

Releasing News to News Media

The Plano ISD Communications Department has established guidelines to expedite the process of disseminating school and district news to various news media sources. These guidelines also help newspapers better serve their readers by enabling them to handle the increased amount of education news released by the Communications Department and to publish news in a timely manner. (Decisions regarding publication of news are made by the various news media reporters/editors.)

- The Communications Department uses several methods to distribute news items from the schools to the news media—hard copies in media mail boxes located in Communications Department, faxes, and e-mails. (E-mail is the most frequently used method of distribution.) Education news releases and or briefs should be typewritten on a plain sheet of paper for personal distribution or distribution by fax. For distribution by e-mail, the news information should be submitted as an attachment. Any special requests or special messages can be sent to Nancy Long in the message part of the e-mail.
- Please send releases via school mail to the attention of: Nancy Long, PISD Communications Department, fax to Nancy Long at 469-752-8096, or e-mail to Nancy Long at nancy.long@pisd.edu . Please direct any questions to Ms. Long at 469-752-8147.
- When preparing an article, please include this information: a contact name and phone number (in case reporters need more information); first and last names of all individuals mentioned; titles, whenever applicable; and name, phone number, and address of school (include that it is a Plano ISD school particularly if the address is not a Plano address). Also, ages and grades of students being recognized are helpful but may be omitted if dealing with a large group. Grades and subject/title of district personnel being recognized are also important.
- When typing the information, please take note of the following requests to allow articles to be processed more easily by the reporters:
 - *Please do not underline words or make handwritten corrections to articles as this will prevent a scanner from “reading” these words. You can write at the top, bottom, or side of page.
 - *Please use **standard upper and lower case letters**, not all caps.
 - *Please place **lists such as student winners in paragraph** form rather than in columns.
 - *Names should be submitted with the first name first, not the last name first.
 - *Please do not use dot-matrix printers or any script-like fonts, which are difficult to read.
 - *Spacing such as single space and/or double space does not matter.
 - *Indented paragraphs and/or flush left paragraphs do not matter.
 - *If you are requesting photos to be taken, please state: **Photographer Requested**. The decision to send a photographer is made by the news media staff.
- Meeting notices and other short news items should be typed in sentence form using the guidelines outlined in this memo. Please include who is invited to the meeting such as the public is invited to attend; PTA members are invited to attend, etc.
- When submitting photographs, please make certain that all individuals in the picture are identified as to their location in the photo (example: left to right are). Photos can be e-mailed to Ms. Long as an attachment and information as requested above should be included. The photos should be high resolution and the jpeg format or original copies of photos.
- The parental publicity release form that is addressed in the Student/Parent Policy Guide should be signed and on file in school office for any photos submitted and for any students who may be photographed/interviewed by news media when covering an event that has been submitted for coverage.
- Various area print media cover Plano ISD regularly. These include Plano Star Courier, West Plano People, Plano Profile, and the Dallas Morning News.
- Some news items are of interest to television and radio news departments and other area and state newspapers. Items will be submitted for their consideration when appropriate. Plano ISD is a popular television market and is frequently featured on Channels 4, 5, 8, 11, and 33.

News Release Examples:

Example of a Meeting Notice/Brief

For Immediate Release/Photographer Requested

Contact: Sharon Sample, Publicity Chairman-- 972- 400-0005
Mendenhall Elementary School (Plano ISD)
1313 18th Street, Plano—469-752-2600

Mendenhall to Host Coffee for Parents

Mendenhall Elementary School, 1313 18th Street, Plano, will hold a coffee on Tuesday, August 22, from 8 to 9:30 a.m. in the school library, 1313 18th Street, Plano, to welcome new parents. All Mendenhall parents are invited to attend.

Example of a Press Release

Plano ISD News Release/For Immediate Release
Contact: Nancy Long, 469-752-8147
Plano ISD Communications Department
Photographer Requested

Plano ISD to Observe Texas Public Schools Week

More than 55,000 students in the Plano Independent School District will be among the more than the three million students across the state celebrating Texas Public Schools Week, February 27 through March 3. This year's theme is "Texas Public Schools: A Landscape for Learning," and it is designed to celebrate the array of educational opportunities available to students attending Texas public schools.

As part of the weeklong festivities, local schools are distributing special invitations to parents and area residents to visit classrooms and observe the educational process, said Superintendent Doug Otto.

"Of course, the community is always welcome in our schools," Dr. Otto explained, "but this week is especially exciting because our students have planned many special activities emphasizing Texas Public Schools Week."

Evening open houses are planned as follows: senior high schools and high schools on Monday, February 27; middle schools on Tuesday, February 28; and elementary schools on Thursday, March 2. Open house times vary from school to school depending on activities and are available by contacting the individual schools.

"Texas Public Schools Week is a celebration in which everyone-- parents, grandparents, families, and the community-at-large-- can participate," said Dr. Otto. "It is the responsibility of the people of the community to ensure that a high quality education is being provided to its students, and Texas Public Schools Week is an optimal time for local residents to check in on their schools."

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