

Principal's Guide to Scholastic Journalism

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**QUILL
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The University of Iowa

Quill and Scroll's

PRINCIPAL'S
GUIDE
to
Scholastic Journalism



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Quill and Scroll was founded with the idea of recognizing scholastic journalism programs and this booklet addresses the value and importance of these programs high schools today.

The publication of this booklet comes at the end of the 75th anniversary year of Quill and Scroll Society. The scope of this booklet has been expanded and the topics have been explored in detail to help provide the guidelines for a healthy and prosperous atmosphere in which all scholastic journalism activities in today's high school may function. Many share the credit for the publication of this fourth edition.

Many share the credit for the publication of this fourth edition. Special thanks go to Linda Waller, deputy director of the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund, Inc., for sponsoring and arranging the weekend retreat in Newark, N.J., that began the process of this booklet's revision and update; and to Diana Mitsu Klos and Suzanne Jenkins of the American Society of Newspaper Editors and Susan Bischoff and Frances Thiel at the the *Houston Chronicle* for the cover design and the format of the booklet.

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Richard P. Johns
Executive Director
Quill and Scroll Society
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INTRODUCTION

School media often defy definition. It is easier to say what they are NOT than to say what they ARE or should be. They project a visual and verbal image of the school to all who read them, but they should not be primarily public relations tools of the school. The school media serve as communication links within the school, but they are much more than simple house organs. They are unique and their reasons for being must spring from the educational goals that an individual school system sets for itself.

It is with this philosophy that Quill and Scroll presents this *Principal's Guide to Scholastic Journalism*. It is not intended as a definitive set of rules. It is an attempt to assess the general practices and attitudes regarding scholastic journalism in general. It is an effort to help principals understand the value of journalism programs in their respective schools and to determine what their roles should be in helping to develop, maintain and support these programs.

We salute those administrators who provide the facilities, the time and the climate for a responsible journalism program within their schools.

We salute those principals who select and support advisers who are challenged in meeting the needs of each current crop of student journalists and their audience as they strive to achieve educational goals.

We salute the growing number of student journalists who take seriously their tasks of reporting events, issues, activities and concerns to their audience through attractive, interesting and responsible coverage.

We salute Dr. Laurence R. Campbell, former dean of the School of Journalism at Florida State University and a faculty member of that school's Department of English Education who was the author of the original version of this booklet in January, 1966.

Professor Campbell authored and co-authored a number of books in the field of journalism and authored countless articles on scholastic journalism in professional journals. He was the head of the Quill and Scroll Newspaper Critical Service and the director of Quill and Scroll Studies, the research program of Quill and Scroll Foundation.

We salute Mary Benedict, who worked on the updating of this booklet in 1971 and who was a member of the committee that worked on this current revision. In addition to Mary Benedict seven other individuals worked on the 2002 revision of this booklet. They are John Bowen, 1983 National High School Journalism Teacher of the Year and a Journalism teacher and adviser at Lakewood High School, Lakewood, Ohio; Charleen Silva Delfino, a member of the National Council of Teachers of English, San Jose, Calif.; Pat Graff, 1995 National High School Journalism Teacher of the Year, LaCueva High School, Albuquerque, N.M.;



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PRESSURES ON TODAY'S PRINCIPALS

Mary Benedict with Tim Westerberg

On any given day, the principal of a modern high school may have to meet with community leaders about civic issues, meet with parent groups about their concerns and complaints, with department chairs, student groups or individual teachers about important instructional matters or respond to a bomb threat — all with their special requests, complaints and concerns.

Most principals with whom we have talked in preparation for this booklet said their tasks have been complicated by a number of current factors:

- The insistence on accountability. Politicians, business and community leaders and parents are demanding that our students pass performance tests to demonstrate academic achievement. Test scores and other accreditation pressures are sending messages that schools must 'perform or else.' Those pressures could lead principals to sacrifice programs such as journalism — programs that bring standards to life for students — for courses with more traditional sounding titles.
- Changes in graduation requirements often pose challenges in providing a balanced education with attention to enrichment subjects as well as basic education. In some schools student publications, as well as other school media, have become co-curricular activities if they exist at all.
- Loss of community spirit. It is increasingly difficult for schools to become the centers of activities for students, teachers and parents that they once were. Many students now leave school as early as possible for their jobs. Others are bused to their respective neighborhoods. Meanwhile, principals face a definite challenge to keep their schools centers of activity after the academic day.
- When the Supreme Court in 1988 enabled administrators to exert control over the contents of school media produced as part of the school's academic program for credit, the principal was given much greater authority to censor. Principals heard that message and many weighed the wisdom of exercising that control. Given the authority to decide what was appropriate for their schools, many principals sought competent advisers who would work with student journalists in an atmosphere of responsible freedom. Others yielded to pressures and denied students the valuable learning experience attached to student media work.
- Violence and threats of violence force today's principal to think first of providing a safe, secure atmosphere in which learning can take place. The mood of the country is in favor of 'zero tolerance.' That attitude often puts pressure on the principal to place rigid discipline above concern for the individual student(s) involved.

WHY MAINTAIN A JOURNALISM PROGRAM?

Mary Benedict

In an atmosphere of challenges and pressures, why should today's principal be concerned with maintaining or retaining a journalism program? Faced with multiple problems, some principals are asking themselves whether student publications are worth the risks involved.

Students interested in journalism are inquisitive by nature, always on the brink of discovery, gaining new insights and new understandings. The process of learning often involves making mistakes. Band members hit sour notes, thespians muff their lines and athletes fail to score. We tend to accept those miscues, but the potential permanence of the printed word often denies the student journalist that same margin of error learning requires. And often, the student publication is remembered for its worst efforts, not its best.

Even so, the student publication is one of the best measures of a school's academic health. At its best, it reflects a vibrant, dynamic school in which students are learning to be active participants in the democratic process.

No other activity forces its participants to remain in the shadows and to put the accomplishments, achievements and concerns of others in the spotlight. Yet, that is what most of journalism is about. Student reporters and editors try to help all students catch a glimpse of what other groups are doing. They strive to capture not only the important events of the week, the month or the year, but also to reflect the mood and concerns of that particular student body.

In a very real way, student journalists speak *to* and *for* their fellow students as they gather information and write articles about club activities, athletics, academic awards and social and personal problems that can affect a student's performance in school. And in that respect, those student journalists share a few of the same problems, pressures and challenges that confront the principal.

Let's look at some of the advantages of a student publication produced by well-trained, responsible student journalists:

- It helps various groups within the school connect with one another, gaining respect for diversity and for a variety of activities.
- It provides opportunities for students to apply basic reading and writing and thinking skills they have learned in other courses.
- It prepares students for the kind of rigorous research, analysis and writing expected by college and university professors.



Why Maintain a Journalism Program?

- It provides a link with the administration. Students will learn what administrators are thinking, what changes are being considered and problems are being addressed. It also will reflect to the administration the concerns, interests and activities of students.
- It provides a forum for an exchange of student opinion.
- It helps student readers gain an understanding of the media and how reporters work on behalf of their readers, how reporters seek stories which will satisfy their readers' need, right and desire to know about the world in which they live.
- It enables those student readers to become more critical readers of their metropolitan newspapers by helping them to recognize different types of articles that appear in the media. They will expect a news story to contain the opinions of relevant sources and be free of the writer's opinions. They will appreciate the feature story and know that an editorial reflects the opinion of the staff. And they will see a column as an expression of a single writer who hopes to establish rapport with the readers.
- It provides valuable training for student staff members who are considering careers in journalism.

STANDARDS IN THE JOURNALISM CLASSROOM

Pat Graff

In the rush to ensure that students meet new state standards in language arts, journalism programs are sometimes cut. However, strong journalism programs with a variety of publication options often help students meet those same standards, especially those that involve higher-level thinking and advanced skills.

Students learn to adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences when they design a broadcast segment on a proposed school renovation bond issue. (NCTE/IRA Standard #4, see Appendix, p. 50) Research skills, using a variety of sources, are enhanced with each story written. They learn to generate ideas and questions, pose problems, and evaluate the various sources to communicate their discoveries. (NCTE/IRA Standard #7, see Appendix, p. 50) With editorial meetings and subsequent published opinion pieces, students use spoken language to accomplish their purposes of persuasion and the exchange of information. (NCTE/IRA Standard #12, see Appendix, p. 50)

Publications work is authentic assessment at its best: a synthesis of analysis and critical thinking, planning and relating to an audience beyond the classroom, and performance-based outcomes. Student work leads naturally to a portfolio of specific completed tasks, and publications skills positively support school-to-career progress.

Both the Journalism Education Association and the National Council of Teachers of English have resources to help the adviser align the school's journalism program with local, state and national standards. Good journalism should, in fact, enhance student performance in these skill areas.

TYPICAL EDUCATIONAL GOALS FOR STUDENT JOURNALISTS

Among the goals that apply to students enrolled in journalism, the principal and adviser may want to consider these:

I. Editorial skills

Reporting — accuracy, fairness, completeness

Writing — precision, attribution, transition, readability, thesis, focus

Interviewing — backgrounding, arranging, conducting, synthesizing

Editing — judgment, fairness, balance

Photography — depicting news through pictures, making and developing pictures, creativity, fairness

Graphics — using design to communicate information



II. Packaging skills

Design — dominance, balance, unity, variety, eye appeal

Audience — considerations of timeliness and relevance to receivers

III. Business skills

Advertising sales — research, persuasion

Advertising design

Subscriptions — conducting and planning a sales campaign, when appropriate

Circulation — getting the product to the buyer

Budget preparation and reconciliation

IV. Technology skills

Word processing

Desktop publishing

Web page design and currency

Internet research

Graphics software for art and design

Databases and business systems

V. Leadership and management

Ethics and decision-making

Staff leadership

Organization

Peer criticism

Time management

Affecting change — school leadership

Group dynamics

GOALS TO CONSIDER FOR STUDENT MEDIA CONSUMERS

Here are some goals suggested by advisers and principals. They may help to formulate the list that best suits your school situation.

I. Reading skills

Comprehension — students will read about events that involve or concern them

Analysis — students have the opportunity to evaluate multiple sources and opinions

II. Writing skills

Recognize forms of expression- exposure to various good models of writing, such as news, editorial, feature, column

Journalism kids do better

Although it is important to be careful drawing conclusions on cause and effect, there is a body of research that provides data that show students who participate in journalism programs do better on testing and college language arts courses. In *Journalism Kids Do Better*, written by John Dvorak, Larry Lain, and Tom Dickson in 1994, research results indicated journalism students tend to score higher on the language arts portion of the ACT test, earn higher grades and succeed in college composition courses at higher levels than non-journalism students. Copies of this report are available from the Journalism Education Association.



Note errors — spelling, pronunciation, and grammar errors become obvious when published

Express opinions in feedback formats

III. Understanding media

Understand the role of the media in a democratic society

Understand limitations of various media

Examine credibility of sources

Recognize and discount reporter bias or opinion in a story

IV. Respect for the First Amendment and Constitution

THE FIRST AMENDMENT AND SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS

John Bowen

“Not only do social studies classes teach basics of the First Amendment, but in journalism classes throughout this country, students are admonished to take the First Amendment seriously, not because it is license to publish whatever they please but because it provides the underpinnings that protect their readers. Thomas Jefferson probably said it best: ‘Our liberty depends on freedom of the press and that cannot be limited without being lost.’”

Jefferson’s comment still is true today, despite conflicting U.S. Supreme Court decisions affecting freedom of expression for high school students. These cases and others, and with their interpretations, have created an atmosphere of confusion and have led to conflicts that a sound understanding of the law and thorough practice of educational standards could have avoided.

To develop a real democracy, students must have a chance to practice what they learn in American history, in English, in business and in sociology, a former high school journalist said. They must experience, as Supreme Court Justice William Brennan wrote in the 1988 U.S. Supreme Court *Hazelwood* decision, the Constitution of the United States as more than *just parchment under glass*.

