



Eagle Media

Broadcast • Newspaper • Photography • Yearbook

Policy Manual

Vol. 12

2023-2024

Policy

The name of the Lake Ridge High School yearbook is Fidelity.

Location

The Lake Ridge High School Journalism Department is located on the main campus of Lake Ridge High School in room E-131.

The Lake Ridge High School website can be accessed at <http://lakeridge.mansfieldisd.org>

The yearbook website is www.lakeridgenewsonline.com/yearbook

Contact

The journalism department may be contacted by mail at

101 N Day Miar Road

Mansfield, TX 76063

The department's phone number is (682) 314-0351

To reach the yearbook staff by email, contact the adviser at kristincanon@misdmail.org

Purpose

- The Fidelity yearbook is a laboratory for journalism students designed to serve the total school community. As a laboratory, publications and videos provide staff members with independent writing and design opportunities with hands on/real life experiences. Writing is based on a wide variety of research for a broad and often critical audience. The experience often demands responsibility, cooperation and a great deal of professionalism. Business skills are also learned through selling advertising.
- The journalism department serves their audience with accurate and factual reporting on significant aspects of school life and subjects of concern to its readers. As an independent observer, the publications should use their unique access to news and a broad perspective to lead the school community toward constructive accomplishments. Videos entertain audiences through clever, creative approaches to writing, photography, design and coverage of the human spirit.
- Lake Ridge High School publications have a goal to successfully reach the high school community with interesting, timely articles that will enhance the surroundings and purpose of the educational experience.
- The overall Lake Ridge High School journalism experience should encourage students to become more creative and strive to master skills of the trade while entertaining and enlightening the LRHS student audience.
- Lake Ridge High School publications provide readers with a public forum. Students, faculty, administrators, parents and others in the school community are encouraged to react to printed material through signed letters to the editor. Letters must be signed by the author and accompanied by a phone number and address. The letter will be published without alteration.

Coverage

- It is the responsibility of the publications to cover school, city, state, national and international events and issues that affect or concern the campus, its students or its readers in a non-bias method.
- School publications will attempt to cover all aspect of the school; however, coverage will depend greatly upon an item's news value (how important or interesting it would be to the majority of the school population). Publication editors determine the news value of all material.
- School publications will clearly identify sources of news, except when it is necessary to uphold the journalist's privilege of protecting the identity of sources. When in such case, the journalist must reveal the source to the editor or adviser, who will determine if the source is creditable.
- School publications will avoid sensationalizing news and events. Publications do not invade personal privacy or print material that might be embarrassing or degrading to any individual or group.
- All editorial or opinion content must be backed up by three sources of facts. At no time will an editorial attack a person. Only policy related material may be published.
- Online stories must have two sources

Frequency & Format

- The Fidelity yearbook is published once a year and distributed in May
- The Fidelity yearbook is the responsibility of the advanced journalism yearbook and photo classes offered by Mansfield ISD
- The 2024 Fidelity yearbook is published by Jostens.
- Photos, videos, and stories are published by all journalism classes.

Audience

School publications are written primarily for the 2,600+ students who attend Lake Ridge High School. Secondary audiences which may receive the yearbook include:

- Feeding Middle Schools
- Faculty, Staff, Administration of Lake Ridge High School
- Advertisers
- Parents
- School Board Members
- Other school journalism programs
- ILPC, JEA, NSPA, TAJE, CSPA and other professional organizations

Board of Education and Administrative Policy

- The Board of Education and the Central Administration of Mansfield provides the publications with a partial subsidy to cover basic supplies, just as it does for other classes in the school curriculum.
- The student body of Lake Ridge High School does not provide the publications with a partial subsidy. The student body does, however purchase the yearbook for a set price during the school year.
- Additional funds are generated through the sale of advertising by the publications staff and deposited into the high school's yearbook activity fund.
- Commission sales from school day portraits are also collected and deposited into a school fund.
- While school publications are responsible to the board for the funds they receive and subject to state and federal laws, content reflects student's thinking and is not necessarily in agreement with the administration of Mansfield Independent School District.
- Editorials represent the staff majority of agreement along with the story. Opinions are not generally those of the adviser, its editors, student body, faculty or administration
- All content is a designated public forum for student expression without prior review by school officials.

