

Think First

JEA
press rights
commission

Free expression
through
responsible
journalism

Newspaper Editorial Policy

Francis Howell North High School

“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 North Star is the official student newspaper at Francis Howell North High School. An abridged version of the North Star editorial policy is printed in the first issue of the academic school year and remains on file in the journalism laboratory. A copy of the editorial policy in full will be located on the North Star's official website: northstartoday.com

1. FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

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

- * this school newspaper 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 newspaper will accept guidance from its adviser, but will make its own editorial decision
- * only the editorial board may veto any material intended for publication, judged to be in violation of the North Star editorial policy
- * this school newspaper 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 newspaper editorial board will elect replacements for board members that have been dismissed

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
- * the adviser provides a journalistically professional learning atmosphere and experience for students by allowing them to make the decisions of content for the publication, and ensuring the publication will

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remain an open forum

- * the adviser guides the newspaper staff in accordance with approved editorial policy and aids the educational process related to producing the newspaper
- * 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_
- * the adviser will keep abreast of the latest trends in journalism and share these with students_
- * the adviser will submit the school newspaper and contributions of students to rating services and contests so the school newspaper 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 newspaper

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 newspaper 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

5. PURPOSE OF THE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

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

6. REGARDING PROFANITY

- * the school newspaper will not print any profanity, including slang, cultural, or colloquial terms
- * the board reserves the right to edit quotes for profanity or possible offensive words
- * 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

7. REGARDING CONTENT

- *the editorial board determines content, priority, placement and space given to all material
- * the school newspaper will not publish any material that is obscene, libelous, invasive of others' privacy or

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that encourages physical disruption of school activities

- * the school newspaper will not publish any attack material regarding individuals, religion, gender, age, mental or physical ability, ethnicity, race, culture, or lifestyle choices_
- * the school newspaper will not publish any material for which there is evidence that the author is using the paper for inappropriate personal gain
- * the school newspaper does not criticize policy without providing for solutions or alternatives_
- * the school newspaper 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 newspaper 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

- * all writing in the school newspaper, other than letters to the editor, will be written by the newspaper staff and students in the school's journalism courses
- * the school newspaper will not accept writing, except for letters to the editor, from anyone other than the school newspaper staff and students in the school's journalism courses_
- * the school newspaper will not accept guest columns

9. REGARDING EDITORIALS

- * all editorials printed will be bylined_ as: On behalf of the Editorial Staff
- * editorial ideas may be submitted to the editorial board by all members of the newspaper staff
- * all printed editorial subject matter will be determined by the editorial board
- * all individual staff columns will be bylined
- * the photographs of writers of standing columns will appear with the columns
- * sports columns will appear in the sports section of the paper

10. 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?
 - *What are the alternatives?
 - *Is there a logical explanation to anyone who challenges the issue?
 - * Is this a mountain we want to die on?

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11. REGARDING LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

- * letters to the editor will be printed in the opinion section
- * letters must be signed by the author and verified for publication by the editorial board.
- * letters to the editor may be submitted to Mr. Manfull's mailbox or room 26 or emailed to letters@northstartoday.com
- * letters to the editor should not exceed 400 words, must be signed and must include the writer's address and phone number for verification
- * all letters to the editor will be verified by a member of the editorial board to determine the authenticity of the writer
- * no material will be printed where content is obscene, invasive of others' privacy, encouraging physical disruption of school activities and/or implies libel
- * the editorial board reserves the right to have letters edited for length, grammar, punctuation, clarity, etc.
- * If editing is required, the letter will be sent to the author for consent.
- * the school newspaper will only publish one letter per author per issue
- * all letters to the editor become the property of the school newspaper upon receipt and will not be returned

12. REGARDING TRIVIA

- * the school newspaper will not publish gossip columns, popularity polls, April Fool's editions, senior superlatives, will and testaments, etc
- * the editorial board retains the right to determine what material is considered trivia

13. 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 newspaper staff does not express opinions on these matters
- * all reviews will be to evaluate and inform, not to promote
- * 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 newspaper staff
- * all printed review subject matter will be determined by the editorial board

14. REGARDING BYLINES

- * all articles, graphics, photographs, art, columns, pages and reviews printed will be bylined unless determined otherwise by the editorial board
- * all editorials will be bylined
- * all bylined writers will be held accountable for their work
- * shared bylines will be written will be used when determined by a member of the editorial board

15. REGARDING NEWS AND FEATURES

- * the school newspaper will specialize in and emphasize coverage of school news_
- * the school newspaper will cover community, state, national, and international news if it is directly relevant to the school community and includes a local angle
- * the school newspaper will strive to provide equitable coverage to all school organizations and functions
- * the school newspaper will focus on issues, before personalities

