

Think First

JEA
press rights
commission

Free expression
through
responsible
journalism

Yearbook Editorial Policy

Francis Howell North

“Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press...”

- The First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America

“The vigilant protection of constitutional freedoms is nowhere more vital than in the community of American schools.”

- Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District

The Excalibur is the official student yearbook at Francis Howell North High School in St. Charles, MO. The Excalibur editorial policy remains on file in the journalism laboratory. The name Excalibur is to be kept, as tradition of the school, under no circumstance should it be changed.

1. FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

The Excalibur believes it is essential to preserve the freedom of the press in order to preserve a free society. Therefore:

- * this school yearbook will serve the best interest of the students of Francis Howell North and keep itself free from any other obligation
- * the staff of the school yearbook will accept guidance from its adviser, but will make its own editorial decision
- * the editorial board may veto any material intended for publication, judged to be in violation of the Excalibur editorial policy
- * this school yearbook will vigorously resist all attempts at censorship, particularly prepublication censorship

2. THE EDITORIAL BOARD

- * the editorial board will consist of staff editors
- * no member of the editorial board shall have more than one vote on the board
- * the school yearbook staff will elect replacements for board members that have been dismissed
- * Editors will take vital part in communication with the publisher.

3. THE ADVISER

- * the adviser is a professional teaching staff member and is in charge of the class just as in a normal classroom situation
- * the adviser is a certified journalism teacher that serves as professional role model, motivator, catalyst for ideas and professionalism, and an educational resource

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- * the adviser provides a journalistic professional learning atmosphere and experience for students by allowing them to make the decisions of content for the publication, and ensuring the publication will remain an open forum
- * the adviser guides the yearbook staff in accordance with approved editorial policy and aids the educational process related to producing the yearbook
- * the adviser may caution, act as legal consultant and educator in terms of unprotected speech, has no power of censorship or veto except for constitutionally valid reasons such as inciting a riot, obscenity, defamation, intrusion, appropriation. For further descriptions of these constitutionally valid reasons for censorship, see the Quill and Scroll Foundation's Principal's Guide to Scholastic Journalism
- * the adviser will keep abreast of the latest trends in journalism and share these with students
- * although awards are not enforced, the adviser will submit the school yearbook and contributions of students to rating services and contests so the school yearbook staff receives feedback
- * provide information to the staff about journalism scholarships and other financial aid, and make available information and contacts concerning journalism as a career
- * work with the faculty and administration to help them understand the freedoms accorded the students and the professional goals of the school yearbook

4. THE BUILDING ADMINISTRATION

- * the Francis Howell North administration will provide the students of Francis Howell North High School with a qualified, journalism instructor to serve as a professional role model, adequate equipment, and space for a sound journalism program
- * the school yearbook staff and/or adviser may seek advice from the administration on paper content at any point in production
- * the Francis Howell North administration will offer equal opportunity to minority and/or marginalized students to participate in journalism programs
- * the Francis Howell North administration may caution, act as a legal consultant and educator but has no power of censorship or veto except for constitutionally valid reasons. For further reference, administration may see the Quill and Scroll Foundation's Principal's Guide to Scholastic Journalism

5. PURPOSE OF THE SCHOOL YEARBOOK

- * the role of the school yearbook is to inform, interpret, and entertain through accurate and factual reports
- * the school yearbook is to serve as an educational laboratory experience for those on staff
- * the school yearbook will run as an open forum
- * the school yearbook will strive to be accurate, fair, impartial and responsible in its coverage of issues that affect the school community
- * the goal of the school yearbook is to cover the total school population as effectively and accurately as possible

6. REGARDING PROFANITY

- * the school yearbook will not print any obscene language
- * the board reserves the right to edit quotes for profanity or possible offensive words

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- * any edited quote will be shown to the source prior to publishing
- * the editorial board will make the determination as to whether or not specific words will be considered profane or offensive
- * photos with profanity must be considered newsworthy unless otherwise noted

