

The Board of Education encourages a policy of sound relations with the press and other communication media in the community and surrounding geographical area.

Therefore, information concerning the Portage Community School District and its operation is public information. The news media represent the public interest in reporting information concerning the schools. It is, therefore, in the interest of both the education community and the citizen-taxpayers of the District that there be open communications with news media.

However, in the interest of protecting the rights of individual students, employees are not to discuss individual students or families with the media unless the parent/guardian or a student of the age of majority signs a release.

In order to avoid interruptions in the school day, all requests by representatives of the media to speak to students or staff on school property or during the school day are to be referred to the building principal. In cases where there is doubt with regard to taste or privacy, but where it is felt that the publishing of the photograph serves a purpose which is in the best interest of the District, the principal will not authorize the use of the photograph without first obtaining a release from the individual(s) concerned or their parent or guardian. The building principal is to represent the school with the media on most building issues.

Media requests regarding district-wide issues or disturbances, disruptions, or emergencies should be directed to the superintendent. Natural disasters, fires, strikes, sit-ins, bomb threats, etc. are examples of the issues that should be directed to the superintendent. The superintendent may authorize other personnel to speak for the District.

The superintendent or authorized personnel will provide media representatives in a timely manner all facts to the best of his/her knowledge. Media representatives will be fully informed with regard to the school system by identified administrators in all aspects, activities, and changes, so that any reporting will be done on the basis of a complete and valid overview and protect school personnel from any unnecessary demands on their time by news media representatives.

Media requests regarding the Board of Education agenda or decisions made by the Board at meetings should be directed to the Board President. If the Board President is unavailable, these requests should be directed to the superintendent.

Cross. Ref. District Crisis Handbook

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