



## MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY OF KIPP CHARLOTTE

To ensure the quality and consistency of information disseminated to news media sources, the following policy shall be enforced:

- KIPP Charlotte welcomes media interest to build our brand, develop our donor base, and celebrate our successes and our lessons learned.
- All news media inquiries are to be directed to the School Leader or his or her designee, regardless of who the news media representative is, whom he or she represents, or how innocuous the request.
- All press releases or other promotional materials are to be approved prior to dissemination. The School Leader, the Board Chair, the Marketing Committee Chair or board designate shall collaborate on message development.
- For brand management, the School Leader, Board Chair, and Marketing Committee Chair will work together to facilitate the editorial review process. Examples of media articles needing talking points in advance and additional review of draft copy include in-depth features in newspapers or magazines, print or electronic forums; interviews on growth scenarios or capital campaigns under development; compliance with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction; and comparison with our local Charlotte Mecklenburg School System.
- The School Leader may involve the KIPP Foundation as a resource to prepare for media inquiries.
- The Development Director will distribute paper or electronic copies of media coverage related to KIPP Charlotte to the board in a timely manner.
- The KIPP Charlotte Marketing Committee will be involved in shaping proactive news coverage of KIPP Charlotte by offering leads, story angles, and contacts for building awareness and strategic support of KIPP Charlotte.
- Any law enforcement presence on campus should immediately be communicated to the Board Chair and board attorney by the School Leader or his or her designee at the time.

Only the School Leader, board chair, or other individual(s) designated by the Board are authorized to speak with the news media. The KIPP Charlotte Board of Directors may designate a media spokesperson from the board at its discretion.

Employees, board members (other than the chair) and members acting in a capacity within a committee shall not make statements, provide information for



distribution, or provide background information unless specifically directed to do so by the School Leader and/or the Board.

Provided that they have prior permission to do so from the School Leader or the Board, employees, board members, and members acting in a capacity with a committee shall speak publicly on behalf of KIPP Charlotte.

A Web site will be maintained at [www.kippcharlotte.org](http://www.kippcharlotte.org) to provide access to member services and information to the general public. The Web site will be updated on a regular basis. Information and updates will be posted by employees after approval from the School Leader or his or her appointee.

Failure to comply with KIPP Charlotte's media policy shall be grounds for disciplinary action.

This policy is effective July 1, 2009.

## MEDIA INQUIRY PROCEDURES

**Main Contact:** School Leader

**Other Contact:** Development Director, Board spokesperson

### Description

How to handle inquiries from any media such as newspaper, radio, TV, cable access, magazine, trade organizations, etc.

### Background

KIPP Charlotte strives to advance its mission by communicating openly and honestly using consistent messages with its constituents, including the media. It is important for all KIPP Charlotte staff and board members to reinforce these messages by referring all calls from any media source to the appropriate contacts.

### Procedure

1. Please refer all media calls or media visits to the School Leader; if he or she is not available, or if the inquiry is specific to grants, refer to the Development Director. This first contact who will respond to the media is responsible for engaging the board spokesperson when appropriate.
2. If senior staff is not available, take the following steps:
  - Find out the reporter’s name, phone number, and deadline.
  - Find out the nature of the story (“*Our school leader is the spokesperson for KIPP Charlotte. May I ask what kind of a story you are working on so that we can gather the information and he (or she) will have all the facts in front of him (or her) when he (or she) calls you back?*”), OR, if you are sure that the School Leader will be available to hear a voicemail message, offer to let the reporter leave a detailed voicemail message.
  - Let the reporter know that the School Leader or another staff member will return the call by a stated time and date.
  - Contact the School Leader immediately if the deadline is imminent.
  - Please do *not* offer information to media — even if you know the answer. It is helpful for KIPP Charlotte that all news contacts be handled by senior staff and documented. Also, it’s too easy to get quoted as an organization spokesperson if you volunteer something the reporter wants to use. Assure the reporter that someone will respond in time to meet the deadline.

3. If the reporter needs an immediate response, or if the School Leader will not be available in time to meet the reporter's deadline, refer the call to the Development Director. If it's on the subject of grants, refer the call to the Development Director.
4. If you cannot reach the School Leader or the Development Director (at work, home, or on cell phone) to respond in time for the deadline, call the reporter back, explain the situation, and apologize, but still decline to answer the question yourself. *In no case* should you let the deadline come and go without any response. Then, please leave a detailed message for the School Leader or other approved contacts so that he or she can follow up with the reporter. In general, it is not advisable to say "no comment," since that constitutes a form of an answer that may be used against the organization in some instances.

**Key points to remember when dealing with the media:**

- Be polite.
- Be helpful.
- Find out what the reporter needs to know and what his or her deadline is.
- Don't let a deadline pass without a response.
- Don't get drawn into providing information or opinions that you don't have the authority to provide.
- Always inform the School Leader of the call for follow-up.