That is why journalism teachers and advisers focus on the legal and ethical rights and obligations of student journalists before anything else: For our democracy to be truly participatory, students must learn to be empowered so they see the value of making a difference.

To develop the ideal citizen, administrators have to consider the following areas:

- Why it is *legally* and *educationally* important school officials support the First Amendment and free expression rights of students.
- Why it is important not to engage in prior review or restraint.
- What administrators can do with school media to ensure freedom of expression.
- Why it is *legally* important school officials support the First Amendment and free expression rights of students.

Helping students understand their legal obligations, as well as their rights, is an important goal of journalism education, whether student media is a part of the classroom or is co-curricular.

To do this, journalism educators emphasize the teaching of five areas of unprotected speech as defined by the Student Press Law Center in its text *Law and the*



Student Press. Those areas are libel, obscenity, material disruption of the school process, invasion of privacy, and copyright infringement. Understanding these five areas by all involved will safeguard the interests of the system, the students and the readers.

In addition, creating and maintaining student media as forums for student expression is essential to assure the best learning. It is impossible and unwise to “protect” students from knowledge of society’s problems. A public forum reduces rumor, speculation and misinformation; it offers solid information, sources of aid and a basis for wise action; provides students an outlet for comment, opinion and debate; and introduces student thought to the rest of the community and allows for community response.

Administrators should also ensure the school’s curriculum presents the following legal cases and their impact on scholastic journalism:

■ ***Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District, 393 U.S. 503 (1969)***

“It can hardly be argued that either students or teachers shed their Constitutional rights to freedom of expression at the schoolhouse gate. ... Students in school as well as out of school are ‘persons’ under our Constitution. They are possessed of fundamental rights which the State must respect. ...” Justice Abe Fortas wrote for the majority.

The Court ruled as long as there is not “substantial disruption of or material interference with school activities,” the students’ freedom to express themselves is protected by the First Amendment.

■ ***Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier, 484 U.S. 260 (1988)***

This decision enabled administrators to prevent publication of material when their censorship was “reasonably related to legitimate pedagogical concerns.” The Court, however, left that phrase undefined, saying only a court should act to protect student expression when the censorship has “no valid educational purpose.”

Not everyone agreed this ruling was sound.

“My students’ ability to publish controversial material is now in every respect dependent on my attitudes, my thoughts and my willingness to be vulnerable in front of my superintendent, my board of education and my community,” Franklin McCallie, former principal at Kirkwood (Mo.) High School, wrote. “Before the ruling there was a spontaneity, even a tension which was healthy and democratic and educational and growth-producing. We have lost that under the new rules.”

It is important to note *Hazelwood* does not say administrators **must** censor; it only says under certain conditions they **may**.



Hazelwood also did not overturn or challenge *Tinker*. Instead, it added a parallel set of rules that confused the issue of student free expression. Under some conditions, high school students have the right to free expression; under others they do not. When they do and when they do not seem to be at the whims of administrators across the country — and administrators don't seem to agree.

The Freedom Forum First Amendment Ombudsman Paul McMasters said at the summer 1996 Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication convention, *Hazelwood* “legitimized stopping the potential of youth. It, in effect, said democracy itself is flawed and something to be feared” when students have uncontrolled freedom of expression.

■ ***Yeo v. Town of Lexington, 131 F.3d 241(1st Cir. 1997)***

The case arises from the decision of two public high school student publications — the newspaper and yearbook — not to publish an advertisement. The advertisement promoted sexual abstinence and was proffered by a parent, Douglas Yeo, in the aftermath of a decision by the Lexington, Massachusetts, School Committee to make condoms available to students as a public health matter. Yeo had campaigned against the condom distribution policy and lost. The two high school student publications declined to publish the advertisement on the grounds each had a policy, albeit unwritten, of not running political or advocacy advertisements. The First Circuit Court affirmed the decisions of the district court, saying the state, meaning the school, had not been involved in the decision to reject the ads. Thus it could not be held responsible for the content decisions students make.

“The decision emphasizes that schools have more to fear by censoring than by leaving content determinations to student editors,” said Student Press Law Center Executive Director Mark Goodman. A “hands-off” policy, he said, is actually more likely to protect a school from liability.

In reaching its decision in *Yeo*, the court reinforced standards long espoused by the Journalism Education Association:

- Administrators who do not censor or practice prior review are not liable for content. Had school officials (including advisers) in *Yeo* made decisions for students, Yeo might well have won his case.
- State laws protecting student free expression are important. Massachusetts has such a law.
- Providing financial support does not mean school authorities must control content.
- Precisely-worded policies calling publications forums for student expression and giving students decision-making responsibility for content are vital.

Why is it *educationally* important school officials support the First Amendment and free expression rights of students?



Administrators would not think of planning the chemistry teacher's lessons or calling the plays for the football coach. Yet routinely they ask for prior review and prior restraint of student media.

Let's define these terms:

- **Censorship** — prohibiting publication of information, preventing reporters access to public information or creating an atmosphere in which students censor themselves.
- **Prior review** — examining copy prior to publication for any reason.
- **Prior restraint** — forcing the staff to remove or change something prior to publication which was to be published.

Administrators and sometimes media advisers practice prior review/restraint even though there is no definable educational value. Taking decision-making away from students clearly tells them and their advisers their ideas have no value, they don't need to be critical thinkers; the First Amendment is not a necessary part of society; the school needn't practice the principles of a democracy; trained journalism teachers are unnecessary; students who pursue journalism careers will not be able to decide what readers need to know.

WHAT ADMINISTRATORS CAN DO WITH SCHOOL MEDIA TO ENSURE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

One of the most important steps administrators can take to ensure freedom of expression and to protect themselves is to work with students and advisers to encourage them to develop publications policies. In the Yeo case, students had clearly established a policy for the yearbook and newspaper and school officials not only supported it but endorsed it.

"There is a danger of policies being over broad," SPLC's Goodman said. "In this case it was quite clear students made decisions of policy and the paper was designated as a forum for student expression by student editors." By stating student editors make all content decisions, there is no risk some disgruntled advertiser or letter-writer can say their First Amendment rights were violated.

The Yeo case also quoted Massachusetts law about what could be good policy for all student media. "No expression made by students in the exercise of such rights shall be deemed to be an expression of school policy and no school officials shall be held responsible in any civil or criminal action for any expression made or published by students," the case stated.

The case further outlined why student decision-making was important. "School officials have an interest in their (students') autonomy to make educational decisions," the court reported. "Officials have determined the best way to teach journalism skills is to respect the students' editorial judgment, a degree of autonomy similar to that exercised by professional journalists. That choice by the officials parallels the



allocation of responsibility for editorial judgments made by the First Amendment itself.”

PRACTICES ADMINISTRATORS SHOULD AVOID

For years, JEA and the SPLC have urged advisers and students to develop editorial policies as the first step to a professional, student-directed, journalism program.

Some policies, however, are too broad and are not defensible in terms of what they argue is unprotected speech. Terminology in this category can read like:

- Material inconsistent with the shared values of a civilized social order.
- Material potentially harmful to juveniles or offensive according to community standards as to what is suitable for juveniles.
- Material offensive to good taste.
- Material denying endorsement of issues or candidates.
- Subjecting all material to review by the advisers and/or principal. Those who are denied approval for inclusion of materials in school publications may appeal to a committee composed of the principal, the advisers of the school paper and yearbook and the presidents of each class. The function of this committee is advisory, based to review the material presented. The decision remains with the principal.

Policies also need to avoid questionable objectives for student-operated media such as creating a wholesome school spirit and to support the best traditions of the school. Similar kinds of statements would not stand careful legal scrutiny.

Positive steps administrators can take to ensure freedom of expression include:

- Learn to what extent the student press is governed under provisions of the 1988 *Hazelwood* decision.
- Remember: Students have First Amendment protection.
- Understand the distinction between school publications that are by policy and practice forums for student expression and those in which advisers or principals determine the content.
- Work to have a common understanding of what constitutes a “reasonable” educational justification to censor student publications.
- Work with your media advisers and students to develop policies like the SPLC model (see Appendix, p. 51).

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LAW AND ETHICS?

Law says what we should do; ethics says we could do, helping us explore the options. Then, and only then, we decide what we would do. The goal in asking ethical questions before stories are published is to carefully consider the implications and consequences of the journalist's choices.

Ethics can be helpful in reporting sensitive or controversial issues. A staff working its way through a list of questions to make reasonable, ethical decisions can provoke many valuable comments, discussions and considerations helping in many situations.

Common ethical problems student media face:

- **Conflict of interest:** Examples include interviewing friends; only interviewing one grade or those with a specific point of view; “getting even” with those who might have wronged you; doing anything that might compromise objectivity in the reporting of the truth.
- **Plagiarism:** Claiming others' work as one's own, essentially stealing from them. Students must credit other people's materials and ideas, including those published in newspapers, magazines and books. This includes “borrowing” or downloading visuals from the Internet to use without permission with stories.
- **Anonymous sources:** Although many reporters use anonymous sources, there are rules about when to use them. A reporter has to determine the information's value and whether it is possible to get it any other way. She also has to determine whether she needs to protect the source from harm from being an identified source. A comment about the cafeteria's food should not be permitted to remain anonymous, for example, but a revelation about suffering child abuse may be.
- **Offending or distasteful content:** Although it is impossible to run any story without offending, insulting or displeasing someone, student journalists must strive to keep the press open and accessible to a wide range of views without stooping to gratuitous offense. While some use of “dirty” language might be necessary, journalists have to decide if there is another way to present the information or if the presentation will be so offensive it will preclude readers from getting the information.
- **Invasion of privacy:** While this is often a legal issue, it is also an ethical one. Student — and professional — reporters must consider the consequences of publishing the outstanding news-value photo or naming someone in an article.
- **Bias:** Human beings cannot be purely objective. The mere selection of one story over another raises the issue of value judgments. Those who create con-



tent must attempt to be as fair and impartial as is possible. Every issue has more than one side, and all sides should be represented as much as possible. Student journalists trying to be objective should not avoid exploration, experimentation and variety in the press.

- **Commitment to accuracy:** Little undermines integrity and, therefore, effectiveness of the media more than carelessness (or deceit) leading to inaccuracy in the press. Not publishing information is almost always better than publishing inaccurate information. The rush to be first, prized today and available to anyone now with the Internet, is no justification for not checking out data, information and sources.

PREPARING STUDENTS TO BE CRITICAL CONSUMERS OF MEDIA

Charleen Silva Delfino

“I’m looking for someone who will sponsor the school newspaper and yearbook, but I’m more interested in someone who will teach our general students about the importance of the media.”

— administrator from New Jersey seeking a journalism teacher

Of all our social institutions, the media probably affect our lives more than any other. Critics blame television for students’ poor reading habits. Yet newspaper, magazine, radio, television and the Internet form valuable, in fact, essential information and education links that enable us to manage our lives effectively, to vote intelligently and, in general, to keep in touch with the world in which we live.

Main issues important in preparing critical consumers of media are:

- Create balanced and accurate reporting that does not reflect personal bias.
- Incorporate the use of the Internet and the credibility of the various sources available.
- Understand the role of advertising in the media.
- Know the role of various media and their contribution to the understanding of how they work in shaping decision-making and informing the citizenship.
- Be aware of the possibility of manipulated or altered images and the ethics involved in their use.
- Understand various ways opinions/beliefs are expressed by the editorial staff of a medium, as well as those of the consumers of that medium.

Case No. 1: A student journalist, concerned with cheating in classes by school athletes, decided to write a report for the front page of the school newspaper. After interviewing teachers, he discovered that about 15 of the 20 teachers he interviewed supported his position. When writing his article, he decided to only use the evidence of the 15 teachers who supported his argument because he felt it would make a stronger case.

This student reporter is confusing the role of balanced, accurate reporting with that of editorializing. It is his job as reporter to report accurately and fairly what he learns whether it supports his position or beliefs or not.

