COMMUNITY RELATIONS: Communication with the Public
Publications, Radio, Television and Digital Media

I. Purpose

To implement Board of Education of Baltimore County (Board) Policy 1110 by establishing guidelines and responsibilities for the dissemination of information to the media and public.

II. Definition

*School Administrator* – School principal or in the absence of the principal, the administrator designated by the principal.

III. Guidelines

A. The Department of Communications and Community Outreach is designated by the Superintendent to oversee all informational communications for the Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) and to provide guidance and assistance concerning the dissemination of information.

B. All communications issued on behalf of BCPS or an individual school shall comply with all federal, state and local laws, as well as Board policy and Superintendent’s rules.

C. The Department of Communications and Community Outreach shall approve the release of information concerning any school emergency.

D. The media will have access to all school events to which the public has been invited.

IV. Press and Media Relations

A. The Department of Communications and Community Outreach shall be responsible for:
   1. Coordinating the dissemination of information about the school system and individual BCPS offices to the press and other media; and
   2. When authorized by the Superintendent, providing a statement in the name of the Superintendent.
B. Individual Schools
1. The school administrator shall be responsible for the release of information about programs, activities and accomplishments to the media and his/her school community that relate exclusively to his/her individual school.
2. The school administrator shall seek approval from his/her community superintendent and the Department of Communications and Community Outreach prior to disseminating information concerning any school emergency.
3. The school administrator is responsible for reviewing and complying with the student privacy designations and for photography/filming by outside news media organizations for events other than public events and ensuring that those students are not photographed or filmed.

C. Student Privacy Options

All employees are required to comply with parental restrictions relating to the disclosure of a student’s directory information and other privacy options.

V. Compliance

Any employee deemed to have violated Board Policy 1110 or this Rule may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Legal References: 5 U.S.C. § 552a, Privacy Act of 1974
17 U.S.C. § 101, et. seq., Copyright Act of 1976
20 U.S.C. § 1232g, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
47 U.S.C. § 230, Communications Decency Act
Annotated Code of Maryland, General Provisions Article §§ 4-101 to 4-601 (Public Information Act)
COMAR 13A.08.02, Student Records

Related Policies: Board of Education Policy 1100, Communications with the Public
Board of Education Policy 1200, Community Involvement
Board of Education Policy 1270, Parent and Family Engagement
Board of Education Policy 4104, Technology Acceptable Use Policy (TAUP) for Authorized Users
Board of Education Policy 6202, *Technology Acceptable Use Policy (TAUP) for Students*

Related Rules: Superintendent’s Rule 1120, *Copyright*
Superintendent’s Rule 4104, *Technology Acceptable Use Policy (TAUP) for Authorized Users*
Superintendent’s Rule 6202, *Technology Acceptable Use Policy (TAUP) for Students*

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