



Lower Kuskokwim School District's Media Contact Procedures

It is the policy of the LKSD to work cooperatively with the news media for coverage of issues and events involving the school district, its students or staff. However, LKSD is also dedicated to providing all students with a safe learning environment without unnecessary interruptions to the instructional process. Therefore, the following administrative guidelines are in effect for all LKSD campuses.

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

The LKSD Communications Coordinator works in the Superintendent's Office and retains responsibility for and direct authority over the public information program of the entire district. In the case that the District does not have a Communications Coordinator, the communications duties defer back to the Superintendent or his designee.

MEDIA PERSONNEL

Media personnel include reporters, photographers, and film crews representing news outlets, television channels, and other public media inclusive of radio, television, print media, and online platforms.

Permission for Campus Access

PUBLIC EVENTS

Athletic and other extracurricular events that are open to the public are considered to be public events. Media Personnel are permitted on school campus for such public events without receiving any special permissions in advance.

UNSOLICITED MEDIA INQUIRIES

For news coverage beyond public events, media outlets must complete the form, "Media Inquiries" to outline their story proposal and request access to LKSD students, staff, and campuses. The Communication Coordinator will work with the necessary personnel to decide the district's response to each individual media request. If the request is approved, the Communications Coordinator, working with the media representative and the Site Administrator, will attempt to work out a schedule agreeable to all concerned for a school visit and interview.

MEDIA COVERAGE REQUESTS FROM SCHOOLS, DEPARTMENTS, AND PROGRAMS

Schools, departments, and programs may at times request media coverage of school achievement or special events.

This should be in form of an email outlining upcoming events and programs and extending an invitation for media personnel to attend. The email should be sent to the LKSD Communications Coordinator, who will issue the proper notification to the appropriate news media. This is done with the understanding that the school initiating the request is prepared to receive news media in the building and give them the information and access to cover the story.

Site Administrators and department/program heads should be adequately prepared to discuss their schools' policies and programs when called upon to do so. Site Administrators are not, however, expected to address matters pertaining to board or central administration policies or procedures. If such inquiries are made during an interview, a Site Administrator should not hesitate to send the reporter back to the Superintendent's Office for further referral.

PRESS RELEASES

After an event, accomplishment, or other media-worthy story, schools may choose to prepare a press release to local media outlets. All press releases should be prepared in a timely manner and sent to the Communications Coordinator for review and editing. The Communications Coordinator will distribute the press release to the appropriate local media outlets.

Media Personnel on Campus (unauthorized)

If media personnel visit the school site without prior approval, they should wait in the school office until the Site Administrator and/or the Communication Coordinator can be notified. If the site administrator grants campus access to media personnel at his/her discretion, he/she should immediately contact the Communications Coordinator with a summary of the media representative's interactions at site.

The media does have the right to be outside a campus on public property taking photographs/video or interviewing parents/students as long as they remain off school grounds. However, the media does not have the right to go into your school, other than to check in at the front office, and does not have the right to walk hallways or film students anywhere within the building without following the district's designated protocol. School students and staff should not feel compelled to agree to an interview just because media shows up at a campus. Site Administrators should direct the reporter back to the Communications Coordinator to follow district procedures.

Media Personnel on Campus (authorized)**CHECKING IN**

All media personnel must first receive permission from the LKSD Communication Coordinator as well as the school's Site Administrator prior to visiting campus (with exception of public events). Upon arrival on school campus, media personnel must check in at the school office like any other visitor.

STUDENT INTERVIEWS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Schools are required to get parental permission before photographs or videotaped media interviews are conducted with any student and to obtain written consent before releasing personally identifiable information of students. Therefore, each school in LKSD is required to have an LKSD Parental Media Release Form on file for every student. During media visits to school campuses, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that no photographs are taken or or interviews are conducted with students whose parents have not granted permission.

EMPLOYEES AS SOURCES

Site administrators and other school staff do not have to speak with the media under any circumstances. However, a site administrator may serve as a spokesperson about campus-related programs and events if they choose. Site administrators and school staff are more knowledgeable about the exciting happenings and student successes on their campus and in their programs, and can often provide better information to reporters about these positive stories. School staff should not discuss district decisions or any topics outside their direct area of participation. These types of questions should be directed back to the Communications Coordinator.

Media Access to a School Building During or After a Crisis

In a crisis or emergency situation, it is imperative to disseminate accurate, objective information, while also ensuring that students and staff have the space necessary to resolve the crises safely.

During a crisis, all such information should come directly from the Superintendent or designee in order to ensure that false rumors do not get started, and all media must receive permission from the Superintendent or designee for campus access.

References:

Lower Kuskokwim School District Board Policy. (1989). *BP 1112 Media relations*. (Section 1000-1999 Community Relations). Retrieved from: <http://www.boarddocs.com/ak/lksd/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=9ZU2A2012D16>

Lower Kuskokwim School District Board Policy. (1989). *BP 1260 Visits to the schools*. (Section 1000-1999 Community Relations). Retrieved from: <http://www.boarddocs.com/ak/lksd/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=9ZXP8V636D9E>

Lower Kuskokwim School District Board Policy. (1989). *BP 0450 Crisis response*. (Section 0000-0999 Philosophy, Goals, Objectives, & Comprehensive Plans). Retrieved from: <http://www.boarddocs.com/ak/lksd/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=9ZT3EQ005B1F>

Lower Kuskokwim School District Board Policy. (2006). *BP 6114 Crisis response plan*. (Section 6000-6999 Instruction). Retrieved from: <http://www.boarddocs.com/ak/lksd/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=A2LV4L7EF0C1>

Lower Kuskokwim School District Administrative Regulations. (2006). *AR 6114 Crisis response plan*. (Section 6000-6999 Instruction). Retrieved from: <http://www.boarddocs.com/ak/lksd/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=A2LV6C7F3272>