WRITING AND SUBMITTING GOOD NEWS STORIES

Please refer to the following guidelines when preparing stories for submission to the Good News network. Submitting stories accurately and in accordance with these guidelines will strengthen the likelihood that your story/event will receive coverage.

- **ONLY STORIES SUBMITTED <u>AT LEAST TWO WEEKS PRIOR</u> TO THE EVENT WILL BE CONSIDERED FOR GOOD NEWS**
- Submit stories in narrative form, ready for distribution to the media
- Write stories in the third person using full sentences
- Include the most significant information first and secondary details later
- Do not use acronyms without explanation
- If sending something directly to the media, please copy goodnews@gcsnc.com and Haley Henderson at henderh@gcsnc.com

Here are the ways in which your story **may** be covered:

- GCS Ch. 2 News Breaks
- GCS Web site
- Local media coverage (TV, Print, Internet)

Please keep in mind that not all stories are considered newsworthy

Include each of the **"Six Ws"** to be sure that all relevant information is covered.

- **WHO** - Tell who is sponsoring the event, or who will receive/has received recognition. Provide **<u>first and last names and the title</u>** of people mentioned, as well as newsworthy people that will attend or participate in the event.

- **WHAT** - Give details about what will occur or what a reporter may see when covering the story. For awards, tell what the award recognizes.

- **WHY** - Explain the **<u>reason or goal</u>** of the subject of the story. For awards, provide information about why the award was presented, such as nomination/selection criteria details.

- **WHEN** - Include the **<u>day, date and time</u>** of the event (including a.m. or p.m.).

- **WHERE** - Include where the event or recognition will occur, including the address and room name or number.

- **WRAP UP** - Provide additional information to make the story more interesting and **<u>set it apart from other similar stories</u>**. Check to make sure that the guidelines above have been followed.

Submit Good News by email to: goodnews@gcsnc.com
For questions, call Haley Henderson at 336-370-3200

Sample Good News Submission

Good News submissions are forwarded to area news outlets and GCS media to help schools promote their **accomplishments, programs and activities**. These submissions, which serve as the starting point for obtaining media coverage, are used to inform the media and our community about school stories.

When submitting Good News, please refer to the guidelines, *Writing and Submitting Good News Stories*, as well as the following sample:

> **Guilford Kindergarten Camp**
> Summer camp fun is not over yet. Guilford Elementary is holding a Kindergarten Camp from Monday, August 15 to Friday, August 19 to acclimate incoming kindergarteners to the school before the year starts. The camp is being held from 8 a.m. until 12 noon, and on the last day of the camp, an open house will be held for students and their families. During the camp, participants and their parents have the opportunity to meet teachers and learn the school's daily routines.
>
> The Kindergarten Camp is designed to eliminate the first-day separation anxieties that occur between students and parents and to help students and teachers focus on instruction as early as possible when school begins. Last year, as a result of holding the camp, teachers were able to focus on instruction sooner than in previous years because they were familiar with student behavior patterns, academic readiness and social constraints. Guilford Elementary's kindergarteners also made the adjustment into kindergarten better than in previous years, as a result of time spent in the camp.

This sample Good News submission begins with a catchy opening line then immediately gives the most important information, including **who** (Guilford Elementary), **what** (kindergarten camp), **when** (August 15 – 19 from 8 a.m. until 12 noon) and **where** (Guilford Elementary). Information about **why** the camp is being held is also included in the story. Finally, the submission **wraps up** with information about how the camp was successful last year.

Note that all relevant information is included in a **brief, clearly stated** submission. Good News can be stated in approximately 100 words, although more information can be added to increase the story's appeal.

Good News submissions can cover school activities, exemplary teaching strategies, student and staff awards and any other stories that are especially newsworthy.

Sample Press Release

The press release is a valuable public relations tool that may be used to inform the media about important news at your school. Press releases may also be posted online to help schools directly keep the community informed about school news.

When drafting a press release, consider that the information must compete with announcements and other news receiving coverage. To increase the chance of media covering a story, use the press release to emphasize specific details that set the story apart from others that are similar. The sample press release below includes format and content suggestions and represents accepted standards for creating press releases for distribution to media.

First Page

For Immediate Release: Date
Contact: Name

School Name
Telephone Number
Fax Number
Email Address
Web Site Address

Sample Press Release Now Available

City, State, Date — Opening paragraphs should include the most important information in the release, including who, what, why, when and where.

"Press releases are a good way to distribute quotes," said Principal Smith. "However, information with substance should be included in the quote."

The remaining text should be concise and contain specific information. Media should be able to understand the necessary facts quickly, yet not lose important details.

-more-
(At the end of each page, except the last, use "-more-" to indicate that additional pages follow)

Subsequent Pages

Abbreviated headline (page 2)

If necessary, continue the text on the second page. Be sure that the most important information is provided first. Background information and less relevant details should be included last.

Include a school description or boiler plate last. In one paragraph, summarize your school with information such as enrollment size, grades served, special programs offered and recent, significant recognitions. This paragraph should be reused on each press release distributed.

Guilford County Schools is the third largest school district in North Carolina serving more than 67,000 students at 112 schools. With approximately 8,000 employees, the district's mission is to graduate responsible citizens prepared to succeed in higher education or the career of their choice.

Guilford County Schools is a national leader in providing specialized schools and instructional programs designed to meet the educational needs of a culturally diverse citizenship. For more information, visit the district's Web site at www.gcsnc.com

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(On the final page, use "###" to indicate the press release is finished)