Case No. 2: The English department chairperson and a vice principal criticized the journalism teacher for printing a letter-to-the-editor in which the writer com-



plained about the books being read in English classes. “What are you trying to do,” they asked, “undermine our program?”

Both faculty members assumed the journalism teacher agreed with everything in print. And both of them demonstrated a lack of understanding of the purpose of letters-to-the-editor.

Living in a democracy requires a respect for differences of opinion and recognition of the need for a forum in order to share and test ideas. For that reason, newspapers invite readers to voice their opinions. Newspapers are careful to label the letters-to-the-editor and to separate all opinion from news and feature stories. Even so, many readers fail to distinguish between the types of material that appear in print.

The two examples picked are not isolated incidents. They represent the kinds of misunderstandings that lead to a distrust of the media and failure to use the media effectively.

To what extent should the high school try to prepare students for critical use of the media? That New Jersey administrator who was seeking a journalism teacher first and a publication adviser second wants to offer courses for students of all levels of achievement. The educational goal would be to help train more intelligent consumers of the media.

Toward that general goal, specific objectives might fall into two major categories:

TO USE THE MEDIA TO BE BETTER CITIZENS

- Learn to distinguish fact from opinion.
- Be able to identify the different kinds of visual messages, as well as the strengths and weaknesses associated with each. The expectations of the receiver should fit the intent and purpose of the medium.
- Realize the news does not come from the reporter but through that reporter from a source or sources involved in an event or issue. The student must then learn to discern the credibility of sources.
- Learn how the media work — the pressures, the limitations, the time constraints, the need for visuals (graphics), and the possibility of manipulation of them.
- Understand the role the media have played in the development of this country.
- Understand the ethical and legal principles involved in gathering and presenting of news and information.

TO USE THE MEDIA EFFECTIVELY IN ORDER TO BECOME AN EFFICIENT CONSUMER OF PRODUCTS, SERVICES AND IDEAS

- Learn to shop comparatively by examining advertisements.
- Understand the power of advertising as an economic force.



- Develop and analyze advertising messages in order to understand the techniques of persuasion that are used in those messages. Why did the advertising pitch have appeal? What propaganda devices were used? With what effect?
- Develop and implement advertising policies that reflect journalistic ethics and legal considerations.

QUALITIES OF A GOOD ADVISER

Pat Graff

HIRING THE ADVISER

Finding a quality adviser for student publications programs is “Job One” for principals. An adviser who has skills and abilities specifically related to student journalism can avoid many potential problems. In addition, a strong adviser helps ensure students have quality experiences in the journalism program, experiences that may result in awards, scholarships and lifelong skills in the consumption of media.

It’s important to remember the adviser will supervise one — or more — of the school’s most public activities. A principal needs to take care in selecting that individual. The adviser position should not, as is often the case, be handed to a first year teacher. It is a position of great importance to the life and functioning of a school and needs a sure hand. “Good advisers, like good drama directors or band leaders, are made with training and care,” says Harry Proudfoot, adviser in Westport, Connecticut. “Random folks don’t make good advisers.”

In many cases, a trained, experienced adviser is simply not available. Many states have stopped issuing specific endorsements in journalism, and only a few universities provide training in journalism education for future teachers. Ideally, adviser candidates should have course work and experience in journalism, as well as in the fundamentals of teaching writing and communication.

But when the “ideal” does not seem available, here are some qualities to look for in hiring an adviser:

- Knowledge of the steps of the writing process: pre-writing, research, writing revision, and publication.
- Basic knowledge of technology to be used with the production.
- Prior experience with journalistic activities: writing, editing, ad sales, etc.
- Willingness to learn and to be trained in new skills — especially media law and ethics.

SUPPORTING THE ADVISER

Principals and advisers together should develop a plan for support and continued training. A variety of considerations should be discussed and implemented.

First, carefully look at the situation the adviser is entering. If there is a debt or financial burden from previous years, consider forgiving that debt. Advisers tell horror stories of being saddled with \$10,000 debts in a yearbook program, a seemingly



insurmountable obstacle to handle before one even gets started. It's best not to give a new adviser a difficult teaching load. Certainly that person needs an established classroom in which to build a program: no "floating"!

Advisers need to be adequately compensated for their out-of-class work. Release time and/or stipends should be commensurate to other high profile programs in the school. Publications classrooms need sufficient equipment and technology so students can produce their work in a timely, efficient manner. New teachers in the school system need clear, detailed instructions on financial policies and practices.

The job of adviser is often a lonely one in the school, so look for ways to get support for the new person. Principals should look within their area for other quality advisers who might be willing to share their advice and expertise. Memberships in local and state scholastic press associations are vital for helping the adviser build a network of support and help. The Journalism Education Association offers a free mentorship program for new advisers that matches those advisers with experienced advisers willing to share; this exchange occurs by phone, mail, and electronic communication.

From the beginning, principal and adviser should establish open and frequent communications. This might include providing opportunities for student journalists to interview administrators on a regular basis and being sure the adviser is welcome in the main office to ask questions and request help. This includes working together with students to develop an editorial policy for each publication. Advisers should be encouraged to share their students' success with the principal. In addition, when students are tackling a potentially controversial topic, administrators who understand the rationale for the coverage do a better job of explaining the process to the community.

Continuous training is a must for any adviser, no matter how experienced or skilled that individual is. Principals need to provide frequent opportunities, time, and financial support for advisers and their students to get additional training. Because of the specific nature of much publications work, this training often has to be obtained through non-traditional avenues. A local or state scholastic press association, the professional media, or a national scholastic press group's convention are often valuable resources. Many of these workshops and seminars include options for student participation as well, which supports the adviser's efforts to train the student journalists. Some advisers have the opportunity to participate in summer intern programs with the professional press. A variety of books, magazines and newsletters provide ongoing professional development. Specific courses in media law, student media advisement and production techniques are offered at numerous universities and colleges during the year, especially during the summer.

Professional involvement in scholastic media groups also helps further "grow" an adviser. A complete list of these groups can be found in this book's appendix. Principals should encourage advisers to seek the national certification offered by the Journalism Education Association. Certified Journalism Educator (CJE) is available for most advisers either based on course work or a written test, while Master



Journalism Educator (MJE) is the national designation for those who have demonstrated mastery level skills in journalism instruction. This program, instituted in 1990, encourages advisers to engage in an ongoing plan of curriculum development, training and growth while ensuring certain high national standards for journalism instruction.

WHAT DOES A GOOD ADVISER DO?

A good adviser helps students leave their own, preconceived ideas and look beyond to other sources and new ideas. Good publications programs equip students with the ability to analyze and synthesize a variety of facts, evaluating sources and creating new hypotheses. According to the model guidelines for job descriptions of publications advisers, adopted by the Journalism Education Association, student publications are a valid and integral part of the educational system. They provide students with hands-on learning laboratories that allow students to put into practice the most noble of ideals of language arts, social studies and other core areas of learning.

As a result, the adviser of the student media has a responsibility to do the following:

- Provide a journalistically professional learning atmosphere and experience for students, allowing them to make all decisions of media content and ensuring the publication remains an open forum.
- Work with students to increase their competence in all facets of production including determining news values, selecting appropriate pieces for publication, developing and applying ethical and legal knowledge, gathering and synthesizing information, writing in a variety of styles, editing, designing, creating graphics, selling advertising, using technology for production and implementing circulation plans for the media.
- Provide the students with an educated, professional role model as adviser, and to serve as a motivator and catalyst for ideas and professionalism. Plan and implement a curriculum which continuously instructs students in various aspects of student publications.
- Evaluate student participation in the media.
- Act as an educational resource for students on topics of legal freedoms, ethics, content and financing.
- Help the students develop an editorial policy consistent with legal precedent, court decisions and professional journalistic freedoms.
- Establish policies with the students which will be part of a staff manual. The manual should also include job descriptions for all staff members, style and design guidelines, advertising procedures, grading policy, classroom and equipment usage rules and a code of ethics for all staffers.
- Work with students in all stages of production, including the supervision of all financial aspects.



- Be involved professionally in educational organizations that support student media, staying updated on trends and issues in scholastic journalism. Gather and share information on contests, scholarships, career opportunities, workshops, conferences and other avenues for student growth.
- Work with faculty and administration to help those individuals understand the freedoms accorded student journalists and the professional goals of the student media.

USING THE INTERNET TO PUBLISH AND RESEARCH NEWS

John Bowen, Candace Perkins Bowen and Leana Donofrio

The Internet is an excellent tool for student journalists and, as such, should be extended the same freedoms and responsibilities as print and broadcast media.

At issue is the question of where students are going to learn to use the Internet — at school with educators available to assist, at home with or without supervision — or on their own.

Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner, noted educators, wrote, “To the extent our schools are instruments in a democratic society, they must develop in the young not only an awareness of freedom, but a will to exercise it and the intellectual power to do so effectively.”

Since the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in the 1996 Communications Decency Act, *ACLU vs. Reno*, and subsequent court cases overturning it, it is clear the Internet is similar to print media in its degree of freedom.

Mark Goodman, executive director of the Student Press Law Center, said no court has ruled the protections of the First Amendment apply with any less force to the Internet than they do to print media.

To protect student expression as well as further school needs, administrators and teachers should develop acceptable use policies (AUP) outlining how and why students are able to use the Internet.

Along with the usual mission and goal statements, the AUP might contain language like: “Making the Internet available to students carries with it the potential some students might encounter controversial information or people who would bring harm to them. However, taken as a whole, the Internet overwhelmingly offers more positives than negatives, and the school believes it is one more important part of the learning process to teach students how to deal with such information and people.

“Because information on the Internet appears, disappears and changes, it is not possible to predict or control what students may locate. Just as public librarians do not attempt to control the public library environment, school officials should not attempt or promise to control the Internet environment for students. They will, however, do their best, in concert with parents and community officials, to instruct students in the best educational use of the new media.

“As learning resources, online media using the Internet are similar to newspapers and books. Online media may also be used by students and faculty to educate, to



inform and to entertain both the school and wider community. Such media are entitled to the same protections and subject to the same limitations as all other student media as specified in the Board of Education's existing student expression policy."

FILTERING THE INTERNET

Internet filters are used to try to protect students by blocking pornographic or inappropriate sites.

A 1999 incident at a California high school points out the need to question their use. Students there could not get scholarship information because their school district used a filtering program which blocked certain sites and key phrases on the Web. Words like "sports," "finance" and "entertainment" were banned, according to an article in the *Los Angeles Times*. Said the system's superintendent, "Kids should be focused on their task. That task is to be educated, not entertained."

"If filters only blocked material in fact 'obscene as to minors,'" Goodman said, "then there is little question the school would be legally entitled to use them."

"The problem is," he said, "every filter created blocks out far more than obscene material, and still allows obscene material through."

Judges, Goodman said, seldom have an easy time deciding what is and what is not pornography.

"It's difficult to imagine a computer program could do so," he added.

Jon Katz, a First Amendment scholar and columnist for The Freedom Forum, said people should not ignore the issues of pornography or inappropriate material, but "cannot expect a filter to replace education, morality and responsibility."

"It's an adult's responsibility to teach moral direction and monitor learning," Katz said. He also said there are ways to make Internet use safe, educational and productive without filters. He said some of the best ways are to first educate teachers and students on how to use the Internet. He also suggested physically placing computers in the classroom where anyone could see what's on the screen.

THE CASE FOR REMOVING FILTERS

Are we reaching a time when schools will be the place where students go to have their Internet education interrupted because of filters which block legitimate information?

Schools using Internet filters should consider implications raised by Ann Symons, president of the American Library Association. If the school (government) blocks sites, it becomes responsible for the problems encountered, Symons said. No blocking means no legal responsibility, just as in the print media.

Other views from the ALA:

- Blockers impose their maker's viewpoint on the community.



- Filters give an unkeepable feeling of safety — but they can always be gotten around and then the school is responsible.
- Compromising the First Amendment and open investigation is based on bad legal advice; schools must do what it takes to meet their educational missions.
- The collision of ideas only leads to good — recipients are more informed and can react to and defeat bad ideas.

The Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) mandates filters as of April 2000, but allows for their removal in certain situations. Use in journalism programs should be one of those exceptions.

PUBLISHING ON THE INTERNET

Legal issues also arise when students use the Internet to publish. People fear what they don’t understand, and such technophobia is even more apparent with something as far-reaching as the Internet. Factor in its potential impact on young people, and it’s not surprising publishing on the Web is creating confusion.

So how is it possible for a school to find a balance between plunging in blindly and severely, even illegally, restricting content? What should novice Web *publishers* consider?

- One approach is to draw analogies between the Web publication and others in a school. If a student newspaper publishes names and photos, why would these be eliminated on the Web? If the newspaper allows students to make content decisions, why run the online publication past a screening committee? Part of the Supreme Court decision in the Communications Decency Act (CDA) indicates the Internet is legally like the printed word, and legal speech can appear there. If the paper or broadcast outlet is an open forum and explores problems and policies in a responsible manner, reaching a wider audience is a plus.
- An Acceptable Use Policy that spells out student rights and responsibilities can prevent another type of problem. If administrators are worried about unprotected speech or links to illegal sites showing up on the school publication, AUPs can spell out consequences for creating these. Although one student might ignore this, quick punishment using the guidelines will deter others in the future.
- Linking Web site policies to the school’s mission or curricular goals is also useful. If a journalism class is to practice the professionalism of its “real world” counterparts, eliminating names and photos is certainly not typical. In fact, if the local newspaper has a Web site with names and photos, what’s the value of prohibiting these on the student site? In addition, the school’s mission may include preparing students for their roles in a democratic society. Where else but school can they learn how the Internet ties into their part as citizens? What better opportunity for authentic assessment than to see how many hits and how much responsive e-mail a student Web staff receives? Besides, requiring Web



sites to have clear goals and policies and educational purposes eliminates personal student home pages, and those are the ones that might contain questionable material.

Consider this policy developed in an Ohio school system:

In carrying out this segment of the schools' educational mission:

- School officials will apply the same criteria used in determining the suitability of other educational and information resources when determining student media access to, or *authoring of*, online material.
- Unprotected speech, that is, libel, invasion of privacy, obscenity, copyright infringement and material disruption of the school process, will not be published. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in the loss of authoring privileges and the removal of Web page(s) from the server.
- Just as the purchase, availability and use of media materials in a classroom or library does not indicate endorsement of their contents by school officials, neither does making electronic information available to students imply endorsement of that content or responsibility for that content on the part of administrators.
- Just as content of print media produced by students does not indicate endorsement by school officials, neither does making content created by students available to others imply endorsement of that content or responsibility for that content on the part of administrators.
- All material displayed on system Web sites is subject to applicable federal, state and local laws. All other student media guidelines also apply to online sites.
- Instruction for all levels of potential Web site users will be available throughout the calendar year. Such instruction will include technical as well as legal and ethical instruction.
- Web sites posted under the auspices of the Board of Education will follow current communications law and district policies. No site should list students' home phone numbers, home addresses or social security numbers.
- Parents and only parents have the right and the responsibility to restrict the access of their children — and their children only — to resources.
- Educators have the responsibility to educate students about their responsibilities — to themselves and to others — while using the Internet and Web sites.
- A balanced approach to the Internet and Web site use emphasizes instruction and guidance rather than censorship. Educators empower students to exercise judgment and restraint, not to be restrained by artificial barriers.



PUBLISHING STUDENTS NAMES AND PHOTOS

Schools have no grounds for concern that such things as publishing names and faces cause liability risks. Of course no one gives out addresses, social security numbers and personal information, but students should learn not to do this anyway as part of their Internet training. Names and faces are available to those outside the school in the library, the yearbook and many other places.

Another consideration is the ramification decisions have on all school publishers. If student media can't use names or photos, would other sites tied to the school — say a PTA home page — have the same restrictions? Not printing names would mean GOOD news about students, teachers or administrators could be eliminated as well. That includes scholarships, winning touchdown passes and national awards.

There is no evidence to suggest online publications pose any more of a danger than their print-based counterparts. Nothing in the CDA requires schools to prohibit the publication of student names or photos in an online student publication. Where newsworthy information — including student names and photos — is lawfully obtained and accurately reported, it is not an invasion of privacy to post it on the Internet. Parental consent is irrelevant.

Neither is it a violation of the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), also known as the Buckley Amendment, as some have suggested. The Department of Education has made clear news reported by students in a student newspaper is not equivalent to educational records being released by the school itself. Newspapers report news. The very idea of a newspaper without names or other identifying information strikes at the core of journalistic integrity and a free, robust press.

Such practice is also legally quite risky. Put aside the constitutional question of whether an outright ban on all names and photos is even permissible, a policy that requires news subjects be incompletely identified is poised for trouble. Reporting, for example, that an unnamed tennis player was kicked off the team for illegal drinking could subject the student newspaper to a libel lawsuit by the team's nine other players who were not drinking.

IMMEDIACY OF PUBLISHING

Releasing breaking news on Web publications should require no more concern than that of print publications. Checking sources, verifying information and knowing legal and ethical standards are still the standards for Internet publication, and of sound journalism education.

CONTROL OF WEB SITES PUBLISHED OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL

School officials have no authority to censor or punish students who publish home-based Web sites.



PLAGIARISM

Material on the Internet is not free for the taking. The same copyright rules that protect printed material also protect all images, graphics, sound and text on the Internet.

ROLE OF THE ADVISER

The role of the adviser in Internet publishing is the same as that of the print and broadcast adviser, which is best summarized in the Journalism Education Association's model roles of the adviser in the appendix.

SENSITIVE TOPICS AND SCHOOL SAFETY

John Bowen and Tim Westerberg

Even handled professionally, with balanced reporting and immaculate attribution, some topics generate such strong emotions they force student journalists to react and to explain their publication.

Planning and anticipating questions and attitudes will help students handle any comment directed at them for their reporting.

Case A

The reporter had combined a study of rock lyrics with interviews and a review of research to present a story about the subliminal effect of hidden messages some said were woven into popular songs. Questions the reporter considered included were satanic messages laced throughout the lyrics and what were the effects, if any, of that technique?

“I just did not expect the violent reaction we received,” the editor said about what followed. “I’m sure we would have run the story anyway, but I wish the adviser and I had been able to anticipate the waves of protest. We could have prepared for it.”

Audience interest in the subject was so high the reporter was attacked by song enthusiasts as he walked through the halls of the school to his classes. Demand for papers was so high the staff had additional copies printed.

Case B

An adviser told of appreciation for the backing of his principal of in-depth reporting on religious cults. The adviser had alerted the administrator to the sensitive nature of the topic.

“It was a story that had to be written,” the adviser said. “We knew we’d catch flak but never dreamed of the intensity.”

The story concerned the growing number of students who had joined a small religious group that had just established itself in the community. Parents were worried the congregation was a cult and their sons and daughters were being lured away from traditional values. Students who had joined the church and later withdrawn told about unusual demands on their time and money.

After the story appeared, reactions were immediate and extreme. Church leaders threatened a lawsuit. Parents demanded the principal protect their children. Students wanted to know more about the situation. The reporter, once proud of the



byline, wished her name had not appeared with the story. She received threats at school and at home.

Case C

Two young men, both seniors, attended a school dance as a couple. The student photographer, taking photos for the paper and the yearbook, took numerous pictures that night, including several of the boys dancing together.

The next school day, everyone at school talked about the boys. Students discussed the topic at home and work.

After a story and photos about the dance appeared, and a spread was planned for the yearbook, students seemed to “shoot the messenger.”

“They blamed us,” the adviser said. “We hadn’t created the story. It happened long before we wrote about it.”

In response to the extended student discussion, the paper’s editors decided to do a series on homosexuality. The center section in the newspaper included depth interviews with the two young men, a story about the growing number of young persons making their sexual identities known and the problems they encountered. It also included interviews with gay organization leaders and an editorial in which the editor expressed the staff view that homosexuals should be accorded both rights and respect.

Adviser and editor heard a parade of complainers, most who objected to extensive coverage they said dignified the cause of homosexuality. The principal, too, was forced to respond to community leaders, parents and students who charged the stories implied school approval.

Each of these topics evoked strong emotions and brought waves of protest. Each had every right to be presented in scholastic media and each represented the very best of scholastic journalism.

HANDLING THREATS OF DANGER WITH THE MEDIA

Another potentially controversial situation arises when the principal becomes aware of threats of violence aimed at the school or members of the school community. What roles do student media play, for example, when the school receives a bomb or Internet threat, or when an act of school violence has actually occurred?

When should the principal initiate conversation with student journalists, and when is it better to keep the threat or incident internal?

Decisions of this type are, by nature, somewhat situational. However, questions to consider when determining the role of student media in covering issues of school or student safety include:

- Does the public have a right or need to know?



- What would be the consequences of not communicating or volunteering information? (Health/safety issues)
- How serious is the threat? If police and other officials are all in agreement the threat is not serious, is it wise to create unneeded anxiety?
- Is there anything members of the school community can do? Can they contribute to a solution?
- What potential exists for disruption? Is releasing the information going to create more disruption than would be created by not releasing the information? What is the anxiety factor? Are rumors flying and creating more anxiety? Will presenting information help alleviate the situation?
- What are the legal and confidentially issues?

In many cases these questions would lead the principal to include student journalists in the press briefings and other forums when communicating on the issue.

The list of topics like these varies from school to school just as controversy is created in the eyes of the beholder. Each story was handled responsibly; each brought reactions.

To take the easy way out and avoid such topics would be to ignore the challenge of journalism. The very fact readers respond indicates the subject is both timely and vital. Again, publication of any scholastic media involves risks not inherent in other school activities.

These risks are worth taking; the benefits in preparing students to become more intelligent and critical citizens are many.

Strong, educated support from school administrators for reporting like this shows the educational system at its best, working together to explain issues and events, placing them in perspective for better understanding.

OUTFITTING STUDENT MEDIA WITH TECHNOLOGY/BUDGETING BASICS

John Bowen

Once students have established goals for their media, administrators will be better able to understand their needs. If the school has an extensive curricular and co-curricular program and a large number of students trained in journalism who are interested in working for various media, the question becomes one of meeting the program's financial needs.

There are at least seven areas of cost to consider:

ADVISER SUPPORT

This includes extra compensation for time spent working with students and should be equivalent to other high-community profile advising and coaching positions. Compensation also includes the cost of the adviser's attendance at workshops, conventions and additional college training.

FACILITIES

A media program needs adequate facilities to help students and advisers succeed. Facilities should include:

- A newsroom/classroom dedicated to media use with access during all periods of the day and after school as needed.
- Outside school phone lines.
- If possible, instructional equipment including data projectors, televisions or other visual projectors.

OFFICE SUPPLIES FROM STAPLERS TO ADEQUATE PAPER SUPPLIES

COMPUTERS

- Hardware including computers, printers, scanners, networking, phone line(s), television to complete publication duties without making students wait for long periods of time. Ten to 15 computers might be a minimum for a large school. Computers should be as up-to-date as possible, giving students the best learning experience available.
- Unfiltered Internet access to gather information and post Web sites.
- Storage for media projects that could include networked servers, CD burners and large volume hard drives.
- Technical support.



- Software including word processing, desktop publishing, graphics and photo manipulation, spreadsheet and database, communication and browser and web development. (Data security issues/prior review need to be addressed to protect independence.)

VISUAL COMMUNICATION FACILITIES

These facilities should include darkroom space for photographic instruction and work. More schools and journalism facilities are changing to digital or dry darkrooms with no chemicals or wet sinks. Equipment should include cameras and lenses (film and digital) and scanners (film and print). A wet darkroom should have enlargers, chemicals and other facilities to make prints and develop film.

JOURNALISM LIBRARY OF TEXTS, REFERENCE MANUALS AND PUBLICATIONS

BROADCAST FACILITIES

Support for this area should include a professional quality studio with video and sound editing equipment and cameras, and access to a distance learning center.

