




Prof005	Dealing with Media Policy
<b>Purpose</b>	To provide guidelines on how to deal with the media.
<b>Authority</b>	
<b>Policy</b>	Only the Board Chairman, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and Principals are authorised to speak with the media.
<b>Delegation</b>	Board Chairman, CEO Principal
<b>Related Policies</b>	
<b>Date approved</b>	April 2018
<b>Next Review Due</b>	April 2021
<b>Review Authority</b>	Management
<b>Keywords</b>	Media, crisis

<b>Authorised by:</b>	
<b>Board Chairman</b>	H Dykstra
<b>Date:</b>	April 2018



### Introduction

These guidelines indicate what our approach is to be when providing information to the media. During or following a crisis or event, the media can be a useful tool for disseminating accurate and timely information. Dealing with the media both in good times and in times of difficulty can pose challenges but, with proper planning, dealing with the media can be beneficial.

### Our Vision and Mission the foundation of the Association

As summarised in the Constitution the Free Reformed School Association exists “to assist parents within the Free Reformed Churches of Australia in the provision of Reformed education for their children, by the establishment and maintenance of schools committed to providing education which conforms to God’s Word ...”

### Our approach

While it is prudent to be aware of the different priorities of different media formats and outlets our priority always remains to act in a manner that brings honour and glory to our Heavenly Father and upholds the honour and reputation of our neighbour.

### Authorised

Only the Board Chairman (or delegated board member), the CEO, and the Principals (or delegated manager) are authorised to speak to the media. If no authorised person is available, then request the reporter to leave a contact number and he or she will be contacted when the authorised person is available.

Other staff members are not permitted to speak to the media.



## Appendix 1

## Guidelines for Dealing with the Media

The following guidelines may assist when dealing with the media:

1. **Coordinate Press Coverage.**

A central office should always be aware of what information is being released. Where appropriate, regular updates should be provided if possible.

2. **Shoot Straight.**

Good news or bad... let the media know what's happening.

3. **Never Speculate.**

Release only the information you know is accurate.

4. **Stay Calm.**

The calmer you appear, the quicker people will realise that everything is under control.

### Understanding the Differences between Television, Radio and Newspaper:

Television, radio and newspaper reporters are not looking for the same thing when they are covering a story. Knowing what each reporter is looking for and trying to meet those needs can save you (and them) a lot of frustration. However, it is the honour of God, our trust and dependence on Him, and the truth of the situation that is paramount in the 'story' being provided. Where possible, seek permission to comment on a preview of the story for accuracy before publication.

#### Television:

1. Television reporters are always looking for **good visuals**. Hence, some good visuals may be suggested but a selective representation of information should not be at the cost of the God-honouring and 'completeness' of the story we seek to convey.
2. Television reporters are also looking for **short, to-the-point sound bites**. You'll rarely see a person speaking for more than 9 to 10 seconds during a TV story. Remember this when you talk to reporters; speak in sound bites but keep in mind the message we wish to convey to God's honour.
3. **Spare the detail.**  
Most stories are never going to run more than a minute and thirty seconds. TV reporters aren't looking for hours of detail. They get frustrated when you insist on giving them minute details, and you get frustrated when you spend two hours being interviewed and show up as a 10-second talking head on the 6 p.m. news.

#### Radio:

1. Radio reporters are looking for **good sound**. Hence be prepared to suggest good ideas for natural sound. However, the comments relating to television reporters apply here too.
2. Radio reporters are also looking for **short, to-the-point sound bites**. Once again, you need to speak in short truthful, God-honouring bites when doing radio interview.
3. Radio reporters are **not particularly interested in lots of detail**. Remember the average radio reporter who calls you is probably doing eight stories in a day. They don't have the ability to work

on any one story for days at a time.

### **Newspapers:**

Here's the spot for detail. They want it all, and the history.

1. Most newspaper reporters **want details**.
2. Be **prepared to give** them **details**.
3. Here's your **chance** to get the **whole story** out one that honours God and conveys the truth.
4. Have **all documents** you need **on hand** – statistics, memos and timelines.

### **Rules to live by when dealing with Reporters:**

We should stand for our principles and promote the name of the Lord and the school.

1. Think before you speak.
2. Always prepare for an interview.
3. Know what you are getting into.
4. Always have an agenda. Know what you want to achieve through this interview.
5. If you have a statement or idea that must be understood, repeat it again, and again, and again.
6. Announce your own news first... even if it's bad news.
7. Never LIE to a reporter.
8. Don't speculate.
9. Don't say "no comment."
10. Stay on the record.
11. Don't be offended by a reporter's ignorance; don't be impatient with a reporter.
12. Don't accept definitions.
13. Don't ask to review a story before it is printed or aired.
14. Never be argumentative, nasty or yell at a reporter.
15. Avoid jargon.
16. Answer reporter's calls, or refer them to someone who will return their calls.