



Just-in-Time Reference

A guide for dealing with media, developing situations, and difficult people.

Your Rights

You have the right to talk with the media. You are also under no obligation to talk to the media, and may refer reporters to a district spokesperson at any time.

How do I submit general information to the media?

Want to share good news about what's going on in your classroom, with your club, or on your team?

- Online Press Release - online form is available on whitnall.com. Upon approval of your press release by building principal, you may submit it yourself to:
 - JSonline.com - click on "Got a Tip?"
 - Greenfieldnow.com and myhalescornersnow.com - Under "Your Stories" (center column) select "Post Your Story Now" (note: story will appear as written - spelling counts!)

Can I comment on "developing situations?"

Things change rapidly when a difficult situation arises. As a district, we want the media to have access to the most accurate and up to date information to minimize confusion and misinformation. In most cases, you will want to refer any questions to the Superintendent's office.




While you have the right to talk to the media, you also have the right to NOT talk to the media if you choose. If you choose to talk with the media, please keep comments specific to what you have experienced first-hand. In the event of a situation that may have potential legal implications, you may be asked NOT to speak with the media at all.

A few tips:

- Take time to think
- Don't say "no comment"
- Assume nothing is "off the record"
- Don't argue
- Don't speculate
- Don't blame

It's OK to say "I don't know" to the media. "That's an important question, and I want to answer it for you. Can I do some research and get back to you?" "I want to make sure you get the most accurate information, so please contact the superintendent's office for that answer."

Crisis Communications Levels

-  **GREEN: Club information, classroom activities, awards**
-  **YELLOW: District policies**
-  **RED: Unfolding crisis, legal issues**

CORE COMMUNICATIONS MESSAGES

Personalized Academics: Programs are available for every student to succeed in the real world.

Technology: Students and staff are immersed in technology every day

Globalism: Students are being prepared to embrace the challenges of our dynamic global society

Fiscal Responsibility: We are creatively working to maintain all programs and meet our goals under our current budget. We are concerned about future funding, which will pose challenges for our programs.



Just-in-Time Reference (cont'd.)

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Diffusing Difficult People

Negative comments are commonly based on a local grapevine or inadequate information. Here are some strategies:

- Ask questions instead of arguing
- Where are you getting this information?
- How do you know that what you are saying is true?
- Have you been a school to visit, to find out what the truth is?
- Can we set up some time to discuss this in person?

Name their state of mind:

You sound very frustrated, unhappy, upset, angry about this.

Practice your response for specific hot-button issues, such as:

Must be nice having summers "off." "Yep, nothing like 11 weeks of not getting paid."

"It is nice. So why aren't you a teacher?" (hmm, not enough pay, working with children, no education, no interest...)

Schools too top-heavy?

Less than 3.5% of our costs are due to administration.

Students not achieving?

Our schools are better than ever and scores prove it.

Schools serving our community?

We are building the next generation of health care providers, engineers, and creative problem solvers that will be responsible for all of us. Education is worth it.

Taxes too high?

Are you familiar with the challenges we're facing regarding school funding? We're looking for people to serve on a task force regarding that very issue.