While there are still schools publishing print media without computers, administrators should ensure students have the most modern learning experience possible, converting to computer-assisted publication as soon as possible.

Determining the price tag for necessary equipment and supplies is often easier than finding revenue sources, but financial support for student media is essential. If the school cannot provide all these facilities, work with the adviser to find corporate sponsorship and assistance.

The best scenario is school-provided financial support for student media. Students and advisers should not have to take time and energy away from the teaching and practice of journalism to pay the bills.

Four potential sources of income for student media exist at the scholastic level:

SUBSIDY FROM SCHOOL/SCHOOL DISTRICT

Complete or partial subsidies would allow students to carry out their educational mission while still seeking some financial support on their own

SUBSCRIPTION SALES

Most print publications staffs offer their product for sale, some by single copy and some by yearly subscription.

ADVERTISING SALES

Advertisers know the youth market is a buying market.



CORPORATE AND BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

Corporate and business partnerships have become a growing way to collect income and achieve community support with minimum effort. Be sure to know what the business wants in return for its support.

There are definite values to all of the financial support mentioned and some publications may employ a combination of each. The subsidy underscores the school system's intention to consider the media a valid educational tool. By allocating a portion of taxpayer funds toward the production and distribution of student media, a school system tells the community it recognizes the educational value in both student production and student/community reception of that media.

If fundraising is necessary it should be related to the mission of the journalism program. Media cannot compete with other activities with the same type of fundraising.

JOURNALISTIC ETHICS AT CENTER STAGE

Richard Johns

Making ethical decisions for student media is often like buying a car. You think of all the questions to both ask and answer, look at all the possibilities, and then make the best decisions you can.

It's tough enough for adult journalists to make ethical decisions, to recognize when a conflict in morals and standards may harm members of their audience or interview subjects. For student journalists, making such judgments is especially daunting. Students live more closely with their journalistic decisions than professionals do. They sit next to the classmates they feature in their newspaper, yearbook, news bureau or other media. They're taught by the teachers who are the subjects of their stories, and many student staff members have working relationships with administrators they also must interview for sometimes difficult stories.

Robert Dardenne of the Poynter Institute for Media Studies published a research project entitled *A Free and Responsible Student Press*. In his 100-page paper, he identified the following guidelines regarding ethical decision-making:

- Practice ethics every day; make that practice a part of your routine.
- Create a code of ethics as a guide for making wise ethical decisions.
- Create a set of questions (Who will be hurt? Who will be helped? What harm will come of it? Etc.).
- Reach careful, rational decisions, rather than succumb to gut reactions.
- Be sensitive to conflict of interest, plagiarism, distasteful or offensive content, invasion of privacy, bias, and inaccuracy.

CHECKLIST FOR STUDENT EDITORS

- Is the story or photo essay accurate? Have we checked and double-checked the facts we are passing on to our audience?
- Is the presentation fair? Does it correctly represent the facts or has some information been used out of context that causes misrepresentation of the true situation?
- Are we tackling issues rather than attacking individuals?
- Are we using this story to serve our audience — our audience's needs, rights and interests — rather than personal narrow biases? In other words, are we



using, in fact, abusing our access to disseminate information in order to project our own narrow perception of what is news?

- Are we willing to defend this article or presentation to critics? What arguments will we use? What justification will clarify its use for persons who need to understand better the role of the media in our society?
- Is the story balanced? Has the reporter gone to a variety of sources so that differing or opposing views are fairly presented?
- Is the story free of editorial bias or has the reporter injected his or her opinion into the story?

ACHIEVING DIVERSITY ON STAFF AND IN COVERAGE

Pat Graff

Just as the local newspaper needs many voices to tell its community's story, so do the various school productions. Providing opportunities for a variety of students to participate in school media production is important to having publications that reflect, as accurately as possible, the full picture of the school and its community. A diverse staff offers different viewpoints and has a broader view of issues and topics that might interest and speak for more of the audiences it targets.

In building diversity on staff, the principal and the adviser should look at barriers to class admission that might, intentionally or unintentionally, keep certain groups of students out of the media classroom: prerequisites, grade requirements, etc. This is not to say that they must abandon high standards, but it's important to remember that there are a variety of ways for talented students to contribute to publications.

Besides doing away with real or perceived barriers, principals and advisers might use specific techniques to recruit members from a variety of student groups. Providing opportunities for "freelance" writers is a good way to get students interested at the beginning. One-on-one, personal invitations to be on staff are often the most effective methods, whether the adviser or a student staffer issues the invitation. It's important to say honestly, "We need you as a part of staff." And, it's equally important to provide training and support for these new staff members.

Building accessibility to scholastic journalism programs is important for quality programs. When diversity is valued — indeed, sought — in the newsroom, it becomes a key element of decisions on coverage, fairness and editorial leadership. In addition, students from minority groups often have the opportunity to attend summer workshops, earn scholarships and work as interns in the professional media. For example, the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund offers more than 30 free workshops each summer for minority students interested in journalism careers, with additional scholarships awarded at the end of each program.

But diversity goes beyond recruiting and supporting a diverse student staff; coverage must be fair, balanced and accurate. Student media should share different viewpoints, portray a wide variety of students doing lots of interesting activities and serve as an open forum for student opinion with numerous opportunities for feedback. By covering the "offbeat" students or less-frequently-mentioned groups in the school in a respectful way, staffs can help their peers appreciate these individuals' unique gifts and contributions while validating their issues.

It's important that coverage avoid perpetuating negative stereotypes of any group, whether it's the cheerleaders or devout Muslims. Some topics are overdone, especially in the generic approach (Martin Luther King, Jr., Day, Women's History



Month), so students should be encouraged to look for local angles that tell compelling stories about people. And staffs should always look for ways to reflect their schools' diversity. Photo polls should have males, females, freshmen, seniors, and kids of all shapes and colors in them. Yearbook candid photos should show new faces on nearly every page. Literary magazines might run poems in Spanish, accompanied by accurate English translations.

School media advisers might be wise to spend some time in diversity training with their staffs. Workshops are available, as are other resources. *The Full Palette Diversity Guide*, published by The University of Iowa in 1996, offers a variety of class activities focusing on diversity in school media coverage and participation. The Southern Poverty Law Center offers a variety of teaching tools, including *Teaching Tolerance* magazine and "The Shadow of Hate" videotape and workbook for exposing issues of intolerance in American history. Any training with the student staff is important, especially if, during the course of a school year, students find themselves covering sensitive racial or intolerance issues.

Just as there is a dearth of minority teachers throughout this country, so is there a significant lack of minority advisers for student publications. Efforts by the Journalism Education Association in the last decade to recruit, train and retain minority advisers are beginning to have positive effects, but certainly much more needs to be done to ensure students have the opportunity to work with many advisers who have a multitude of world experiences. And, ultimately, efforts to increase diversity on the school publication will result in more diversity in professional journalism as well.

OTHER SCHOOL MEDIA

Richard Johns

When we think of student media, we usually think first of the school newspaper, which has a long history in scholastic journalism.

Other media include the yearbook, which, in a very real sense, is the school's historic record of one school year. From the pages of the yearbook the character and personality of a school emerge. Students who produce the yearbook gain valuable skills that they can apply to other studies or to a career objective.

Broadcast journalism, including radio and TV, are now offered in a growing number of schools and provide audiences with timely news. They give students who produce those programs the opportunity to interview, report and write within the framework of a unique deadline structure.

Literary magazines provide an outlet for creative expression, written and visual. They can be a totally independent publication or combined as a section in the student newspaper or yearbook. Students learn to appreciate various kinds of expression: fiction, essays, poetry, illustration and photography.

CHECKLIST FOR PRINCIPALS

Lyn Fiscus

The principal is an important element in establishing a positive climate for scholastic journalism. Evaluate your attitudes and practices by answering the following:

- Do I understand the role of student journalism and am I ready to defend that role to critics?
- Is there a set of guidelines (an editorial policy) — acceptable to me, to the adviser, and to the editors — that spell out the role, responsibilities, and limitations of the student media?
- Do the adviser and student editors know and do they agree with the objectives established for their publication?
- Have I met with the student media staff members in an informal news conference so they know my expectations for student journalism?
- Have we established a working budget that will ensure a publication delivered on a regular schedule for the entire year?
- Have I helped to clarify the role of the student media to other teachers so that they understand its purposes?
- Am I available as a source of news for reporters on assignment?
- Have I thought out a method of providing feedback to editors after publication so that they will benefit from my review but will not be intimidated?
- Have I helped the adviser establish logical and practical criteria for selecting a printing company or other necessary vendors such as yearbook portrait photographers?
- Have all contracts been approved and signed by necessary administrators in the school district?
- Have I helped to provide adequate facilities for both the adviser and student media staff members?
- Have I worked with the adviser to establish clear standards for evaluating the adviser's work with student journalists?
- Have I provided opportunities, time, financial support, and encouragement for the adviser to participate in professional growth activities in the field of scholastic journalism?
- Have I established a fair increment to be added to the salary of the adviser? (In all respects, the journalism adviser is a coach, drilling students in important communication fundamentals and supervising their performance for public scrutiny.)

RATING SERVICES AS THEY INFLUENCE ADVISER-ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONSHIPS

Richard Johns

Using national or regional critical services to review student media is like brandishing a double-edged sword. This long-standing practice of obtaining an outside “objective” view of a school’s media offers the obvious advantage of providing third-party appraisal of a staff’s efforts and performance.

It also brings the potential for conflict between adviser and administrator if either party places undue emphasis upon the significance of the ratings received. Consequently, a brief discussion of critical services is appropriate.

Experienced advisers today generally agree that critical rating services do serve an important function.

- They provide standards of excellence through guidelines published in their critique booklets.
- In addition, most of the rating services supplement these efforts by sponsoring national and regional conferences and a variety of materials ranging from magazines to guidebooks, leaflets, videos, CDs and Web sites.
- Through their critical services and awards programs, they have offered constructive criticism and brought recognition to thousands of student journalists.
- Advisers can use the comments from the rating service judges as teaching tools.

However, there are potential problems in use of rating services. If the services are used primarily for recognition and publicity rather than for objective evaluation, the staff is vulnerable to complaints that the media are produced for judges, not for their audience.

And, if the administrator bases his or her judgment of the adviser’s effectiveness upon ratings, that administrator may be doing the adviser a serious disservice. If too much stress is placed on achieving the service’s top rating, unrealistic goals may be established that can create conflicts between the administrator and the adviser and between the adviser and student journalists.

If the use of critical services is considered important and appropriate, principals should acquaint themselves with the standards established by the service and discuss these standards with the adviser to determine the validity of applying these norms to the school’s media.



But, above all, principals should base their judgment of the adviser's performance upon other, more important criteria:

- To what extent has the adviser achieved the goals previously established for the school media program?
- In what ways do the media meet the needs and challenges of this particular school?

Then, if honors come to any of the school media through a review by a critical service, regard this acclaim as an extra dividend.

QUILL AND SCROLL CHAPTER TO HONOR STUDENT JOURNALISTS

Richard Johns

Your school — like all dynamic secondary schools — encourages students to do their best. In the classroom it urges all of them to achieve to the best of their ability. In athletics, music, dramatics, student council, clubs and other activities it provides for recognition and reward.

What are the keys to incentive in student journalism? You may have your own local award system that includes students on media staffs. At assemblies or banquets or other occasions you may focus attention on them because they deserve applause, too.

What is Quill and Scroll? It is the international honorary society for high school journalists. Local charters have been granted to more than 14,200 high schools in every state and in 44 foreign countries. More than one and a half million young journalists have earned Quill and Scroll memberships.

Quill and Scroll was organized April 10, 1926, by a group of high school publication advisers to encourage and recognize individual achievement in student journalism. The Society has done much to improve student media and scholastic journalism standards.

