisor, the editor, and the writer so agree, legal requirements excepted.

2. **Reviews and Critiques:** Periodically, movies, books, plays and musical performances are reviewed or critiqued. This expression of interest in cultural activity is deemed as a legitimate function of the student publication in bringing these things to the readers' attention. All reviews and critiques - favorable and unfavorable - shall be constructive and in keeping with good taste. They shall not be malicious or irresponsibly done.

### **Pictures and Artwork**

Pictures and artwork in the publications shall add to the meaning of a story, shall serve to identify individuals, and shall generally add reader interest to the publication. These pictures shall cover many and varied individuals and activities. The photographs shall not violate the right of privacy and shall present a truthful situation. Cartoons and artwork shall have a definite function within the editorial context of the publication.

### **Copyright Law**

All published materials and reproductions of artwork, etc., must not violate copyright laws.

### **Advertising and Business Management**

#### **Financial Arrangements**

The financial operation of student publications must be approved by the building principal in accordance with current district funding practices. At no time are financial arrangements to be entered into without principal or school district approval.

#### **Advertising for Yearbooks**

##### **1. Allocation of Space**

The amount of space allocated to advertising in school publications are not a set amount. A portion of the yearbook is set aside for advertising.

##### **2. Advertising Rates**

Advertising rates will be set by each school publication with approval of the faculty advisor.

##### **3. Acceptable Advertising**

Advertising shall be accepted from bona fide business firms in operation for a year or more or from new firms of a stable and permanent character.

Any advertising offering employment opportunities promising high earnings, travel or other extravagant claims should be thoroughly investigated.

**4. Types Prohibited**

- a. No advertising of liquor, tobacco or narcotics shall be accepted.
- b. Advertising soliciting sales of patent medicines, health treatments, salacious literature, joke devices, firearms, lotteries or any other items prohibited by postal laws shall not be accepted.
- c. When students and/or staff pictures are used in advertising, they shall be requested to sign permission slips.
- d. Advertising for motion pictures rated "X" may not be accepted. Pictures rated "R", "G" and "PG" may be advertised.

**5. Collections**

Advertising contracts between the student publication and the advertiser are binding to both parties as per terms of the contract. Most advertisements sold are paid for at time of purchase. Other advertisers will be billed. If payment has not been made within a reasonable time period, the advisor will call and inquire if the advertisement is still wanted. If the student publication staff fails to fulfill its contract terms, advertiser will receive the same ad at no cost or they may double their ad for a lower price.

**Violations of Standards**

If any school publication or publication other than those sponsored by schools is in violation of standards of school publications, the principal/designee shall request the distributor to desist distribution and call for a hearing immediately with parties involved.

Hearing procedures shall follow those in the school district guidelines.