



LEADING THE JOURNEY

An E-newsletter on EXCELLENCE in Leadership

Newsletter Coordinator

Newsletter Editors



Berit von Pohle
Editor

Ed Boyatt
Editorial Advisor

Dennis Plubell
Director of Education
North Pacific Union Conference

JOIN the JOURNEY

Email: Leadingthejourney@puconline.org

Visit: www.leadingthejourney.org

Student Publications

Leadership, [NAD Principals' Handbook](#) (excerpt)

The principal serves as the publisher of all student publications. This requires that principals carefully monitor the development, presentation, and distribution of digital and paper newspapers, journals, yearbooks, student and faculty photos, etc. Publications should routinely be reviewed cooperatively with faculty sponsors in advance of production and distribution.

Principals should be specific in outlining for sponsors, the following:

- Budget parameters
- Editorial prerogatives
- Lists of individuals receiving complimentary copies
- Parameters for securing and selecting advertisers/vendors
- Protocol/procedures for processing legitimate complaints and/or concerns
- Publication and distribution deadline dates
- Student charges
- Student privacy issues

Expect the Best

*Dan Nicola, Principal, Portland Adventist Academy and
Dennis Pluebell, Director of Education, North Pacific Union*

Has the digital world made school publications obsolete? Student newspapers may not be hardcopy papers and video yearbooks may have captured our interest and attention. However, regardless of the modality, there are still great learning opportunities and school-wide benefits to having student-led campus publications. Creativity in writing and graphic communication, collaboration on an editorial team, and exercising critical thinking are 21st century skills that are core competencies for student publishers.

Despite the benefit for student learning, experienced principals have stories of “bumps” they have experienced along the student journalism road. So, how do you ensure a smooth ride that avoids the mislabeled portrait, demeaning opinion column, inside joke, negative image of all things Adventist, or hidden message in student publications? Here are a few tips that may get you out of the driveway and down the road.

1. Select quality staff sponsors/advisors. Creative interest, effective management skills, and good judgment are vital characteristics that a staff member must bring as a role model and motivator to student publishers.
2. Provide appropriate time for the teacher/advisor within the school day in consideration of the publishing schedule and outside-of-school time demands.
3. Allocate adequate financial support for equipment,

(Continued on page 2)

Walking the Line

Lorin Koch, Principal, Livingstone Adventist Academy

A difficult issue that requires the wisdom of Solomon is that of discerning what is appropriate to say about a student in an article. Students love inside information. Sharing experiences can build great community among a class or group of students. When there is an inside joke, just making a reference to something that happened in a class will get everyone laughing.

Let me illustrate. A couple of years ago, one of my students was expressing how impressed he was with some of the early elementary students at our K-12 school. He meant to say “I didn’t even learn to read until I was 7,” but what he actually said was, “I didn’t even learn to read until 7th grade.” It was a humorous moment, all laughed, and his classmates still mention it every so often. He has had a good attitude about the joke and has not expressed ill feelings in anyway.

Imagine, though, if the journalism staff decided to publish an article that made the same joke: “Jimmy [not his real name], who didn’t learn to read until 7th grade, says that he hated *To Kill a Mockingbird*.”

Add into that the fact that people outside the school community will be reading the paper as well. Parents might have a different response than students to such a comment, as might members of the community. People who are in on the joke would find it humorous. People who do not catch the reference might be surprised, shocked, or even disgusted.

As much as I want my student newspaper to be by and for the

(Continued on page 2)

Expect the Best

(Continued from page 1)

materials, and a publications office to ensure a quality student publication.

4. Take special interest in encouraging and engaging talented and motivated students to serve on the editorial team. If possible, student editors should be on staff and “in training” the year prior to their editorship of the school yearbook or student paper.
5. Provide the students with good training by offering credit and instruction, as well as participation in other publication workshops and conferences. They need to be equipped for the task with clear understanding of the responsibility.
6. Ensure that all involved with student publications are on the same page about the purpose, audience, school expectations, editorial guidelines, publishing deadlines, and legal issues for journalism.
7. Communicate frequently with students and the advisor to share your high expectations as well as your strong support. Be accessible to address issues during development to avoid the drama that might otherwise come at publication.

May these tips help you navigate the “bumps” ahead in student publications. Keep expecting the best. 🌟

Walking the Line

(Continued from page 1)

students of my school, I have to acknowledge that a larger audience is also paying attention. And as much as I want to avoid the newspaper being used as a PR tool, I have to be aware that people who are not in the loop will be reading it too.

How can we as sponsors of publications help our students understand this point? They do not have the perspective of including the larger audience in their thoughts when writing.

It can be beneficial to have the students picture someone actually reading their article. I have suggested to some students that they picture their grandparents reading the article (which is, in fact, very possible!). Or picture their pastor or an older member at church seeing their byline and reading curiously. What would that person’s reaction be upon reading your inside joke? How could you explain yourself so they will understand?

There is often a fine line between appropriate and inappropriate. We cannot predict exactly how readers will react. In fact, I have had parents complain about sentences I thought were totally innocent. But the exercise of picturing a specific reader can help us walk the line on the side of appropriateness. This may work for you, as it has for me, to effectively avoid issues that can arise from using inside jokes that will be misunderstood by parents and other adults in the community. Or even a 7-year-old! 🌟

Plan 4 Success

Marien Vera, Principal, Columbia Adventist Academy

Any plan for success for school leaders and teachers responsible for student publications must include at least one of Covey’s *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. I’m thinking specifically about “beginning with the end in mind.” With the end product clearly in sight, whether it be a weekly or monthly publication or especially for the school’s yearbook, the journey to release of your vision can begin with the following four essential components.

1. PLAN, PLAN, PLAN

Plan to deploy sponsors and students in areas of demonstrated interest and expertise. Plan collaboratively with sponsors for a reasonable publishing schedule. Plan to stay ahead of schedule allowing time for editing and consultation with administration.

2. COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE

Communicate regularly with sponsors and students, offering encouragement and guidance on the purpose of the publication in the context of the school’s culture. Communicate the value of teamwork by facilitating student publication staff training in effective peer communication and conflict resolution.

3. BUILDING ON THE BASICS

Teaching the basics of journalism must be a part of the program. Ensure that your teachers have a plan for student learning in topics such as theme development and continuity, copy editing essentials, photography composition, and principles of design and layout to name a few.

4. EXPERIENCE JOURNALISTIC EXCELLENCE

After all the planning, communicating, and building on basics, experiencing excellence in student journalism requires that the principal and sponsors insist on fairness, accuracy, and good taste. Fairness requires unbiased, equal treatment of opposing positions, telling both sides of the story. Accuracy demands that all sources be checked carefully. Good taste compels sponsors and staff to make thoughtful decisions that maintain high standards.

The values and beliefs of Adventism must be supported, explicitly or implicitly, in all school publications. A principal will have some anxious communication from stakeholders—parents, grandparents, pastors, and other constituents—when things don’t meet the high standards. Students deserve an opportunity to learn and grow in their journalistic skills, but it must be within the context of Adventist education and aligned with best practices for student publications. 🌟