Responsibility for Accuracy and Objectivity

- School publications endeavor to correctly spell names and make accurate class and position identifications. Names of students, faculty, administration and other sources must be checked for accuracy by the writer.
- The editor or adviser is not responsible for inaccuracy in presenting names within a story.
- All facts must be verifiable by at least two sources. All quotes are subject to verification by the editors and/or adviser. Any story containing fictitious quotes will be discarded in its entirety and the writer will be placed on discipline probation.
- Each staff member is responsible for quote collections which must be saved on the server and placed on file for four years.
- Most of what is published is the work of individuals. The staff and adviser are responsible for all material which appears in school publications. Administrators have a non-review role: they may, according to the Hazelwood court decision, control content prior to publication, and may offer advice on sensitive issues and will offer criticisms that are warranted following publication.
- School publications strive for the highest standards of accuracy, integrity, completeness and careful research in its presentation of material that time allows. Since there are deadlines to meet, however, school publications will go to press with the facts as they stand on deadline. The staff therefore assumes responsibility for the accuracy of these facts.

- Rumor, gossip or innuendo are not, nor will they ever be, the basis for any story appearing in school publications.
- No member of the publications staff will accept any free gifts, considerations or passes that might compromise the integrity of the school's publications or the objectivity of its reporters. The Lake Ridge High School Journalism Department receives five season passes to sporting events free of charge. The purpose of these passes is to properly produce an active, accurate account of the event and should not be used for personal reasons.
- All copy must conform to the department's Stylebook, contained within the Staff Manual. When the publications' stylebook does not have the answer, consult the AP Stylebook.
- When an error merits a proper correction, as determined by the editor or adviser, it will be promptly addressed.
- School publications are a member of the UIL-ILPC, TAJE, NSPA, CSPA Quill and Scroll, and JEA professional organizations and receive critiques from some of these sources and adhere to these organizations guidelines.
- Website sources used must be accredited and approved by the editor and/or adviser. Any source used must be cited within the story and proper permission must be obtained from the source.

Academic and Behavior Expectations for Lake Ridge Journalism Students

- Student journalists are expected to maintain high standards in academic performance and behavior and to serve as positive role models for the student body.
- Staff members who do not meet these standards are subject to school disciplinary consequences and staff consequences including probation and dismissal.
- Any student member of an extracurricular organization or campus club (e.g. journalism/band/dance team/cheerleader/athlete/student council, etc.) representing themselves, or their organization, through electronic media (i.e. social media, websites, personal home pages, blogs, text messages, chat rooms or similar websites/files accessible through a server or internet), or using electronic communication devices (i.e. camera phones, digital photos, electronic descriptions) in such a way as to cause school officials to reasonably anticipate substantial disruption of or material interference with the activities of the organization or school will be subject to the disciplinary actions determined by appropriate school officials and/or organization sponsors/directors/coaches, including probation or dismissal from the organization.

Time Commitment for Lake Ridge Journalism Students

Journalism is a time-consuming activity and it is the responsibility of each journalist to be present at each activity and perform to the best of his/her ability. Because of the many hours involved in researching, reporting, shooting, and covering events; other school and non-school activities may have to be limited. It may not be feasible, nor in the best interest of the student, the staff, or the school for a student to be a journalist (especially editors and aspiring editors) and hold another major position which requires major time expenditure. The adviser will review school participation conflicts in an attempt to solve the problem while considering the best interests of the individual, as well as the interests of the journalism staff and other school organizations. Everyone must share equally in the behind the scenes work, as well as the covering of all school events. It is sometimes difficult for staff members (particularly editors) to have after school jobs because of the time required outside of class. Any student who does not alert an editor of their potential missing of a deadline or worknight will incur an unexcused absence or grade deduction at the discretion of the adviser. The responsibilities of being on the Lake Ridge Journalism staff and consequences for not meeting responsibilities are assumed at the time the selected staff is announced.

Attendance/Work Nights

- Be here physically and mentally every day. If you are absent, see Canvas, adviser, or editor for missed work, **ESPECIALLY IF YOU ARE ON DEADLINE.**
- Contact the school office and teacher if you will be out for an extended period of time. The adviser may need to send assignments home to you.
- Because all deadlines and assignments are announced ahead of time, an absence does not excuse a student from meeting a deadline.
- Work should be emailed to the adviser or dropped off to class on time.

