

Greenville County Schools



CONNECTIONS Headliners 2014

Media Coverage

Media-Requested Coverage

Requests for information, interviews (staff and student), and photographs/video (except routine coverage of athletics) should be made through the Communications Department. The Communications Department will make arrangements with the appropriate principal. Requests made to schools should generally be referred to the Communications Department. Principals may reply to media requests for basic information about their schools. Questions pertaining to district programs should be directed to the Communications Department. If in doubt, refer requests to the Communications Department.

School-Requested Coverage

Schools are encouraged to contact the media to cover events. The principal should approve requests for coverage. If in doubt, contact the Communications Department.

General Coverage Guidelines

An item included in [Media Tip Sheet](#) is considered school-requested coverage. The principal should approve all media coverage of school events. Once approved, the reporter should report to the school office. A staff member should accompany the reporter on campus.

Media coverage should not interfere with classroom instruction. Classroom photographs and video should only be allowed during the first or last five minutes (approximately) of a class. Principal should confer with the classroom teacher and check **Student Directory Information Forms** before scheduling photographs or video.

Student interviews can only be granted with the approval of the principal and appropriate student/parent. The principal should use discretion. The Communications Department should be contacted and informed of media coverage and/or interviews.

Student Directory Information Form

Student Directory Information and FERPA forms are on file at every school. Please note that when parents have signed and returned the Student Directory Information Form, they are stating that their child cannot be photographed or interviewed.

The [Media Interview Release Form](#) is required for student interviews and can be found in the Communications section of the Intranet. Parent permission should be secured for interviews regarding sensitive issues. Principal has discretion. Please note the media can interview students when they are not under school jurisdiction, without school approval.

Departments

Media requests for information and interviews should be made through the Communications Department. The Communications Department will contact appropriate staff member for information and/or to arrange interviews. Media requests to staff members should be directed to the Communications Department for appropriate action.

Reporting News

As a general rule, school news may be released directly to the media. As a courtesy, please copy your email to sclarke@greenville.k12.sc.us. If you'd like to see your school's story on the District website or social media sites, or to be included in the weekly Media Tip Sheet, email [Susan Clarke](#).

Media stories are just that – they tell a story about a person's positive relationships with others. Think about how your idea will create an emotional connection with readers and viewers. You may submit staff story ideas for use in an edition of [Enlighten E-news](#), our employee newsletter. (*NOTE: This is not a newsletter for student news.*) Be sure to provide a summary of the employee's contributions and impact they have made on their school and/or community. Be sure to include contact information.

Most media outlets have added sections to their websites where viewers/readers can upload their own photos and news, so don't miss out on this great opportunity!

Timing

- Plan your events wisely. If your school or department has a weekend event planned, be sure to remind local media the day before via email/phone.
- Most local television stations and some newspapers cover early morning stories. Be sure to get permission from your principal and have the principal or other approved spokesperson on site while the media are there.
- Know the deadlines and release the story so that all media will get it at the same time. Do not play favorites.
- Do not ask reporters to cover events on an hour's notice. Remember that they work on assignment and need sufficient lead time.

Establish a Relationship

- Get to know the [reporters and editors](#) that cover your school. If you don't already know them, pick up the phone or send an email to introduce yourself. Invite them to tour your school. This will also provide you and your principal with an excellent opportunity to brief them about the outstanding programs offered at your school.
- Remember that credibility is essential to maintaining successful working relationships with the media. Make absolutely certain that you double check the accuracy of any information you submit to the media.
- Learn what kinds of stories they write or produce and be sure to have a spokesperson for your story.
- Learn all you can about the needs of the news media: operation, deadlines, and services. Read newspapers, watch local television news, check out their websites, and follow them on social media.
- Return their phone calls or emails promptly.

Serve the Media Needs

- Keep the media informed about story ideas from your school through email, [Media Tip Sheet](#), or a phone call. When sending email to the media, be sure to put your school's name and event topic in the subject line.
- Don't complain to reporters when they don't cover a story, but be sure to thank them when they do.
- Don't overreact to errors in a news story. Call the reporter and provide him with the correct information so the mistake won't happen again.
- When a reporter does a good job on his story, let him know by sending an email with a copy to his supervisor.
- The reporter works for the media outlet, not Greenville County Schools. It is not the reporter's job to make the school or the school system look good. That is OUR JOB!
- Reporters are professionals; treat them as you would wish to be treated. Help reporters get the story, but don't try to tell them how it should be reported.
- Don't flood reporters and editors with emails that have no news value. If you do, they will get used to automatically deleting anything you send. Local weekly newspapers are more apt to respond to events such as school carnivals, fundraisers, or Honor Roll lists, for example.

Television Coverage

- Think immediate and visual. Watch the news and you will see that stories have action and interviews. Have your news event well organized so that the television reporters do not have to spend a lot of time waiting.
- When you contact the media, give directions to your school and a contact person, along with a phone number and email address or text number if they have questions prior to the event.
- Prepare a fact sheet with a brief summary of the activity and names and positions of people involved. You might also add general information about your school, your school's focus, or refer the reporter to your website for more information.

Photography

- The Greenville News and other local newspapers will provide a photographer if the story needs a picture. Weekly newspapers will usually accept high-quality photos you provide.
- If the media can't come out to your event, send them a picture. Use your cell phone if it takes high-quality photos. Do not send blurry or dark photos. You can upload/email photos in the "jpeg" format to Communications and most newspapers/television stations along with your story. Please be sure your photos are at least 200 dpi (250KB or larger).

District Publications and Resources

Media Tip Sheet

A Media Tip Sheet is posted every Tuesday during the school year on the GCS website. Local reporters and editors receive an email from the Communications Department that includes District and school-level news and upcoming events.

Enlighten E-News

Enlighten E-News is **for** employees and is **about** employees. *This is not a newsletter for student news.* Enlighten features staff news and accomplishments and is posted on the GCS website six times a year. Every full-and part-time permanent employee receives an email link to Enlighten. Enlighten E-news features staff members who have gone “above and beyond.” Story ideas are always welcomed by contacting Susan Clarke.

The Schools Channel & YouTube

The Schools Channel broadcasts school and District video programs as well as student-produced videos 24/7 on Charter Communications Channel 190 and AT&T U-verse 99. The district also has its own YouTube Channel that features district-produced videos, including School Spotlights and videos focusing on student and staff achievements.

The Communications Department accepts school-produced videos throughout the entire year. These videos may include (but are not limited to) school plays, concert performances, class projects, public service announcements, video competition entries, athletic or extracurricular events, and media/broadcast class productions. Videos of all lengths are acceptable. All submissions will be reviewed for approval (check copyright, video quality, etc). For questions regarding video production, please contact the Video Production Department at 452-0122 or 452-0123 or email Jeff Hoffman or Meredith Murray.

GCS Social Media

Greenville County Schools is using Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to keep followers informed about district and school news and events. Submit your photos with a caption or paragraph describing what is happening and identifying your school and teacher. Students' first and last names will be included when announcing awards.

We would like to share your school's day-to-day events on social media. You may send stories to Leisa Artus or Susan Clarke.

If you have personal social media pages, please 'Like' Greenville County Schools and share our stories with your friends.

Contact Communications

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Susan Richards, Secretary

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Susan Clarke, Communications Coordinator

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Leisa Artus, Social Media/Creative Services Specialist

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Meredith Murray, Videographer

452-0123

Jeff Hoffman, Videographer

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