7. REGARDING CONTENT

- * the editorial board determines content, priority, placement and space given to all material
- * the school yearbook will not publish any material that is obscene, libelous, invasive of others' privacy or that encourages physical disruption of school activities
- * the school yearbook will not publish any attack material regarding individuals, religion, gender, age, mental or physical ability, ethnicity, race, culture, or lifestyle choices
- * the school yearbook will not publish any material for which there is evidence that the author is using the book for inappropriate personal gain
- * the school yearbook does not criticize policy without providing for solutions or alternatives
- * the school yearbook will endeavor to provide a chance for comment on all sides of a critical issue in the same edition
- * the editorial board reserves the right to refuse any material not deemed up to the standards the yearbook has set
- * the editorial board retains the right to amend this policy if the need arises
- * this editorial policy requires the signature of the building principal for validation

8. REGARDING STAFF WRITING

- * writing in the school yearbook will be written by the yearbook staff and students in the school's journalism courses. The yearbook will accept writing by outside sources and will run the submitted writing if approved by the editorial board
- * every member of the yearbook staff will check quotes for accuracy and representational viewpoint by showing the typed quote to be used to the source from which the quote was received

9. REGARDING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

- * all sides of the issue will be presented and reviewed so as to refrain from any bias
- * in news, all sides of a school, community, city, state, national, or international political issue will be presented factually so as to inform, rather than promote or endorse
- * the issue will be brought to the editorial board who must consider the following questions before publication in the paper:

- *Why is it a concern?
- *What is the journalistic purpose?
- *Is the information accurate and complete?
- *Are any important points-of-view omitted?
- *How would we feel if the story was about ourselves or someone we know?
- *What are the consequences of publication?

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- *What are the alternatives?
- *Is there a logical explanation to anyone who challenges the issue?
- * Is this a mountain we want to die on?

10. REGARDING TRIVIA

- * the school yearbook will not publish trivia such as popularity polls, senior superlatives, will and testaments, etc.
- * the editorial board retains the right to determine what material is considered trivia

11. REGARDING REVIEWS

- * the reviewers must have experience in the area in which they are writing reviews
- * all reviews will be bylined and all reviews will be the expressed opinions of the signed authors, the editorial board and yearbook staff does not express opinions on these matters
- * all reviews will be to evaluate and inform, not to promote
- * all reviewers will endeavor to obtain direct quotes from participants, presenters, and/or audience to provide a balanced view
- * evaluative criteria used will be determined by the editorial board depending on whether the event/item being reviewed is professional or amateur in nature
- * review ideas may be submitted to the editorial board by all members of the yearbook staff
- * all printed review subject matter will be determined by the editorial board

12. REGARDING BYLINES

- * all articles, graphics, photographs, art, columns, pages and reviews printed will be bylined unless determined otherwise by the editorial board
- * all bylined writers will be held accountable for their work

13. REGARDING NEWS AND FEATURES

- * the school yearbook will specialize in and emphasize coverage of school news
- * the school yearbook will cover community, state, national, and international news if it is directly relevant to the school community and includes a local angle
- * the school yearbook will strive to provide equitable coverage to all school organizations and functions
- * when faced with the undesirable news such as student, staff or faculty crimes, the school yearbook will endeavor to publish the facts correctly, explain the issues, and put a stop to any speculative stories that inevitably develop

14. REGARDING DEATHS

- * any current student, staff member, faculty member, or building administrator that dies during the year will be recognized in the school yearbook.
- * the school yearbook will publish factual information (date of birth, date of death, survivors, organizations,

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hobbies and interests) and one 1" x 2" mug shot if possible in a 1/8 page space

- * the school yearbook will first obtain permission from the deceased's family before publishing any information regarding the cause of death

- * the school yearbook will treat all deaths in a tasteful and respectful manner

- * a book or any portion of it should not be dedicated to or in memory of the deceased

- * cause of death will be listed at the discretion of the editorial board, however suicide will not be listed as a cause of death

15. REGARDING ILLUSTRATIONS, PHOTOGRAPHS, GRAPHICS, ETC.

- * all photographs will record the who, what, where, when, why and how of all photographs taken whether of individuals, places, or things

- * all photographs must be captioned

- * all photographs of special needs students must have the necessary signatures on a photograph release prior to publishing

