

## NEWS MEDIA RELATIONS

The Evansville Community School District recognizes the responsibility of the news media to provide to the community accurate and timely information concerning the objectives, achievements, needs and conditions of the District's schools and their instructional programs.

While it is our intent to cooperate with the news media to insure complete and accurate coverage of newsworthy events in the District, it is also our intent to safeguard our students from unwarranted disruption to their instructional program. Therefore, during the scope of the regular school day, the following guidelines will apply to members of the news media when attempting to obtain school information:

1. Representatives of the press and media will be expected to obtain permission from the District Administrator or designee prior to interacting with staff or students on school property during school hours.
2. If the press or media receive District permission to contact an individual school, principals may validly deny, at their discretion, media interviews on the grounds that it would disrupt instruction, that pupils should not be used for public opinion surveys, or that parents would object to such publicity for their children, particularly if the subject is a sensitive one. The principal must minimize unnecessary interruption of instructional time.
3. Reporters will be expected to limit the scope of the interview to a specific individual and/or specific topic/issue for which the permission was granted. It is the intent that the building principal be informed if the subject matter deviates from the identified purpose of the interview.
4. Interviews of all students are subject to written parental permission.
5. Parents/guardians of students enrolled in a special education program must provide written consent before their child is photographed, interviewed and/or identified in articles, photos or videotapes in a special education setting.
6. Student and staff interviews conducted during class time will be granted only if they pertain to media coverage of the class in session or if such coverage has been approved in advance by the building principal.
7. Any interview of a student during school hours, on school property while under the District's supervision will require that an administrator/designee be made aware of said interview. The District will retain the right to have an administrator/designee present during the interview if it deems such a presence is warranted.
8. News releases of a political or controversial nature, as well as those concerning the overall operation of the District's schools or their actions, policies and positions of the District, or those involving more than one school shall be made only by the Board of Education, District Administrator, or his/her designee.
9. Employees speaking on behalf of the District with the media must first receive authorization to do so from the District Administrator.

Legal Ref.: Sections 19.81 Wisconsin Statutes (Declaration of Policy)  
19.90 (Use of Equipment in Open Session)

Local Ref.: Policy #522 - Staff Conduct  
District Safety Manual