



**TENNESSEE**  
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

# COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

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STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION WORKSHOP  
JULY 21, 2016

# DEFINING ROLES

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- Role of the individual board member
- **The board, as a whole, speaks through its official actions**
- Role of the executive director with media
- Role of the chairman with media

# MEMBER / CONSTITUENT COMMUNICATIONS

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- Provides citizens a voice in the work of the board
- Interactive State Board map makes our members more accessible
- Makes the institution more responsive on the whole
- SBOE staff is happy to help in crafting responses and information requests
- Some mass emails can be handled by a joint response by the Chairman

# IMPORTANCE OF MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE BOARD

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- Provide timely information
- Foster public trust and support
- Provide transparency in operations
- Preserve the independence of the board
- Raise the profile and understanding of the state board and its role
- Increase the influence of the SBOE as an institution in the education conversation in Tennessee

# IMPORTANCE OF MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS BY MEMBERS

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- Appointed by congressional district
- Improve the flow of information between the individual member and their constituents and communities
- Each board member represents roughly 722,000 Tennesseans
- Members are in a unique position to be advocates for the children of Tennessee
- Trustee and representative
- Members can provide an urgent voice for reform and accountability

# TOOLS TO PREPARE

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The five things to do when the media calls you:

- 1) Contact the communications coordinator or staff
- 2) Get a general overview of the story if possible
- 3) Gather any facts or research you will need to reference
- 4) Avoid speculation about facts, can always offer their opinion
- 5) Write down specific talking points

# GUIDELINES FOR SPEAKING WITH THE MEDIA

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- Stay in your lane
- Know your audience
- Think before you answer
- Tell the truth
- Avoid using “no comment”
- Don’t answer speculative (what if) or hypothetical questions
- Avoid jargon, acronyms, slang, and technical terms
- Assume everything you say may be printed or broadcast
- Inform the communications coordinator

# GRANTING AN INTERVIEW

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Before the interview

- The first step is defining the purpose for the interview
- Identify the main idea of the news story
- Plan your answers to potential in advance



# GRANTING AN INTERVIEW

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During the interview

- Don't be afraid to ask for more explanation or to restate main points
- Confirm facts – do not speculate
- Read numbers, names and specific facts back to the interviewer to confirm accuracy

# GRANTING AN INTERVIEW

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Closing the interview

- Add any information at the end that the reporter should know
- Ask the reporter to send you the story or link to the video clip once it is published