- * photographs printed in the school yearbook are displayed as taken; negatives will not be flipped

- * any photographs that must be re-shot due to inappropriate attire or actions by the individuals in the photo, those individuals will pay for all additional photo expenses

- * artwork represents the interpretations of the artist, not necessarily the yearbook staff or Francis Howell North High School

- * the school yearbook will not publish any photographs, illustrations, etc., that ridicule, demean, or misleadingly represent any individual or group

- * manipulated photos will be listed as a photo illustration

- * keep submitted photos to a minimum

16. REGARDING ERRORS

- * concerns about errors in the school yearbook may be submitted to the school yearbook through the adviser, the phone number to the publications room is 636-851-5107; or they can be submitted to room 26.

- * the editorial board retains the right to determine whether, in-fact, an error has been made

- * known and or found errors that are brought to the attention of the school yearbook will be addressed regardless if realized by author, audience, or staff member`

17. REGARDING ADVERTISING

- * the school yearbook will not accept advertising for products that are illegal for minor to purchase, consume or use

- * students not of legal age whose photographs appear in an advertisement of the school yearbook will be required to sign a model release form, as will their legal guardian(s)

- * the school yearbook will not run advertising without the proper signature on an advertising contract which explains the terms of payment, the content, size, publishing dates, and includes an attached layout

- * the school yearbook will not accept classified advertising

- * all ads need to be approved by the editorial board. Any ad not deemed appropriate by the board will not run

- * the school yearbook will cease to publish advertising of any advertiser that does not meet the payment

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obligations specified in the school contract

- * all advertisers who purchase 1/4 page or larger ad will receive a complimentary issue of the Excalibur for which advertising was published and paid
- * if a published advertisement is incorrect in substantive content a reduced price or corrected run will be negotiated
- * advertisements that appear in the Excalibur are not necessarily endorsed by the Excalibur or its staff members, editorial board or adviser
- * senior ads will be accepted until the date specified by yearbook staff, and thereafter accepted only if space permits
- * the yearbook staff reserves the right to refuse any advertisement
- * The new billing procedure, 30% added monthly to the original price for any unpaid ads by October 1. For example, if a \$100 ad is bought and payment is not received by November 1, \$30.00 will be added to the ad bill each month.
- * All ads MUST be proofed by the business or family purchasing the ad before being sent to the publisher for submission, no exceptions!
- * After November 1, the price of the yearbook increased to \$65. After Jan. 1, the price will increase to \$75.
- * Total press run is 1,400
- * For and additional \$5, the yearbook can be mailed to the purchaser

18. REGARDING DISTRIBUTION AND CIRCULATION

- * the school yearbook will come out during registration for the following school year, unless specified otherwise by the adviser and editorial board.
- * the school yearbook will be sold for \$50 from registration until November 1. Price will then increase to \$65 after that date.
- * advertising revenues and fundraising are to be used to pay for the school yearbook's printing costs, supplies and other expenses
- * all budget surpluses are to be used for future production of the school yearbook
- * total press run each issue is approximately 1,400
- * exchange yearbooks are received and displayed in the journalism laboratory

19. REGARDING STAFF DISMISSALS

The Excalibur is considered a team. Each member is expected to complete all assigned stories, pages, photos, etc.. on or before the deadline assigned. Staff members, including editors, may be dismissed from their positions or the Excalibur staff itself if any of the following violations occur:

1. Continuously missed deadlines
 2. Plagiarism
 3. Quote falsification
 4. Vandalism or theft of publication equipment
 5. Continuous negative or pessimistic attitude towards a staff member or the adviser.
 6. Submitting a page designed by any staff member to anyone outside the Excalibur staff
 7. Two suspensions in one academic year
 8. Failing to fulfill job as outlined in the job description
- * major infractions will result in immediate dismissal from staff duties and dismissal from the class and staff

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at the end of the semester (major infractions include, but are not limited to the following: plagiarism, vandalism/theft)

