



# Official Policy of Ogden Preparatory Academy

## 2. Administration

### 2.01.POL Media Policy and Guidelines

**Effective/Revision Date:** 10/09/2013

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Ogden Preparatory Academy (OPA) is an established and highly respected public charter school. We have a reputation for providing excellence in education, good community relations, and a safe learning environment for our students.

While providing this service, the news media is periodically interested in OPA. We feel a responsibility to be open and responsive to information requests as a means to best serve our student community and the community at large.

#### **PURPOSE**

This policy exists to assure that information disclosed by OPA is appropriate, accurate, timely and relevant to the inquiry at hand. Adherence to this policy is intended to provide an effective and efficient framework to facilitate the timely dissemination of information.

#### **SCOPE**

This media policy applies to all employees and Board Members of OPA. This policy covers all external news media including broadcast, electronic, and print.

#### **DESIGNATION OF COMPANY SPOKESPERSON**

The Principal and Board President (or his/her designee on the Board) are designated as OPA's principal media contacts and spokespersons. These individuals are charged with the responsibility of media relations and will weigh each media inquiry to determine the best way to provide information in relationship with other information that is not yet public. These individuals will convey the school's official position on issues of significance or situations that are particularly controversial or sensitive in nature. Among school communications responsibilities:

- Increase public awareness and understanding of OPA and the educational services that we provide;
- Promote a positive public image of OPA and the work we do for audiences that are important to the school, which includes existing and prospective students, employees, peers, and government officials.

Depending on the situation, an individual aside from designees may be asked to be a spokesperson on a particular issue due to their knowledge, experience, and/or expertise. The

Board President will work with that designated spokesperson to prepare them for the media interview as needed. Preparation may include developing talking points as well as counseling, training, and practicing for the interview.

## **GUIDELINES FOR TALKING WITH MEDIA**

A reporter, producer or other news media may contact OPA for a number of reasons, for example:

- To get information about OPA;
- To get information about a recent unexpected event such as natural disasters, thefts or arrests, accidents or injuries, student or parent or employee complaints, federal or state or local regulatory actions, etc.;
- To get information or comment about an action or event that could impact OPA, changes in government or policies or educational comparisons to other traditional public/charter schools.

Refer all media calls to appointed spokespersons. Please do not say you are not allowed to talk to a reporter or have to get permission to do so. Instead, tell the reporter: “OPA policy is to refer all media inquiries to the official spokesperson. May I get your name and phone number so they can return your call?” Whenever taking a call from the media, the same courtesy and professionalism in which we approach our student community and their families should be displayed toward the media. Please act quickly when approached by the media to ensure that the reporter’s deadline is met. In order to promote our customer service image, it is important to respond quickly, courteously and professionally to all media calls. Please remember to immediately contact the assigned spokesperson when the media has approached you. Do not let a reporter compel you to answer questions on the spot. The designated spokesperson will give a response. The spokesperson will always give deference to applicable privacy laws, employment laws and laws regulating public education over the desire for a statement from the media.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PHOTOGRAPHS AND FILM**

A similar process as described above will be used when someone from the media is requesting permission to take photographs or to film inside our facilities. Refer the caller to the school principal. No one will be given access to the school for a photo or filming without approval from the principal.

## **TRAINING**

The principal will inform all school employees of this policy and provide periodic training in appropriate staff meetings.

Document History

Approved: 10/09/2013

Legal References

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