

The Hook's Editorial Policy

The WCHS Media Editorial Policy pertains to The Hook student newspaper and The Hook's website, wchshook.com. The full editorial policy is available on wchshook.com.

WCHS Media are the official student-produced media of news and information published/produced by WCHS Journalism students. WCHS Media have been established as designated public forums for student editors to inform and educate their readers as well as for the discussion of issues of concern to their audience. Advisers may (and should) coach and discuss content during the writing process.

Because school officials do not engage in prior review, and the content of WCHS Media is determined by and reflects only the views of the student staff and not school officials or the school itself, its student editorial board and responsible student staff members assume complete legal and financial liability for the content of the publication. Is this language something you've seen used elsewhere? I have some questions about it.

INTRODUCTION: The overall purpose, role and goal of the WCHS Newspaper is to:

1. Inform and entertain the WCHS community on current and/or important events and important changes pertaining to the school community.
2. Be accurate, fair, and impartial in its coverage of issues that affect the school community.
3. Inform, interpret, and entertain their viewers through accurate and factual reports, where information has been thoroughly gathered and information has been completely verified.
4. Adhere to the ethical guidelines outlined by the Society of Professional Journalists (<http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp>).
5. Cover the total school population as effectively and accurately as possible (including various sports, clubs, classes and staff members).

6. Appeal to a WCHS student and staff audience.

STAFF WRITING AND REPORTING

1. All writing in the media, other than letters to the editor, will be written by students of the journalism program and will not be accepted otherwise.
2. WCHS students outside of the media staffs will have the opportunity to submit writing to the media.
3. Any writing submitted from an outside source for use will be accepted upon request of the editorial board or when open opportunities arise, and will be viewed by Editor and Chief, the appropriate section editor, and adviser for verification.
4. Any material submitted from an outside source can be edited by the editorial board and must comply to this policy.
5. Writing must be the original work of the writer and not previously published in any publication, unless otherwise specified by the adviser and Editor in Chief.

STUDENT JOURNALIST EXPECTATIONS

1. Student journalists will keep all interview notes on file to ensure accuracy.
2. Student journalists will conduct interviews with a prepared set of interview questions and background checks.
3. Students will cite sources correctly.
4. Students will ensure accuracy of their interviews through signatures, fact checking, and digital and/or handwritten documentation of their sources.
5. Student journalists will cite all published photographs correctly and include correct spelling of student/staff names in addition to photo credit.
6. All published photographs will include bylines and captions including the persons and other necessary information in the photo.

7. Student journalists will be knowledgeable of school events.
8. Student journalists will adhere to deadlines for pre-publication and publication.

REGARDING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

1. Potentially controversial article topics will be deemed as such by the editorial board.
2. Staff writers will be notified by their editors if they must adhere to the controversial issues policy for their article.
3. All sides of the issue will be presented and reviewed so as to refrain from any bias, with exception of opinions. The way journalism is supposed to be!
4. 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.
5. The media will not publish material that is unnecessarily obscene, libelous, unwarranted, or invasive of privacy.

REGARDING PROFANITY

1. The media will not print any derogatory terms or phrases.
2. The media will not publish any signs/symbols that may be considered derogatory to WCHS staff and students.
3. The editors reserve the right to edit quotes for unnecessary profanity or unnecessarily offensive words, quotes that have been edited will be noted accordingly when published.
4. The editors reserve the right to paraphrase quotations without profanity and/or vulgarity.
5. The editors reserve the right to edit content appropriately so that content pertains only to the story being told by staff writers.

REGARDING DEATH

1. Any death in the WCHS community will be honored in the newspaper.
2. Memorial will include date of birth, date of death and tenure in the West Carrollton community.
3. Memorial will include a photograph of the person being honored.
4. The Hook staff will strive for a story angle that focuses on the positive influence of the person's life.

PUBLISHING CORRECTIONS

1. Concerns about errors in the school media may be submitted to the adviser. The phone number to the publication room is 937-859-5121 ex 8876, email is wchsnewspaper@wcsd.k12.oh.us.
2. The editors retain the right to determine whether a retraction is necessary. Editors will provide evidence of documentation if they deem a retraction is unnecessary.
3. All corrections will include an update of the situation or quotation in question.
4. All corrections and retractions will include a published acknowledgement and apology from the staff.
5. All staff members will strive to correct errors prior to publication.

SOCIAL MEDIA

To be updated 1/16.

REGARDING LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND ONLINE COMMENTS

1. Letters to editor will be printed in the opinion section of the newspaper or on the website.
2. Guidelines to write letters to the editor will be printed every issue in the opinion section of the paper and is available online at wchshook.com.
3. Letters to the editor may be submitted to Ms. Betz' mailbox, room 304 or emailed at this address: wchsnewspaper@wcsd.k12.oh.us.

4. Letters to editor should not exceed 300 words, must be signed, and must include writer(s) name and WCSD email for verification.
5. No material will be printed where content is obscene, invasive of others' privacy, encouraging physical disruption of school activities, and/or implies libel.
6. The WHS Media editorial board reserves the right to withhold a letter or column or other submission and/OR return it for revision if it contains unprotected speech or grammatical errors that could hamper its meaning. The deadline for letters and columns is 10 days prior to the next publication date.
7. The Hook will only publish one letter, per author, per issue.
8. All letters to the editor become the property of the school newspaper upon receipt and will not be returned to the author.
9. Online comments will require a name and email address submitted that are verifiable.
10. Online comments that are found in violation of the editorial policy will be removed as quickly as possible.
11. Personal attacks are not allowed.

QUERIES

1. Questions or complaints concerning material published in the media should be made in writing to the editor in chief(s) who will present the concern at the next scheduled staff meeting.
2. Complaints and suggestions may be emailed to wchsnewspaper@wcsd.k12.oh.us or dropped off in Ms. Betz' mailbox, or in room 304.
3. Coverage requests can be sent to wchsnewspaper@wcsd.k12.oh.us or submitted online at wchshook.com.

Original editorial policy written by the 2015-2016 The Hook staff 9/15.

Updated 10/7/2015

This proposed editorial policy for West Carrollton High School includes newspapers, websites, broadcasts, videos and all other news or social media used by students. This policy reflects collaboration by the 2015-2015 The Hook student staff plus several changes by Kristi Betz designed to fit West Carrollton High School's unique situation. Sources for this policy include Scott F. Davis of Westville, Oklahoma High School and JEA Scholastic Press Rights Chair. The JEA Model Editorial Policy was also used.

Source: <http://www.jeadigitalmedia.org/2011/07/11/sample-combined-editorial-policy-for-high-school-student-media/>