

VENTURA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

BOARD POLICY NO. 1110

ADOPTED: 2/24/97

CLASSIFICATION: Community Relations

REVISED:

SUBJECT: Media Relations

The Board and the Superintendent recognize that the media influences the public perception of educational issues and can greatly assist the Office in communicating to the community about the educational needs and achievements of students in schools and programs operated by the Superintendent.

Members of the media are welcome at all open meetings of the Board and shall receive meeting announcements and agendas upon request.

All public statements in the name of the Board shall reflect the position of the majority of the Board and shall be issued by the President or, if appropriate, by the Superintendent at the direction of the President. No individual Board member shall make public statements in the name of the Board or statements that contravene the policies and actions of the Board or that jeopardize the ability of the Board to act effectively.

The Superintendent will serve as the chief spokesperson for the Office. The President of the Board shall act as chief spokesperson for the Board. Employees of the Superintendent should supply prompt and accurate information on routine requests for information from reporters.

All media inquiries concerning local school or community college districts shall be referred to the appropriate school or community college district superintendent's office.

The Superintendent shall be informed of all contacts between the members of the media and staff of the Superintendent. Employees of the Superintendent are encouraged to cooperate with representatives from the press, radio, and television. Employees shall not express viewpoints on behalf of the Board or the Superintendent until they have ascertained the Office official position on the matters involved and received specific authorization to speak on behalf of the Board or the Superintendent.

PHOTOGRAPHING STUDENTS

Members of the media who wish to interview or photograph students in schools and programs operated by the Superintendent shall make prior arrangements with the principal so as to alleviate any possibility of disturbances and to comply with issues of confidentiality of personally identifiable information or photography. The availability of certain students to members of the media may be restricted by their status with the Juvenile Court of Ventura County. The availability of students to members of the media is also restricted by students' rights to privacy and confidentiality.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Board members, the Superintendent, and employees of the Superintendent shall release information in accordance with Board policy and administrative regulation. Information which is private or confidential as identified by law shall not be released to members of the media.

CRISIS SITUATIONS

Because it is important to coordinate information during an emergency or crisis situation at schools and programs operated by the Superintendent and the facilities at the Office, all media inquiries shall be routed to the Superintendent who shall:

1. Distribute an official statement.
2. Update the official statements as related events occur.
3. Arrange media briefings as appropriate during and after emergency situations.

Legal References:

GOVERNMENT CODE

54954.1 Brown Act

54954.2 Brown Act

34 C.F.R. 99.1 et. seq.

EDUCATION CODE

49073 Privacy of Pupil Records; Release of directory information

Other References:

Administrative Regulation No. 5145 – Rights and Responsibilities of Students