Thousands of advisers have found that a local chapter of Quill and Scroll provides effective motivation. Membership in Quill and Scroll is a high honor for any student, for staff members who work hard to qualify for membership. Quill and Scroll has high educational and journalistic standards. Charters to establish a Quill and Scroll chapter are granted only to high schools (grades 9–12). However, Quill and Scroll Society does have non-member awards and recognition available that can be used by any school media staff and adviser.

Your school is eligible to establish a chapter if it publishes a newspaper, yearbook, magazine, literary magazine, online publication or engages in radio or television activities. Schools in which students gather and write news for a local newspaper also are eligible.

No specific minimum number of students is required to organize a local chapter. The adviser may recommend one or more qualified staff members as they become eligible at any time during the year.

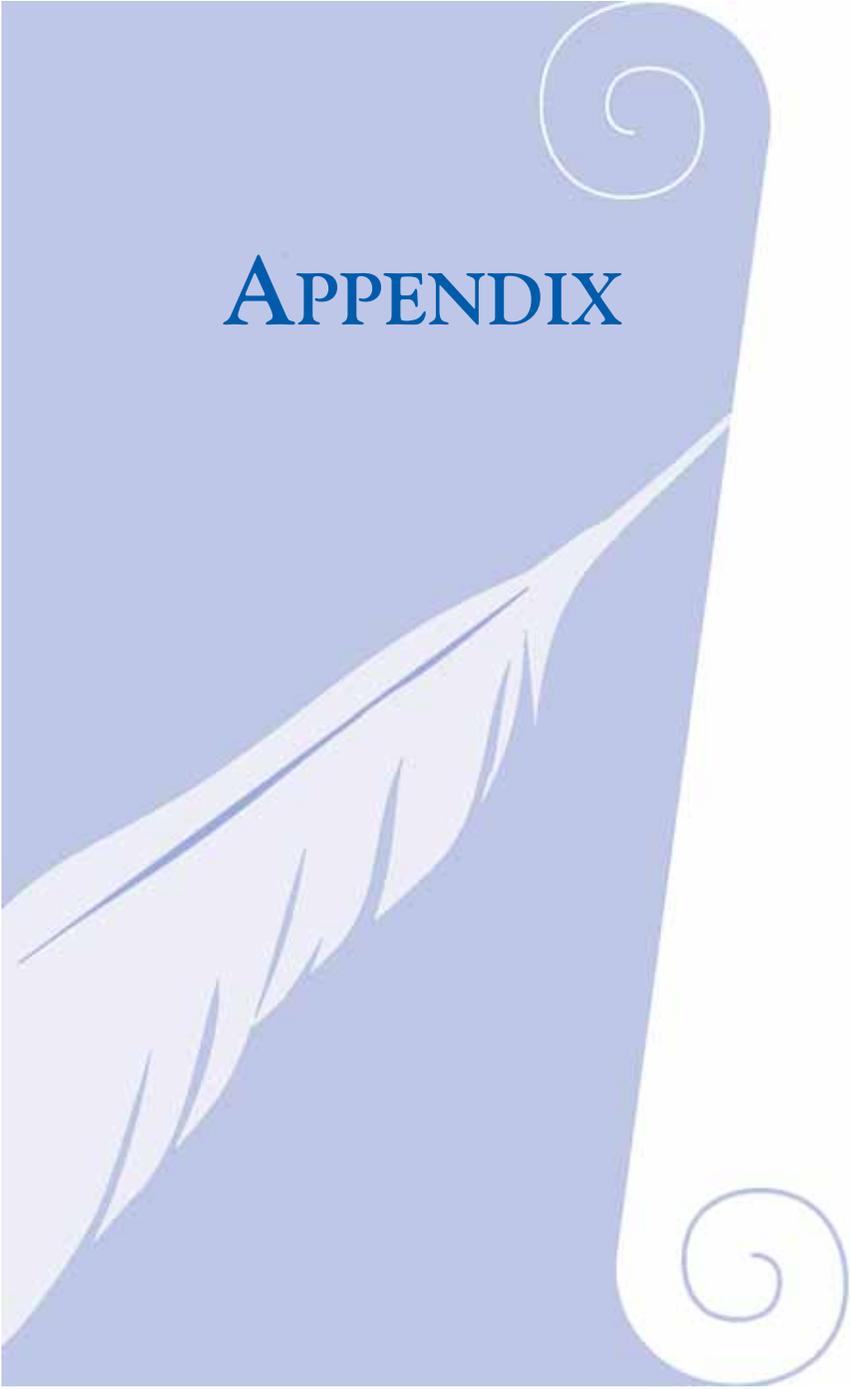
Local chapters develop activities and projects to fit their situation. In some instances the organization is purely honorary. In others there may be a year-round program.



To help members and advisers, the international organization publishes booklets and the magazine *Quill & Scroll*, sponsors an International Writing and Photography Contest, Yearbook Excellence Contest, conducts an annual Newsmedia Evaluation Service and awards scholarships to students and advisers.

Recognition and reward of excellent work that student journalists accomplish during a school year is important. In addition to Quill and Scroll Society there are a variety of additional resources available to help recognize and reward student journalists on the local, regional and national level.

If your school does not have a chapter of Quill and Scroll, write or e-mail for more information to Quill and Scroll, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, The University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa 52242. E-mail address: quill-scroll@uiowa.edu or go to the Quill and Scroll Web site, www.uiowa.edu/~quill-sc.

A decorative graphic of a scroll with a quill pen. The scroll is light blue with a white spiral at the top right and bottom right. A white quill pen is positioned diagonally across the scroll, pointing towards the top right. The word "APPENDIX" is written in a dark blue, serif font in the center of the scroll.

APPENDIX

National Scholastic Journalism Membership Organizations

THE ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATION IN JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION/ SCHOLASTIC JOURNALISM DIVISION

Candace Perkins Bowen,
past head
Kent State University
School of Journalism and
Mass Communication
Kent, OH 44242
(330) 672-2572
cbowen@kent.edu
[http://www.aejmc.org/orgs/
index.html#divisions](http://www.aejmc.org/orgs/index.html#divisions)

COLUMBIA SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION

Columbia University
Edmund Sullivan, execu-
tive director
Mail Code 5711
New York, NY 10027-6902
(212) 854-9400
Fax. (212) 854-9401
cspa@columbia.edu
<http://www.columbia.edu/cspa>

*National Council of Teachers of English/
International Reading Association*

Language Arts Standards Numbers 4, 7 and 12

4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

7. Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.

12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

Adviser Code of Ethics

Media advisers will:

- Model standards of professional journalistic conduct to students, administrators and others.
- Empower students to make decisions of style, structure and content by creating a learning atmosphere where students will actively practice critical thinking and decision making.
- Encourage students to seek out points of view and to explore a variety of information sources in their decision making.
- Ensure students have a free, robust and active forum for expression without prior review or restraint,
- Emphasize the importance of accuracy, balance and clarity in all aspects of news gathering and reporting.
- Show trust in students as they carry out their responsibilities by encouraging and supporting them in a caring learning environment.
- Remain informed on press rights and responsibilities to provide students with sources of legal information.
- Advise, not act as censors or decision makers.
- Display professional and personal integrity in situations which might be construed as potential conflicts of interest.
- Support free expression for others in local and larger communities.
- Counsel students to avoid deceptive practices in all practices of publication work.
- Model effective communications skills by continuously updating knowledge of media education.

— *JEA Board of Directors, Adopted 11/96*

Scholastic organizations ...

JOURNALISM EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Kansas State University
Linda Puntney, executive
director
103 Kedzie Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506-1505
(785) 532-5532
E -mail: jea@pub.ksu.edu
<http://www.jea.org>

NATIONAL SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION

Tom Rolnicki, executive
director
2221 University Avenue
SE,
Suite 121
Minneapolis, MN 55414
(612) 625-8335
Fax: (612) 626-0720
E-mail:
info@studentpress.org
<http://www.studentpress.org>

STUDENT PRESS LAW CENTER

Mark Goodman, executive
director
1815 N. Fort Myer Drive,
Suite 900
Arlington, VA 22209
(703) 807-1904
splc@splc.org
<http://www.splc.org>

Grant-making Foundations and Organizations

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF NEWSPAPER EDITORS

Diana Mitsu Klos,
senior project director
11690B Sunrise Valley
Drive
Reston, VA 20191
(703) 453-1125
dmk@asne.org
<http://www.highschooljournalism.org>

THE DOW JONES NEWSPAPER FUND, INC.

Richard S. Holden,
executive director
P.O. Box 300
Princeton, NJ 08543-0300
(609) 452-2820
newsfund@wsj.dowjones.com
<http://djnewspaperfund.dowjones.com>

THE FREEDOM FORUM

Charles Overby, President
1101 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22209
(703) 528-0800
Fax: (703) 522-4831
news@freedomforum.org
<http://www.freedomforum.org>

Internet Free Expression Alliance Mission Statement

The Internet Free Expression Alliance will work to:

- Ensure the continuation of the Internet as a forum for open, diverse and unimpeded expression and to maintain the vital role the Internet plays in providing an efficient and democratic means of distributing information around the world;
- Promote openness and encourage informed public debate and discussion of proposals to rate and/or filter online content;
- Identify new threats to free expression and First Amendment values on the Internet, whether legal or technological;
- Oppose any governmental effort to promote, coerce or mandate the rating or filtering of online content;
- Protect the free speech and expression rights of both the speaker and the audience in the interactive online environment;
- Ensure that Internet speakers are able to reach the broadest possible interested audience and that Internet listeners are able to access all material of interest to them;
- Closely examine technical proposals to create filtering architectures and oppose approaches that conceal ME filtering criteria employed, or irreparably damage the unique character of the Internet; and
- Encourage approaches that highlight “recommended” internet content, rather than those that restrict access to materials labeled as “harmful” or otherwise objectionable, and emphasize that any rating exists solely to allow specific content to be blocked from view may inhabit the flow of free expression.

Position Statement on Photo Manipulation

Given the rapid growth brought about by photo-manipulation software and the reliance scholastic journalism programs are placing on them, the Journalism Education Association urges students and advisers to follow these principles:

Advisers of student media should not make decisions about the suitability or legality of images in question. Instead, advisers should empower students to make such decisions and to counsel students to avoid deceptive practices in all aspects of publication work.

Advisers should also counsel students to seek professional legal advice in all legal and ethical questions.

Students working on publications should consider the following tests devised by University of Oregon professors Tom Wheeler and Tim Gleason about “whether and how to manipulate, alter or enhance” images:

The viewfinder test — Does the photograph show more than what the photographer saw through the viewfinder?

The photo-processing test — A range of technical enhancements and corrections on an image after the photo is shot could change the image. Do things go beyond what is routinely done in the darkroom to improve image quality — cropping, color corrections, lightening or darkening?

The technical credibility test — is the proposed alteration not technically obvious to the readers?

The clear-implausibility test — is the altered image not obviously false to readers?

If any of the above tests can be answered “yes,” JEA urges student journalists to:

- not manipulate news photos
- not publish the image(s) in question, or

Foundations and organizations ...

FIRST AMENDMENT CENTER

1207 18th Avenue, South
Nashville, TN 37212
(615) 321-9588
Fax: (615) 321-9599
info@fac.org

NEWSEUM

newseum@freedomforum.org
<http://www.newseum.org>
The Newseum is scheduled to reopen in Washington, D.C., in 2006.

JOHN S. AND JAMES L. KNIGHT FOUNDATION

Eric Newton, Director of Journalism Initiatives
One Biscayne Tower, Suite 3800
2 S. Biscayne Blvd.
Miami, FL 33131-1803
(305) 908-2600

NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

John Sturm, president and chief executive officer
1921 Gallows Road
Vienna, VA 22182-3900
(703) 902-1726
<http://www.naa.org>
Student/Newspaper Partnerships



Publications

Adviser Update

Free quarterly newsletter
published by The Dow
Jones Newspaper Fund, Inc.
P.O. Box 300
Princeton, NJ 08543-0300
Editor: George Taylor
(609) 452-2820
gtay200@aol.com

Communication: Journalism Education Today

Published quarterly by the
Journalism Education
Association
Kansas State University
103 Kedzie Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506-1505
(785) 532-5532
E -mail: jea@spub.ksu.edu

Quill & Scroll magazine
Published by Quill and
Scroll Honor Society
School of Journalism and
Mass Communication
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, IA 52242
Richard Johns,
executive director
quill-scroll@uiowa.edu
[http://www.uiowa.edu/
~quill-sc](http://www.uiowa.edu/~quill-sc)

- clearly label images as photo-illustrations when student editors decide they are the best way to support story content.

