

BOARD GUIDELINES IN INTERACTING WITH THE MEDIA

The following exhibit is a comprehensive list of guidelines for Monterey County Board of Education members to consider when interacting with the media. These guidelines expand upon the media relation recommendations outlined in Board Bylaw 9010, Public Statements.

Developing Your Message

- Be credible
- Be compelling (What can you say to make your audience pay attention (using figures, facts))
- Be current (What can you say that is timely, newsworthy or relevant to current events?)
- Develop three to five talking points related to the subject and stay on message (i.e., stick your talking points)

Using the Message

- Know what the reporter wants to accomplish
- Know what you want to accomplish
- Meet in the middle
- Bridge back to your message often
- Remember to repeat, repeat, repeat

Know Your Medium

- Print – provide comprehensive information and resources
- TV – provide charts/facts/visuals
- Radio – be conversational/concise

Media Tips

Be a reliable resource. Returning phone calls on a timely basis and being cognizant of a reporter's deadline will encourage your local media to contact you for future inquiries.

If you don't know the answer, find someone who does. It is valuable to be viewed by a reporter as a vital resource, which doesn't always mean you need to have the answers. Provide your input if you can, then recommend a statewide or more local point-of-view from someone else.

Recommend additional materials or online information that the reporter can refer to for more information. If you need to contact the reporter at a later hour, recommend materials he/she can refer to in the meantime.

Know the appropriate time to contact a reporter. Keep in mind when reporters deadlines are, such as the end of the day or right before daily news broadcasts. Reporters will be more interested in hearing about your press release or event if you call them at the appropriate times.

Take your time. Don't feel that you need to respond to a reporter right away. Being aware of a reporter deadline is important but you should always answer questions after you have a few minutes to prepare.

Practice your key messages and talking points before you speak with a reporter. The more comfortable you are with your message, the easier it will be to include it in your conversations with the media and the community.

Remember to say "thank you." All writers love to hear when their audience enjoys their work. Make sure to thank a reporter when he/she does the job well and get the facts right.

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