



Georgia Department of Education

Policies and Procedures

Policy Title:	<i>Media Relations, State Schools</i>		
Policy Number:	<i>SS-2001 Descriptor Code-KBCA</i>		
Release Date:	<i>10-08-02</i>	Last Revised:	<i>11-22-03</i>

Purpose

To describe the provisions under which State Schools may engage in media relations.

Applicability

This policy applies to employees and students at the Atlanta Area School for the Deaf, the Georgia Academy for the Blind, and the Georgia School for the Deaf.

Policy

State Schools are committed to good media relations as part of the communication process while balancing the rights of the general public to be informed with the legitimate rights of privacy of the Department of Education's employees, students, and parents. Rights of privacy are based upon Georgia law and upon federal statutes. State Schools' primary functions are teaching and learning. It is unlawful for any person to disrupt or interfere with the operation of school. All contacts with students by persons other than school employees and all dissemination of personally identifiable information about students shall always be given only with prior permission from each student's parent or legal guardian.

General Provisions

Officials of the school will cooperate with the media as a vehicle for sharing public information under the guidelines of Georgia's Open Meetings ("Sunshine") Law, Official Code of Georgia Annotated, Title 50, Chapter 14.

During all newsworthy events occurring at the State Schools, the Office of Media Relations for the Department of Education should be informed by the appropriate school official and ready to assist the media in arranging school visits and interviews with the individuals involved under the guidelines stated above. The media is free to contact School Directors directly on all matters of school news; however, any questions that are of a

legal, political, or sensitive nature should be forwarded to the Director of Media Relations for the Department of Education.

In accordance with the powers and the responsibilities vested in school officials, all visitors at any school shall report to the office before seeking out employees or students.

**Authority and/or
Cross-Reference**

- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- O.C.G.A. 16-11-35
- O.C.G.A. 50-14-1