

MEDIA RELATIONS

The Board of Trustees recognizes that the media significantly influences the public's understanding of school issues and can greatly assist the District in communicating with the community about school needs.

The Board respects the public's right to information and recognizes that the media has a legitimate interest in the schools and a responsibility to provide the community with news. District employees are encouraged to cooperate with members of the press, radio and television.

The Director of Communications or designee shall coordinate the release of information concerning the District and the actions of the Board.

News releases will be distributed by the Communications Department to all media in the Capistrano Unified School District area and to select media outside. Distribution of releases to all media within the District will occur regardless of the community in which the school is located in order to emphasize the scope of the entire school community.

Except for statements made and adopted by the Board, or recommended or made by the Superintendent, no District employee, except the Director of Communications designee, shall purport to represent the official point of view of the District public communication.

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

Media representatives, as with all other visitors to schools, shall register immediately upon entering any school building or grounds when school is in session.

(cf. 1250 - Visitors/Outsiders)

(cf. 3515.2 - Disruptions)

Staff may provide the media with student directory information, including, but not limited to, the name of a student, school of attendance, grade level, honors and activities, unless the student's parent/guardian has submitted a written request that such information not be disclosed. The district 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)

The district shall not impose restraints on students' rights to speak freely with media representatives at those times which do not disrupt students' educational programs. 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 should make prior arrangements with the principal or designee.

At their discretion, parents/guardians may instruct their children not to communicate with media representatives.

(cf. 5135.2 – Freedom of Speech/Expression)

(cf. 1340 - Access to District Records)

(cf. 5125 - Student Records)

(cf. 5125.1 - Release of Directory Information)

In order 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 principal 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.

-During a disturbance or crisis situation, the first priority of school staff is to address the situation at hand. At such times, media inquiries shall be routed to the Director of Communications or designee, who shall:

1. Prepare an official statement responding to the particular situation.
2. Update the official statement as events unfold.
3. Keep staff and students well informed.

(cf. 9010 - Public Statements)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

32210 Willful disturbance of public school or meeting

32211 Threatened disruption or interference with classes

35144 Special meetings

35145 Public meetings

35145.5 Agenda; public participation

35146 Closed sessions

35160 Authority of governing boards

35172 Promotional Activities

Policy

Adopted: October 2, 1995

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CAPISTRANO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

San Juan Capistrano, California