



# Media Plan

## DeSoto County School District

### What is Public Information?

Communication should not be an afterthought. Educational Public Information Specialists work to open communication lines amongst employees, the media and community members. The key is being pro-active in the message and dispersing it efficiently. The Public Information Specialist works closely with the superintendent and school administrators on a daily basis to guarantee that each school receives adequate attention and the community receives the most up-to-date information. The following is the Media Plan for the School District of DeSoto County and is to be followed by all employees.

### **(I.) Upcoming Events:**

Special events are most successful when they are publicized. To get your event mentioned in the newspaper, send an email to the Assistant Public Information Specialist within a reasonable amount of time. School weekly events and game schedules fall under this category. Each school secretary knows the contact for this type of information.

### **(II.) Articles:**

- To receive press coverage of a class event email the Public Information Specialist with the details in a sufficient amount of time.
- If time allows, the Public Information Specialist will cover this event. An email will be sent to confirm the appointment for event coverage to the school administrators and all those that the event involves.
- With seven schools, it is impossible to cover every event. The Public Information Specialist takes on other duties in addition to media relations.
- If the Public Information Specialist is unable to attend, the sponsor of the event will be asked to submit pictures and a briefing of the event via email. This briefing is to include the WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, and WHY regarding the event. Please see example:

*“Mrs. Anderson’s fifth grade class at East Side School celebrated Teller Appreciation Day last Monday, by designing special cards for the area bank tellers. The students have participated in this activity for the past five years. Included in the picture are Jon Smith, Sue Williams and teacher, Alma Anderson.”*

- The Public Information Specialist will edit and review the information submitted prior to releasing the article to the media and will notify the sponsor and the administrator of the publication dates.

### **(III.) Media Relations:**

In some cases the outside media (i.e.) neighboring newspaper, TV and radio stations) will be asked to cover the event. The sponsor and school administrators will be informed of the visit.

- Upon confirmation, the sponsor of the event will be notified
- The names of the reporters will be submitted to the school administrators
- The reporter will check in with a school administrator prior to attending the event.
- The office staff will notify the teacher of the reporter's attendance.
- The reporter will sign out when departing

### **(IV.) Unscheduled Media Visits:**

This is **very important** for the safety of our students and staff, so please follow these procedures if a media representative unexpectedly visits the school.

- Notify the school administrator immediately-this is the only person that should answer any questions from the reporter.
- The administrator should survey the reporter for the interview topic, story context and specific detail he needs for his story. It is always good to ask for the reporter's deadline.
- Ask the reporter if you can call him back or email him your response. This will give you time to gather all the needed information.
- The administrator should then contact the Public Information Office to ask if he/she can move forward. This will also allow you an ear to review your response.
- It is always good to contact the Public Information Office so we can ensure consistency of the message.

### **(V.) In Case of an Emergency:**

The Superintendent is the voice of the school district. When a crisis occur, it is best to have **only one** voice to reach the community. The superintendent is to be notified immediately when an emergency occurs.

- Faculty and staff members are to refer to the annual Red Book when a crisis occurs. Each school district employee has a copy at his convenience in case the emergency procedures need to be administered.

*When it comes to media, it's always best to be PROACTIVE not just REACTIVE. By following the above procedures, the School District of DeSoto County will continue to be INFORMED and INVOLVED in the community it serves.*