

Community Relations

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Southern Westchester BOCES ("SWBOCES") community includes but is not limited to Westchester County, the various towns and cities in which its campuses are located, and its component school districts. SWBOCES believes in the importance of communication in maintaining positive community relations with all of its stakeholders and the vital role that the media plays in promoting the positive work of our staff, students and the public education system. Therefore, SWBOCES invites and welcomes the active participation of all forms of mass media and invites members of the media and general public to attend all meetings of the Board.

All staff desiring to release information to the media shall first notify their immediate supervisor. The District Superintendent or designee shall establish all necessary procedures to govern day-to-day interactions between the schools and the news media.

Communication with Component Districts

It is essential the Board and the SWBOCES staff keep component Boards of Education informed as to policies and programs that might affect their educational programs. To the greatest extent possible, the SWBOCES staff and the Board should attempt to provide written and/or oral communication to the superintendents and board members of component districts on any matter that might affect them, including agendas and minutes of SWBOCES meetings.

Communication with SWBOCES Board Members

The SWBOCES staff members shall make every effort to provide Board members with written communications regarding significant items prior to the Board meetings. Communications shall be forwarded via the District Superintendent or designee.

Communication with the Community

The SWBOCES staff shall attempt to keep the various communities informed of school activities so that the communities shall be aware of what is occurring in SWBOCES programs and shall be able to support these activities. Communications involving Board policy shall have prior approval by the District Superintendent or designee.

News Releases

The Director of Communications or his/her designee is responsible for the release of any official information to the media. If the release is of a sensitive nature, the District Superintendent or designee shall consult with the President of the SWBOCES Board.

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In order to assure news releases, announcements or other information to the public are accurate and reflect the position of the Board, the President of the Board is designated as spokesperson for the Board. No other individual is authorized to or shall issue press releases or statements purporting to represent the Board's position on any issue without the express consent of the District Superintendent or Board President or designee.

Publications

The Board encourages the development of appropriate materials and publications that are of direct use in the educational process in component schools and which inform the public, member districts, Southern Westchester BOCES ("SWBOCES") personnel, and the teaching profession concerning policies, activities, and accomplishments of SWBOCES and which aid and promote the improvement of education.

Such publication and materials shall be of a professional quality and shall be appropriately reviewed by the Director of Communications before publication. All publications will be dated at the time they are issued. In every case the title, the names of the author(s) or editor(s), the SWBOCES logo, and the date of publication will appear on the publication.

Copyright

The use of copyright law for selected materials produced through SWBOCES will be implemented for specific classes of items when recommended to the Board by the District Superintendent or designee. All unpublished materials will have copyright identification protected under common law literary property.

All publications, recordings, or digital content developed by staff while working in their official capacity for SWBOCES or by persons/agencies working in their official capacity under contract to SWBOCES are the property of SWBOCES.

Reference:
Arts and Cultural Affairs Law Section 61.09

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