- Attendance at work night sessions is required unless you are excused by an adviser (not when you think you're done).
- All editors must attend all work nights.
- Work night attendance is a test grade.
- Work nights are usually once a six weeks before a major yearbook deadline.

Bylines, Ownership, Copyright

- Any full length story that includes original reporting will carry a proper byline including title.
- Any art or photo will carry a credit line.
- Any story which expresses an author's opinion or analysis will carry a byline and a standing column head to indicate the story represents an individual opinion.
- Staff editorials will not carry a byline.
- Bylines should not be cut for space reasons.
- Any story written or photo taken for the Lake Ridge Journalism Department cannot be reproduced in any fashion without consent from the writer and the adviser.
- All content (written, photos) published belong to the author and cannot be reproduced without permission.
- Lake Ridge Eagle Media encourages and assists students to build an online portfolio to showcase learned skills.
- Advisers and Administration requests students not to sell or distribute owned materials until after the school year is complete to avoid competition of yearbook sales and readership.
- Photos and stories published in Lake Ridge Eagle Media publications will not break any copyright laws.
- The Fidelity yearbook submits annually to the US Library of Congress for legal copyright

Letters to the Editor

- All letters to the editor must include the writer's name and classification and will be printed with both.
- Letters should be limited to 300 words.
- Letters to the editor will not be edited, except in cases to prevent legal liability (invasion of privacy, profanity, etc.)
- Letters to the editor should be placed in a sealed envelope and mailed to the high school's address or placed in the adviser's box.

Advertising in Lake Ridge Student Publications

- The purpose of advertising is to raise money for the department by bringing the buyer and seller together, thus making it a vital part of school publications
- School publications reserve the right to refuse any advertisement that refers to products, services, substances or paraphernalia that are illegal to minors or deemed inappropriate to the Mansfield community.
- All ads are subject to review by the adviser and editor staff.
- All staff members are required to solicit ads.
- Staff members selling a set quota (set by the adviser and business editor) will receive a free yearbook or free advertisement.
- When soliciting advertising, staff members will dress and act in a professional manner.
- The adviser and business editor will set advertising prices at the beginning of a school year during a budget workshop.
- Prices can be found on the department's website.

Distribution

- The Fidelity yearbook's copy count is determined by the numbered purchased.
- The Fidelity yearbook is distributed during the last few weeks of the school year.
- All advertisers must purchase a yearbook in addition to cost of advertisement.

Scholarship Funds

Money collected may be used for a scholarship to graduating students entering the study of journalism at a four-year college. Applicants must have completed the following to apply for scholarship money.

- ◆Completed three years in journalism at Lake Ridge High School
- ◆Contributed to the success and constant operations of the department
- ◆Attended seminars and workshops to enrich journalism skills
- ◆Show a proficiency in the use of computers
- ◆Be accepted to a four-year college and majoring in journalism related field
- ◆Complete a portfolio of high school accomplishments with included resume
- Scholarships will be awarded to individuals who complete the above qualifications. If two or more students qualify, the funds will be distributed equally.
- Scholarship fund awardees are determined by a board of the principal, and two other faculty members.
- Funds are awarded through surplus advertising money.
- The adviser will also actively solicit funds from colleges and universities for journalism students.

Letter Jackets

- Actively involved in the yearbook staff for at least 2 years
- Covered at least 40 events in your entire time as a staff member
- Finished at least 10 complete spreads in your entire time as a staff member
- Attend EVERY work night
- Wear journalism shirt on shirt days
- Supporting yearbook social medias (retweeting, sharing, and promoting posts from yearbook)

*Adviser may determine if a staffer earned a jacket if other yearbook requirements are met.

*Students are responsible for tracking all of the requirements if they would like a jacket and must notify Adviser when requirements are met. Adviser will then give student the information packet to order a letter jacket.

Use of Equipment

- All Equipment is strictly for Journalism use only (computers, cameras, lenses, batteries, etc) Students must obtain special permission from the adviser for other purposes.
- No outside organization may use Lake Ridge Eagle Media equipment, unless approved by the adviser.
- No food or drinks are allowed around computer or camera equipment.
- All equipment used must be properly checked out through the adviser.
- Students are responsible for condition of equipment and must pay for any damage in full.

