APS Policy Review Team
2110 Washington Blvd
Arlington, VA 22204

TO: Arlington School Board
FROM: Policy Review Team
THROUGH: Dr. Francisco Durán, Superintendent
DATE: December 5, 2025
RE: Proposed Revisions to Policy K-2.3.30 Media Relations

This policy is being revised as part of its regular 5-year review and is scheduled for Board Information on December 18.

Staff are proposing the following changes to K-2.3.30 Media Relations.

- Clarify that the Superintendent and Board Chair do occasionally speak for APS.
- Add language allowing media to cover public meetings of public bodies without prior approval.
- Minor technical changes.

This policy has been reviewed by the Policy Review Team and Policy Subcommittee and has been posted for public comment.

Arlington Public Schools disseminates information to students, families, staff, and the community through the Department of School & Community Relations in a fair and transparent manner. Arlington Public Schools is committed to sharing information through various media, including electronic, print, voice and visual. The primary source of Arlington Public Schools communications is electronic through the Arlington Public Schools website, email and social media; however, every effort is made to ensure families that do not have access to electronic devices and/or the internet are still able to receive information through other methods.

Media Requests

The Assistant Superintendent for School & Community Relations, or designee, is typically the only spokesperson for Arlington Public Schools. Occasionally, the Superintendent or Chair of the Arlington School Board may speak for Arlington Public Schools. The Arlington Public Schools spokesperson coordinates and responds to all media requests for the school division. All media releases will be forwarded to the media by the Department of School & Community Relations. All Arlington Public Schools employees other than the Superintendent are required to coordinate all media requests through the Department of School & Community Relations.

Attempts should not be made to coordinate an interview or media request with any Arlington Public Schools employee by contacting an employee or school directly. In addition, parents/guardians or Parent-Teacher Association members must receive approval from School & Community Relations when requesting the presence of the media on school grounds during school hours or at school-sponsored events. Arlington Public Schools strives to meet the needs of the media in a timely manner.

Arlington Public Schools reserves the right to grant or decline any media request. If there is a story of particular interest to the media, the Assistant Superintendent for School & Community Relations may choose to have multiple members of the media attend a general interview rather than scheduling individual interviews. Same-day interview requests may not be accommodated, except in the event of an emergency or other urgent matter. Media should provide as much notice as possible for all interview requests.

Employee Personal/Non-Arlington Public Schools Media Relations

Staff members who do media interviews or panel discussions in roles not in an official capacity for Arlington Public Schools must explicitly express the disclaimer, either in writing or verbally, that all information and opinions expressed are solely their own and do not represent Arlington Public Schools.

Media on School Grounds

Media that do not secure permission to be on school property are asked to limit all news-related business to public areas, such as sidewalks and/or surrounding streets, so as not to interfere with instruction or create traffic hazards. Arlington Public Schools' parking lots are considered school property, and as a result, media are unable to assemble there without advanced permission.

Media should not enter schools or school property without receiving approval from the Department of School & Community Relations. Media who are on school property without permission will be

asked to leave. All media visiting schools are required to check-in at the front office upon arrival at a school, and there are no exceptions to this requirement. In the event of a crisis or emergency situation, the Department of School & Community Relations will identify specific locations and times for news conferences or media briefings.

Public Performances and Non-School Sponsored Events

Media covering public performances, including sporting events, or non-school sponsored events will not need prior approval as long as they are only present for that event and are not reporting on other items. Media credentials must be visible at all times and must be produced to gain admittance to a game. Media may photograph, film and report from the press box or from behind the sidelines so long as they do not interfere with the game, event, or performance.

Public Meetings

Media may cover public meetings of public bodies on grounds owned or leased by Arlington Public Schools without prior approval. However, advance notice is preferred so that Arlington Public Schools can accommodate the needs of the media.

Interviewing and Filming Students

Nearly all Arlington Public Schools students are minors, and not all students have parental consent to be photographed, filmed, or included in media coverage. Therefore, media may be asked to not film student's faces during large events if it is difficult to determine which students have parental consent to be filmed or photographed in these settings. Students are never permitted to be interviewed at school or school related events without explicit parental consent, either verbally or in writing, and must have a staff member from School & Community Relations or the school present during the interview.

Arlington Public Schools requests that media outlets inform all staff in their newsrooms of this policy so that all staff adhere to this policy to avoid interruptions to instruction and normal operations.

Freedom of Information Act Requests (FOIA)

Arlington Public Schools will abide by all state and federal laws in its efforts to provide interviews and information for media outlets. Certain information requested by the media fall under the FOIA guidelines and constitute a formal request, even if not requested in writing. All FOIA requests will be handled in accordance with School Board Policy K-2.1 Virginia Freedom of Information Act and the Code of Virginia §2.2-3700 et seq.

References

Code of Virginia §2.2-3700 et seq. The Virginia Freedom of Information Act
School Board Policy G-3.16.4 Disciplinary Actions
School Board Policy K-2.1 Virginia Freedom of Information Act
School Board Policy K-2.3 Interviewing Students
School Board Policy E-3.31 Safety and Security

Policy Adoption and Revision History

Adopted July 16, 2020, Effective July 16, 2020

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