

Writing Effective Press Releases

Reporters and editors are as busy as you are. They read *fast* so you must capture their attention quickly. You need a hook in the first paragraph. Keep the first paragraph short, to the point and say something that gets their attention.

No matter what you want to say, reporters are looking for certain things – best known as the 5 Ws and H.

- WHO? Who is involved? Who does it affect? (This is most important because people (and reporters are people) are interested in people.
- WHAT? What happened? What is going to happen? This is the reason the reporter wants the story.
- WHERE? The closer it is to home the most we care. Be as specific as you can be.
- WHEN? Don't frustrate the reporter by telling him/her about some unique event then not telling them the date and time. Timeliness is important – the closer to “now” the better.
- WHY? This goes with HOW. It is the heart of the story. Why is it happening and what does it mean.
- HOW? This goes with WHY. How is it being done? How did it come about?

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¹ Adapted from *Media Relations Made Easy*, Broward County Public Schools