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- * when faced with the undesirable news such as student, staff or faculty crimes, the school newspaper will endeavor to publish the facts correctly, explain the issues, and put a stop to any speculative stories that inevitably develop

16. REGARDING DEATHS

- * any current student, staff member, faculty member, or building administrator that dies during the year will be recognized in the school newspaper.
- * the school newspaper will publish factual information (date of birth, date of death, survivors, organizations, hobbies and interests) in a 300 word obituary and include one mug shot if possible
- * the school newspaper will first obtain permission from the deceased's family before publishing any information regarding the cause of death
- * the school newspaper will treat all deaths in a tasteful and respectful manner
- * an issue should not be dedicated to or in memory of the deceased.

17. 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, with the exception of those featured on Page 2, must be captioned
- * photographs printed in the school newspaper 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 newspaper staff or Francis Howell North High School
- * the school newspaper will not publish any photographs, illustrations, etc., that ridicule, demean, or misleadingly represent any individual or group

18. REGARDING ERRORS

- * concerns about errors in the school newspaper may be submitted to the school newspaper 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 newspaper will be addressed regardless if realized by author, audience, or staff member
- * the school newspaper will work to correct errors in first subsequently published issue after the error has been located and acknowledged
- * corrections will appear in a corrections box on the newspaper's website

19. REGARDING ADVERTISING

- * the school newspaper will not accept advertising for products that are illegal for minors to purchase, consume or use
- * students not of legal age whose photographs appear in an advertisement of the school newspaper will be required to sign a model release form, as will their legal guardian(s)
- * the school newspaper 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 newspaper will not accept personal or classified advertising

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- * all ads need to be approved by the editorial board. Any ad not deemed appropriate by the board will not run
- * the school newspaper will cease to publish advertising of any advertiser that does not meet the payment obligations specified in the school contract
- * all advertisers will receive a complimentary subscription of the North Star
- * if a published advertisement is incorrect in substantive content a reduced price or corrected run will be negotiated
- * advertisements that appear in the North Star are not necessarily endorsed by the North Star or its staff members, editorial board or adviser
- * all ads are billed on Oct. 1, unless alternative arrangements are made with the adviser. Bills which are not settled by Nov. 1, will incur an additional fee of 30% of the original balance. An additional fee of 30% the original balance will be added the first of each month until the bill is paid.
- * if an advertiser fails to produce payment by the end of the year, an ad will be run in the local newspaper stating that the advertiser still has not paid their bill to the North Star.
- * all controversial advertising will be discussed by the editorial board

20. REGARDING DISTRIBUTION AND CIRCULATION

- * the school newspaper will begin at no less than 16 pages in tabloid format, the number of pages can however be altered, if need be, under the decision of the adviser and editorial board
- * the school newspaper will come out the third Thursday of every month, unless specified otherwise by the adviser and editorial board.
- * the school newspaper will be distributed free of charge to all students, staff, faculty, and building administrators
- * current copies of the school newspaper will also be displayed in the library, main office, guidance office and room 26
- * advertising revenues and fundraising are to be used to pay for the school newspaper's printing costs, supplies and other expenses
- * all budget surpluses are to be used for future production of the school newspaper
- * the paper will be distributed during first hour on the day of publication
- * the school newspaper will accept subscriptions for the price of \$10 for the entire year.
- * total press run each issue is approximately 2,500
- * exchange papers are received and displayed in the journalism laboratory
- * exchange papers are mailed to other newspapers across the United States

21. REGARDING STAFF DISMISSALS

The North Star 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 North Star 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 North Star staff
7. Two suspensions in one academic year

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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 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 newspaper class allows removal of editors or staff members when school and/or established newspaper 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

22. QUERIES

- * questions or complaints concerning material published in the school newspaper 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

23. PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

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

24. 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 newspaper 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 newspaper reporters will not, within all boundaries of the law, reveal a source who asked to remain nameless

- * all school newspaper 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

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



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25. 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

26. ONLINE AND PODCAST EDITIONS

- *only stories written and photos taken by those on staff or enrolled in a journalism course will appear in the online edition and on the podcast, with the exception of the pictures received for the online picture contests
 - *the content of the online edition and the podcast will follow the rules of the North Star content
 - *all blog entries and comments made on the podcast are subject to moderation by members of the editorial board when found necessary
 - *the website will be updated daily
 - *a new episode of the podcast will air every Friday
 - *all online ads will follow those of the North Star's advertising policy
- ship



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