— JEA Board of Directors, Adopted 4/97

Position Statement on Internet Freedom of Expression

The Journalism Education Association has always believed students involved in print media should enjoy freedom of expression. As an extension of that, JEA also believes student use of the Internet should be free from prior review, restraint and other hindrances preventing free expression.

In particular, JEA:

- endorses the Student Press Law Center's revised Model Publication Guidelines that include statements on use of the Internet and urges journalism programs and school systems to adopt the SPLC model;
- joins with the Internet Free Expression Alliance in working to ensure the Internet is a forum for open, diverse and unimpeded expression;
- strongly opposes the use of filters or blocking software that interfere with the legitimate gathering or authoring of information protected by the First Amendment and recent Supreme Court decisions. All current blocking and filtering software consistently has been shown to restrain more than unprotected speech, taking from educators valid educational decision making and often giving it to unknown parties with unknown rationale;
- recommends communications teachers assist administrators, parents, students and others in their understanding the importance of free expression on the Internet;
- urges teachers, advisers and students to be fully informed of their rights in use of the Internet, web sites and acceptable use policies; and
- urges communications teachers and advisers to be the leaders in the shaping of their systems' Internet policies and decision making.

— JEA Board of Directors, Adopted 11/97

Publications ...

Student Press Review
Published by Columbia
Scholastic Press
Association
Columbia University
Mail Code 5711
New York, NY 10027-6902
Editor: Helen Smith

Trends in High School Media
Published by National
Scholastic Press Association
2221 University Avenue
SE, Suite 121
Minneapolis, MN 55414
(612) 625-8335
info@studentpress.org

Teacher Fellowships and Teacher Recognition Programs and Honors

NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALISM TEACHER AWARDS PROGRAM

Dow Jones Newspaper Fund, Inc.
P.O. Box 300
Princeton, NJ 08543-0300
(609) 452-2820
newsfund@wsj.dowjones.com
<http://djnewspaperfund.dowjones.com>
Deadline: July 1

NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL YEARBOOK ADVISER OF THE YEAR RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Journalism Education Association
Kansas State University
103 Kedzie Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506-1505
(785) 532-5532
jea@pub.KSU.edu
<http://www.jea.org>
Deadline: Oct. 15

Student Press Rights Position

I. The Journalism Education Association upholds the right of students to exercise their freedom of expression as guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, whether it be in the form of print or broadcast media.

Student journalists have the right to report on and editorialize about all topics, events or issues, including those unpopular or controversial, insofar as they affect or interest the school, community, nation and world. However, students have the same legal obligations as those imposed upon all journalists. Students must refrain from publishing or disseminating material that:

- (a) is obscene, according to current legal definitions;
- (b) is libelous, according to current legal definitions;
- (c) creates a clear and present danger of the immediate material and substantial physical disruption of the school;
- (d) is an invasion of privacy, according to current legal standards; and
- (e) advertises illegal products or services, as currently defined by legal definitions.

Student media shall not be subjected to prior restraints, review or censorship by faculty advisers, school administrators, faculty, school boards or any other individual outside the student editorial board, except as stated above, and only when these individuals can demonstrate legally defined justification. In addition, student journalists have the right to determine the content of their media.

II. Responsible exercise of freedom of expression involves adherence to the highest standards of journalism. Students also have an obligation to learn and observe the legal and ethical responsibilities expected of them as practicing journalists. JEA



expects each school system having student media to provide a qualified journalism instructor/adviser to teach students to report information accurately, fairly and perceptively.

III. Student media help educate students by providing an open forum of expression for journalists and the media's audiences, and as instruments through which students, faculty, administration and the public can gain insight into student thinking and concerns.

To make this forum and educational experiences possible, the journalism program needs to be supported by an appropriate assortment of finances, equipment and an educational philosophy.

IV. JEA recognizes that all students, regardless of race or socioeconomic level, should have equal opportunity to participate in journalism programs and that there is a need to identify and remove inequities which exist in these programs.

— *JEA Board of Directors, Revised 1988*

Fellowships and awards ...

GOLD KEY AWARD

Columbia Scholastic Press
Association

Columbia University
Mail Code 5711
New York, NY 10027-6902
(212) 854-9400

cspa@columbia.edu
<http://www.columbia.edu/cspa>

**CARL TOWLEY AWARD
MEDAL OF MERIT
AWARD**

Presented by Journalism
Education Association
Kansas State University
103 Kedzie Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506-1505
(785) 532-5532

jea@pub.ksu.edu
<http://www.jea.org>

PIONEER AWARD

National Scholastic
Press Association
2221 University Avenue
SE, Suite 121

Minneapolis, MN 55414
(612) 625-8335
info@studentpress.org
<http://www.studentpress.org>

**COURAGE IN STUDENT
JOURNALISM AWARD**

The Freedom Forum
1101 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22209
(703) 528-0800

For principals and students
<http://www.freedomforum.org>

Fellowships and awards ...

**HIGH SCHOOL
JOURNALISM INSTITUTE**
American Society of
Newspaper Editors
11690B Sunrise Valley
Drive
Reston, VA 20191
dmk@asne.org
<http://www.highschooljournalism.org>

Student Press Law Center

Model Guidelines for Student Media

I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

Freedom of expression and press freedom are fundamental values in a democratic society. The mission of any institution committed to preparing productive citizens must include teaching students these values, both by lesson and by example.

As determined by the courts, student exercise of freedom of expression and press freedom is protected by both state and federal law, especially by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. Accordingly, school officials are responsible for encouraging and ensuring freedom of expression and press freedom for all students.

It is the policy of the _____ Board of Education that (newspaper), (yearbook), (literary magazine) and (electronic or online media), the official, school-sponsored student media _____ High School have been established as forums for student expression and as voices in the uninhibited, robust, free and open discussion of issues. Each medium should provide a full opportunity for students to inquire, question and exchange ideas. Content should reflect all areas of student interest, including topics about which there may be dissent or controversy.

It is the policy of the _____ Board of Education that student journalists shall have the right to determine the content of student media. Accordingly, the following guidelines relate only to establishing grounds for disciplinary actions subsequent to publication.

II. OFFICIAL STUDENT MEDIA

A. Responsibilities of Student Journalists

Students who work on official, school-sponsored student publications or electronic media determine



the content of their respective publications and are responsible for that content. These students should:

1. Determine the content of the student media;
2. Strive to produce media based upon professional standards of accuracy, objectivity and fairness;
3. Review material to improve sentence structure, grammar, spelling and punctuation;
4. Check and verify all facts and verify the accuracy of all quotations; and
5. In the case of editorials or letters to the editor concerning controversial issues, determine the need for rebuttal comments and opinions and provide space therefore if appropriate.

B. Unprotected Expression

The following types of student expression will not be protected:

1. Material that is “obscene as to minors.” “Obscene as to minors” is defined as material that meets all three of the following requirements:
 - (a) the average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find that the publication, taken as a whole, appeals to a minor’s prurient interest in sex; and
 - (b) the publication depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct such as ultimate sexual acts (normal or perverted), masturbation and lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
 - (c) the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value. Indecent or vulgar language is not obscene. [Note: Most states have statutes defining what is “obscene as to minors.” If such a statute is in force in your state, it should be substituted in place of section II(B)(1).]

Ethics Resources

A Free and Responsible Student Press, Robert Dardenne, The Poynter Institute for Media Studies

Doing Ethics in Journalism (Third edition), Jay Black and Bob Steele, The Society of Professional Journalists

Education for Freedom: Lessons on the First Amendment for Secondary School Students, The First Amendment Congress, The University of Denver

Media Ethics: Where Do You Draw the Line?, Rosalind Stark, The Newseum, Toll-Free (888) NEWSEUM or (703) 284-3544

The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law

The First Amendment Handbook, The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press (also available online at <http://www.rcfp.org>)

The Starting Point: Young Journalists and the Law, Mark Goodman and Mike Hiestand, The Student Press Law Center



Bios

MARY BENEDICT

Mary Benedict is an associate professor emeritus at the Ernie Pyle School of Journalism, Indiana University. In retirement she edits newsletters for nonprofit organizations as a volunteer, works with the Indiana High School Press Association on its internship program and writes travel articles based on her extensive travels. She is a former member of the faculty of the School of Journalism at Indiana University where she taught reporting, editing, public relations and directed the High School Journalism Institute. Before joining the faculty at Indiana, she was the newspaper and yearbook adviser at Washington and Arlington high schools in Indianapolis. She was the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund's 1967 National High School Journalism Teacher of the Year. She earned her master's and bachelor's degrees from Butler University.

2. Libelous material. Libelous statements are probably false and unprivileged statements of fact that do demonstrated injury to an individual's or business's reputation in the community. If the allegedly libeled party is a "public figure" or "public official" as defined below, then school officials must show that the false statement was published "with actual malice," i.e., that the student journalists knew that the statement was false or that they published it with reckless disregard for the truth without trying to verify the truthfulness of the statement.
 - (a) A public official is a person who holds an elected or appointed public office and exercises a significant amount of governmental authority.
 - (b) A public figure is a person who either has sought the public's attention or is well known because of personal achievements or actions.
 - (c) School employees will be considered public officials or public figures in relationship to articles concerning their school-related activities.
 - (d) When an allegedly libelous statement concerns an individual who is not a public official or a public figure, school officials must show that the false statement was published willfully or negligently, i.e., the student journalist who wrote or published the statement has failed to exercise reasonably prudent care.
 - (e) Students are free to express opinions. Specifically, a student may criticize school policy or the performance of teachers, administrators, school officials and other school employees.
3. Material that will cause "a material and substantial disruption of school activities."



- (a) Disruption is defined as student rioting, unlawful seizures of property, destruction of property, or substantial student participation in a school boycott, sit-in, walkout or other related form of activity. Material such as racial, religious or ethnic slurs, however distasteful, is not in and of itself disruptive under these guidelines. Threats of violence are not materially disruptive without some act in furtherance of that threat or a reasonable belief and expectation that the author of the threat has the capability and intent of carrying through on that threat in a manner that does not allow acts other than suppression of speech to mitigate the threat in a timely manner. Material that stimulates heated discussion or debate does not constitute the type of disruption prohibited.
- (b) For student media to be considered disruptive, specific facts must exist upon which one could reasonably forecast that a likelihood of immediate, substantial material disruption to normal school activity would occur if the material were further distributed or has occurred as a result of the material's distribution or dissemination. Mere undifferentiated fear or apprehension of disturbance is not enough; school administrators must be able affirmatively to show substantial facts that reasonably support a forecast of likely disruption.
- (c) In determining whether student media is disruptive, consideration must be given to the context of the distribution as well as the content of the material. In this regard, consideration should be given to past experience in the school with similar material, past experience in the school in dealing with and supervising the students in the school, cur-

Bios ...

**CANDACE PERKINS
BOWEN**

Candace Perkins Bowen directs the Scholastic Media Center at Kent State University, is vice president of the board of the Student Press Law Center and past head of the Scholastic Journalism Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. She is the recipient of the 1989 National High School Journalism Teacher of the Year Award. She earned her master's and bachelor's degrees at Northern Illinois University. She is a recipient of the Carl Towley and Medal of Merit Awards from the Journalism Education Association, a Pioneer Award from NSPA and a Gold Key from CSPA.