- * minor infractions will be given a written warning for the first one. The second one in any academic year will result in immediate dismissal from staff duties and dismissal from the class and staff at the end of the semester
- * warnings will be written, signed by adviser and editor-in-chief(s), as well as the staff member in question as well as his/her parent(s)/guardian(s)
- * an editor will be stripped of his/her title if suspended
- * each member of the Editorial Board and the adviser will attend a meeting with the potentially dismissed student to discuss the issue. The adviser will then make the final decision.
- * the academic nature of the school yearbook class allows removal of editors or staff members when school and/or established yearbook policy is violated
- * the above listed infractions could all result in a staff dismissal, however, staff dismissals are not limited to the listed infractions
- * dismissed staff members receiving academic credit may be given a grade of F and will not be allowed to register for any other journalism courses (will not preempt school policy).
- * dismissal procedures are reviewed and approved by the editorial board
- * dismissed staff members may appeal their dismissal in writing to the editorial board within three school days following the dismissal
- * all dismissal appeals will be directed to the building principal

20. QUERIES

- * questions or complaints concerning material published in the school yearbook should be made in writing to the editor-in-chief(s) who will present the concern at the next scheduled editorial board meeting
- * resolutions will be made within the limits of deadlines

21. PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- * the school yearbook should be a member of state, national, and/or international organizations

22. PRIOR REVIEW POLICY

- * sources will be able to review their quotes at the time of interview or at the reporter's initiative
- * sources will not be able to arbitrarily demand to read the reporter's completed story and then perform editing tasks on that story
- * the school yearbook reporters will endeavor to include the name and/or identity of all sources if the reporter believes that doing so will not result in endangerment, harassment or any other form of undue physical, mental and/or emotional anguish for the source
- * the school yearbook reporters will not, within all boundaries of the law, reveal a source who asked to remain nameless
- * all school yearbook interviewers will respect the interviewee's rights to have information remain "off the record" if that fact is known before giving the information to the interviewer

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- * the school yearbook will not be reviewed by the administration prior to its release to the public

23. EDITOR AND STAFF SELECTION PROCESS

- * the editor-in-chief and other editors are chosen by the faculty adviser, and previous year's editor-in-chief(s)
- * new and returning staff are judged by application, interview, previous work, and prerequisite class work
- * applicants are not turned down because of age, sex, race, religion, mental or physical handicaps that do not impair their editorial responsibilities
- * Editor-In-Chief(s) must attend a summer journalism camp or an equivalent internship

24. REGARDING BIDDING PROCEDURES

- * student representation will be present for any bid meetings
- * administration has the option of attending any bid meetings
- * adviser will be present for any bid meetings
- * yearbook staff and adviser are responsible for choosing publisher
- * at least three written bids and short presentations will be submitted
- * written bids will be submitted one week before the company's short presentation for review by adviser
- * while cost is important, it is not the sole deciding factor in selecting a publisher
- * Editor-In-Chief(s) must be present to all bid meetings

25. PORTRAIT POLICY

- * senior portraits must be taken by company specified by yearbook staff
- * all senior portraits must arrive to the yearbook staff by the posted date given to the yearbook staff by the senior portrait photographer
- * Any senior who fails to get their yearbook portrait taken by the senior photographer contracted by the yearbook staff, will not be pictured in the yearbook
- * portraits provided by the school photographer will be used for students in grades 9-11 and for the faculty members. Because of plant deadlines and the possibility of students missing portrait day, the yearbook staff is not responsible for unavailable portraits of students
- * the section/grade placement of student portraits will be determined by the student's first semester status
- * grade designations will only be changed with written permission by student, student's parent, and a member of the administration
- * photo omissions will only occur for students or faculty with written permission by the student and a member of the administration
- * editorial board reserves the right to review or omit questionable or inappropriate portraits
- * names in mugs section will appear as supplied by the student during portrait day unless otherwise requested
- * portraits will consist of one individual only. No other persons or props are permitted

26. GROUP PORTRAIT POLICY



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- *any groups with school sponsors are eligible to take a group photo
- *yearbook will cover school sponsored, board approved, and established clubs/sports. All other sports or clubs will be reviewed by the editorial board
- *editorial board reserves the right to review or omit questionable or inappropriate portraits
- *portraits will consist of group members and sponsors only. Props are not permitted without prior approval
- * face painting in group portraits is not permitted