

Internal Policies and Procedures of the Utah State Board of Education
Policy # 02-07
Subject: Mass Media
Effective Date: 10/6/2010 (Procedures were in previous Public Information policy) Revision Dates: 9/25/2017
Purpose: To guide USBE employee practices when releasing information publicly, to ensure authorized Board employees respond to media requests by providing accurate information in a timely manner, and to follow Utah law regarding information classification and restrictions.
Policy: All information and records created by the Board and its sections are available to the public and news media representatives, except as restricted by Utah’s Government Records Access Management Act (GRAMA) or other statute.
References: Utah Code Annotated, Title 63G, Chapter 2, Government Records Access and Management Act

Procedures:

Handling News Media Calls

- Note the time of the call and find out all the information the journalist needs.
- Explain that you may not have the answers, but you can find someone to answer the questions.
- Ask if the journalist has a deadline, and make a return call within 30 minutes to update the status of the journalist’s request.
- A USBE employee may provide factual information to the media without seeking approval of a Section Director, but should not offer opinion.
- If questions progress beyond basic factual information, a USBE employee should refer the request to the Section Director.
- A Section Director may designate any person within their section as an authorized media contact or a public information contact who could best handle media needs.
- Any USBE employee may contact the Director of Public Relations at any time for help with a media request.

Media Contact Protocol

- Deputy Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, and Section Directors, or other subject-area designees may represent their respective areas and speak directly to the media without approval of the Director of Public Relations, although the Director is available for help.

- Official press releases and news media events should be handled or coordinated through the Public Relations section.
 - This does not apply to section social media accounts, such as an announcement for “Code Day” or an event.
- The Board and its employees shall expedite requests from members of the news media. No initial call from a journalist should wait longer than 30 minutes without a response to report the status of the journalist's request.

A USBE employee should report all contacts from members of the news media to the Director of Public Relations, and include the substance of the call plus any areas of concern immediately.