

Every effort will be made to assist the press and other communications media to obtain complete coverage of the programs, problems, accomplishments, planning, and activities of the Westford Public Schools.

All representatives of the media will be given equal access to information about the schools. General releases of interest to the entire community will be made available to all of the media simultaneously. There will be no exclusive releases except as media representatives request information on particular programs, plans, or problems.

In order that publicity for the Westford Public Schools is given wide coverage and is coordinated into a common effort and purpose, all of the following procedures will be followed in giving official information to the news media:

1. The School Committee Chair will be the official spokesperson for the decisions of the School Committee, except as this duty is delegated to the Superintendent.
2. No School Committee member shall express his/her individual points of view in the name of the total School Committee.
3. School related news releases that are of town-wide interest, or which may be sensitive in nature, or that pertain to established School Committee policy may be written by any staff or School Committee member, but must be approved by the School Committee prior to release. Exceptions may occur for time-sensitive topics where release is required prior to the next scheduled School Committee meeting. Such items may be approved for release by the School Committee Chair or delegate, and must be placed on the agenda for the next scheduled School Committee meeting. The School Committee must be notified of any such item and its contents within 24 hours of its release.
4. News releases or newsletters that are of concern to only one school, or to an organization at one school, are the responsibility of the Principal of that particular school. Any items in these releases or newsletters which may be sensitive in nature shall be approved by the Superintendent.
5. All formal statements made to the press by staff members of the particular school must be cleared with the Principal and Superintendent. Staff members may not be interviewed regarding school matters without the approval of the Principal and the Superintendent.

While it is impossible to know how news releases will be treated by the press, every possible effort should be made to obtain coverage of school activities that will create and maintain a dignified and professionally responsible image for the Westford Public Schools.