JOHN BOWEN

John Bowen is a past president of the Student Press Law Center Board of Directors and chairs the Journalism Education Association Scholastic Press Rights Commission. He teaches social studies at Lakewood (Ohio) High School where he advises the *Lakewood Times*, a National Pacemaker



Bios ...

award winner and one of nine inaugural First Amendment Schools. He was the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund's 1983 National High School Journalism Teacher of the Year. His other honors include CSPA's Gold Key, NSPA's Pioneer Award, JEA's Medal of Merit and its Carl Towley Award. He is a graduate of Kent State University.

CHARLEEN SILVA DELFINO

Charleen Silva Delfino is the chair of the Secondary Section of the National Council of Teachers of English; a former secondary school teacher of English and social studies and advisor of the student literary magazine. Currently, Delfino is the director of the San Jose Area Writing Project at San Jose State University in San Jose, Calif.

LEANA DONOFRIO

Leana Donofrio is sophomore pro-journalism major at Kent State University. She is an enterprise reporter for the *Daily Kent Stater*. At Lakewood (Ohio) High School she was a team

member of the student newspaper and was involved in several student events influencing student attitudes and behavior and whether there have been any instances of actual or threatened disruption prior to or contemporaneously with the dissemination of the student publication in question.

- (d) School officials must protect advocates of unpopular viewpoints.
- (e) "School activity" means educational student activity sponsored by the school and includes, by way of example and not by way of limitation, classroom work, official assemblies and other similar gatherings, school athletic contests, band concerts, school plays and scheduled in-school lunch periods.

C. Legal Advice

1. If, in the opinion of a student editor, student editorial staff or faculty adviser, material proposed for publication may be "obscene," "libelous" or would cause an "immediate, material and substantial disruption of school activities," the legal opinion of a practicing attorney should be sought. The services of the attorney for the local newspaper or the free legal services of the Student Press Law Center (703/807-1904) are recommended.
2. Any legal fees charged in connection with the consultation will be paid by the board of education.
3. The final decision of whether the material is to be published will be left to the student editor or student editorial staff.

D. Protected Speech

1. School officials cannot:
 - (a) Ban student expression solely because it is controversial, takes extreme, "fringe" or minority opinions, or is distasteful, unpopular or unpleasant;



- (b) Ban the publication or distribution of material relating to sexual issues including, but not limited to, virginity, birth control and sexually-transmitted diseases (including AIDS);
 - (c) Censor or punish the occasional use of indecent, vulgar or so-called “four-letter” words in student publications;
 - (d) Prohibit criticism of the policies, practices or performance of teachers, school officials, the school itself or of any public officials;
 - (e) Cut off funds to official student media because of disagreement over editorial policy;
 - (f) Ban student expression that merely advocates illegal conduct without proving that such speech is directed toward and will actually cause imminent unlawful action.
 - (g) Ban the publication or distribution by students of material written by nonstudents;
 - (h) Prohibit the endorsement of candidates for student office or for public office at any level.
2. Commercial Speech

Advertising is constitutionally protected expression. Student media may accept advertising. Acceptance or rejection of advertising is within the purview of the publication staff, which may accept any ads except those for products or services that are illegal for all students. Ads for political candidates and ballot issues may be accepted; however publication staffs are encouraged to solicit ads from all sides on such issues.

E. Online Student Media and Use of Electronic Information Resources

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leader, a National High School Journalist of the Year runner-up and winner of several other national, state and local scholarships.

LYN FISCUS

Lyn Fiscus is the editor of the award-winning *Leadership for Student Activities* magazine since 1995. She is a former leadership and journalism teacher and student activities adviser. Before joining the National Association of Secondary School Principals as editor of the monthly magazine, Fiscus taught high school in the St. Louis area for 12 years and worked with a variety of student groups including yearbook, newspaper, student council, and others. She is a graduate of the University of Missouri-Columbia with a bachelor's degree in journalism and a Master of Education degree.

PAT GRAFF

Pat Graff is chair of the English Department at LaCueva High School in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She holds a bachelor's degree in jour-



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nalism from the University of Oklahoma. She was recognized as the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund's 1995 National High School Journalism Teacher of the Year. Ms. Graff served on the NASSP/Carnegie Foundation Commission that produced the report on high schools for the 21st Century, *Breaking Ranks*, in 1996, and she served on the Advisory Council of NASSP's National Alliance of High Schools from its inception in 1996 until January 1999. She is active in Girl Scouts of America and the National Federation of Press Women.

RICHARD JOHNS

Richard Johns is executive director of Quill and Scroll Society and a member of the faculty of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Iowa. He teaches journalism education, advanced media design and teaching methods. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. He has edited *Quill & Scroll* magazine

1. Online Student Media

Online media, including Internet Web sites, e-mail, listserves and Usenet and Bitnet discussion groups, may be used by students like any other communications media to reach both those within the school and those beyond it. All official, school-sponsored online student publications are entitled to the same protections and are subject to no greater limitations than other student media, as described in this policy.

2. Electronic Information Resources

Student journalists may use electronic information resources, including Internet Web sites, e-mail, listserves and Usenet and Bitnet discussion groups, to gather news and information, to communicate with other students and individuals and to ask questions of and consult with sources. School officials will apply the same criteria used in determining the suitability of other educational and information resources to attempts to remove or restrict student media access to online and electronic material. Just as the purchase, availability and use of media materials in a classroom or library does not indicate endorsement of their contents by school officials, neither does making electronic information available to students imply endorsement of that content.

Although faculty advisers to student media are encouraged to help students develop the intellectual skills needed to evaluate and appropriately use electronically available information to meet their news gathering purposes, advisers are not responsible for approving the online resources used or created by their students.

3. Acceptable Use Policies

The Board recognizes that the technical and networking environment necessary for online communication may require that school officials define guidelines for student exploration and use of electronic information resources.



The purpose of such guidelines will be to provide for the orderly, efficient and fair operation of school's online resources. The guidelines may not be used to unreasonably restrict student use of or communication on the online media.

Such guidelines may address the following issues: file size limits, password management, system security, data downloading protocol, use of domain names, use of copyrighted software, access to computer facilities, computer hacking, computer etiquette and data privacy.

III. ADVISER JOB SECURITY

The student media adviser is not a censor. No person who advises a student publication will be fired, transferred or removed from the advisership by reason of his or her refusal to exercise editorial control over student media or to otherwise suppress the protected free expression of student journalists.

IV. NON-SCHOOL-SPONSORED MEDIA

A. Non-school-sponsored student media and the students who produce them are entitled to the protections provided in section II(D) of this policy. In addition school officials may not ban the distribution of non-school-sponsored student media on school grounds.

However, students who distribute material described in section II(B) of this policy may be subject to reasonable discipline after distribution at school has occurred.

1. School officials may reasonably regulate the time, place and manner of distribution.
 - (a) Non-school-sponsored media will have the same rights of distribution as official student media;
 - (b) "Distribution" means dissemination of media to students at a time and place of normal school activity, or immediately prior or subsequent thereto, by means of handing out free copies, selling or offering copies for sale, accepting donations

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and served on Student Press Law Center executive board and is currently a member of the SPLC Advisory Board. His honors include CSPA's Gold Key, NSPA's Pioneer Award, JEA's Medal of Merit and its Carl Towley Award.

LINDA WALLER

Linda Waller is deputy director of the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund, Princeton, N.J., a non-profit foundation within Dow Jones & Company, which encourages young people to pursue careers in journalism. She joined Dow Jones in 1988. The Fund offers a business reporting internship program for minority college sophomores, juniors, and copy editing, real-time and online internships for juniors, seniors and graduate students. Ms. Waller coordinates support for high school journalism workshops for minorities and assists the executive director in administering journalism education programs. She oversees production of career literature, news releases, Web site postings and Fund publications. Ms. Waller holds a



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B.A. in journalism from the University of Bridgeport, Connecticut. Before coming to the Newspaper Fund, she worked for 12 years as a reporter, news editor, bureau chief and city editor for Gannett Suburban Newspapers, Westchester County, N.Y.

TIM WESTERBERG

Dr. Westerberg has been a high school principal for 21 years, the last 15 of which have been at Littleton High School in Littleton, Colorado. Prior to entering administration he served as a social studies teacher and coach for five years in Illinois and Iowa. Dr. Westerberg received Bachelors and Masters degrees from the University of Iowa and a Doctorate in Educational Administration from Iowa State University. He has published several articles and commentaries on high school reform, standards-based education, and leadership for change in professional journals including *Educational Leadership*, the *NASSP Bulletin*, and *Education Week*, and is

for copies of the media or displaying the media in areas of the school which are generally frequented by students.

2. School officials cannot:

- (a) Prohibit the distribution of anonymous literature or other student media or require that it bear the name of the sponsoring organization or author;
- (b) Ban the distribution of student media because it contains advertising;
- (c) Ban the sale of student media; or
- (d) Create regulations that discriminate against non-school-sponsored media or interfere with the effective distribution of sponsored or non-sponsored media.

B. These regulations do not apply to media independently produced or obtained and distributed by students off school grounds and without school resources. Such material is fully protected by the First Amendment and is not subject to regulation by school authorities. Reference to or minimal contact with a school will not subject otherwise independent media, such as an independent, student-produced Web site, to school regulation.

V. PRIOR RESTRAINT

No student media, whether non-school-sponsored or official, will be reviewed by school administrators prior to distribution or withheld from distribution. The school assumes no liability for the content of any student publication, and urges all student journalists to recognize that with editorial control comes responsibility, including the responsibility to follow professional journalism standards each school year.

VI. CIRCULATION

These guidelines will be included in the handbook on student rights and responsibilities and circulated to all students.

Prior Review Statement of the Journalism Education Association

The Journalism Education Association strongly opposes prior review of student expression.

Along with the Student Press Law Center, we believe no non-school-sponsored or official publication, printed or electronic, should be reviewed by school administrators prior to distribution.

Prior review by administrators, school officials or teachers, other than publications advisers, is illogical, journalistically inappropriate and educationally unsound.

A journalism teacher working with students advises, counsels and supervises the editing process. Such internal discussions do not constitute prior review, so long as protected speech is not tampered with, and students make final content decisions.

IN PARTICULAR, PRIOR REVIEW:

- violates the concept that it is the school's responsibility to teach and maintain, through example, the principles of democracy;
- gives school administrators, who are government officials, the power to decide in advance what people will read or know. Such officials are potential news makers, and their involvement with the news-making process can interfere with the public's right to know;
- contradicts every principle of sound journalism education and constitutes blatant but indirect censorship;
- negates the educational value of a trained, professionally active adviser and teacher working with students in a counseling, educational environment. Prior review simply makes the teacher an accessory, as if what is taught really doesn't matter;

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well respected as a speaker on those topics both nationally and internationally. Dr. Westerberg served on the NASSP/Carnegie Foundation Commission that produced the report on high schools for the 21st Century, *Breaking Ranks*, in 1996, and he served on the Advisory Council of NASSP's National Alliance of High Schools from its inception in 1996 until January 1999.



- establishes the possibility of viewpoint discrimination which destroys a free marketplace of ideas where a community can be fully informed and undermines all pretext of responsible journalism;
- leads toward self-censorship, the most chilling and pervasive form of censorship in schools. Fear like this can eliminate any chance of critical thinking, decision-making or respect for the opinions of others.

INSTEAD WE BELIEVE:

- a newspaper serves its readers only when it is editorially independent;
- good journalism occurs when a qualified faculty adviser, clear publications policies and professionally oriented journalism curriculum exist;
- rights, not authority and discipline, prepare students for roles as citizens in a democracy;
- the potential for abuse is not sufficient reason to withhold a right or privilege;
- a student publication is a forum for ideas, and with ideas there is no clear right or wrong;
- constructive criticism helps improve education;
- students become more aware of the country's values through a free press;
- students who make important decisions also strive to learn the history behind the country's principles and issues.

Learning must be a dynamic process, one in which an adviser helps students adjust to change. Censorship interferes with this change and is the last resort of an educational system failing its present and future citizens.

Prior review is a weapon in the arsenal of censorship, and the Journalism Education Association opposes its use in America's schools.

— JEA Board of Directors, Adopted 3/90