Prohibited Materials

- Students cannot publish or distribute libelous material. Libelous statements are provable false and unprivileged statements that injure an individual's or business's reputation in the community including the following
 - ◆ A public official who holds an elected office or appointed office
 - ◆ A person who is known for personal achievements
 - ◆ School employees, students, staff, faculty members, or administrators
 - ◆ Publications, including Eagle Media
- Under the "fair comment rule," a student may express an opinion on a matter of public interest as long as it is in good taste and approved by the editor and the adviser – in some cases the principal.
- Students are prohibited from publishing materials that are obscene including without special permission from the adviser. Students are prohibited to publish or distribute materials that will cause a material and substantial disruption of school activities including, but not limited to:
 - ◆ sex
 - ◆ gang activities
 - ◆ seizures of personal property
 - ◆ school boycotting or walk-out
 - ◆ racial/ethnic slurs
 - ◆ racial remarks or undertones
 - ◆ anything that lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value
 - ◆ drugs and alcohol
 - ◆ foul language
 - ◆ strikes
 - ◆ fights
 - ◆ slander/libel
 - ◆ violence or threat thereof

Death Policy

Publications often times have to report on a student's or staff member's death. The following are guidelines in handling such stories. In general, deaths are not covered in the yearbook because of deadline timing and constrictions. Generalized stories can run in the newspaper.

A death ruled "suicide" or by illegal activities or drug/alcohol related will not be reported on nor will a tribute of any kind run in any publication. Suicide or drug related deaths may be generalized and show the compass of the situation, but the story cannot name the student of whom has committed the act.

Students who die of "natural" causes can be spotlighted in the Fidelity Yearbook and can have a memorial bookmark created at the parent's cost or donated funds. The story or tribute must be approved by

- The adviser
- The principal
- The parents or guardians (at which a letter of story release must be signed and kept on file)

Social Media/Web Policy

- Any journalism student work cannot be posted to personal social media sites, blogs or websites.
- Any and all social media posts, conversations, text messages, and communications related to Eagle Media, during and after enrollment, are to be appropriate.
- Students may retweet/like from the Lake Ridge Eagle Media accounts.
- Media students are to refrain from posting comments on other people's personal sites, blogs, social media pages concerning any item about the journalism program.
- Students given passwords to the department's social media sites, web sites, servers, etc. can only use these outlets for journalism reasons (social media sites are to be used for headline and information only – no editorializing or promoting of personal items or agenda).
- Students are expected to be professional and refrain from inappropriate comments, materials, photos, etc. when posting on personal social media profiles while on publication staff, class functions, trips, class time and other times when representing Lake Ridge Eagle Media
- Students are responsible to know the full "social media policies" district manual.

Returns/Refunds

- No refunds can be given for a yearbook purchase.
- All ads are designed online and approved by the buyer when submitted.
- Refunds for a senior ad may be given if there is a mistake made by Lake Ridge Eagle Media staff.
- An option of a "crack and peel" (stickers) for errors in senior ads may be available. If Lake Ridge Eagle Media staff is at fault, the department will pay for the correction. If the mistake was that of the buyer, the buyer may have an option to purchase a correction sticker.
- Any yearbook not retrieved by the buyer within six months of the distribution date will be resold or donated.

Online Take Down

- Only the writer/photographer, editor, adviser or principal has the right to remove a story from online.
- Stories will only be pulled for fact errors or violations of this policy
- A letter of "request of removal" for a story can be submitted to the adviser and will be considered on an individual basis

POPS (Parents of Publication Students) – for more info and suggestions, contact the adviser.

- The purpose of POPS is to have a relationship between publication students and parents and the adviser and parents. The staff will produce newsletters informing parents of upcoming events and recent successes. Also in the newsletter will be information on journalism scholarships and advertising/budget information.
- POPS are encouraged to volunteer time working with journalism students. Whether to stuff mailout envelopes, help with school day photos, or to feed staff members during deadlines, parent involvement is a huge help for success. POPS are also welcome to chaperone journalism trips, if needed.
- Although it is not a formal organized booster club, parents are suggested to elect a leader to be the communicator for the group. Parents can set up meals for worknights or success parties when students win awards.