

*the*

# BACK-TO-SCHOOL

*issue*

**6** What's new with  
The Year of the  
Student Journalist

**8** The talk you *REALLY*  
need to have with  
students this fall

**10** Why paying student  
journalists is so  
complicated



STUDENT PRESS LAW CENTER  
**REPORT**  
FALL 2019 VOL. XL, NO. 2

The Student Press Law Center works at the intersection of law, journalism and education to promote, support and defend the First Amendment and press freedom rights of student journalists and their advisers at the high school and college level.

### STAFF:

- **Executive Director:** Hadar Harris
- **Senior Legal Counsel:** Mike Hiestand
- **Director of Engagement:** Diana Mitsu Klos
- **Staff Attorney:** Sommer Ingram Dean
- **Outreach Fellow:** Danielle Dieterich
- **Journalism Intern:** Madison Dudley

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

\*Affiliations for identification purposes only

- **Jane Eisner (chair)** — Columbia Journalism School, New York
- **Logan Aimone** — U. of Chicago Laboratory High School, Chicago
- **Elizabeth Banker** — Internet Association, Washington, D.C.
- **Samantha Barry** — Glamour Magazine, New York
- **Joseph Esposito** — Esposito Mediation, Washington, D.C.
- **Jane McDonnell** — Cushing, Maine
- **Matthew Pakula** — Tyson Foods, Inc., Chicago.
- **Tracy Schmalzer** — Kivvit, Washington, D.C.
- **Sherrese Smith** — Paul Hastings LLP, Washington, D.C.
- **Ernest Sotomayor** — Columbia Journalism School, New York.

The Report (ISSN 0160-3825), is published by the Student Press Law Center Inc., 1608 Rhode Island Ave. NW, Suite 211, Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 785-5450. Copyright © 2019 Student Press Law Center. All rights reserved.

Welcome back to school, and welcome to the Fall 2019 issue of The Report!

**This issue:** Our cover story, “Pay Day,” delves into the ramifications of paying — and not paying — student journalists. In our Cheat Sheet “The Talk” (no, not *that* talk) we remind advisers to have a conversation at the very beginning of the school year with their students about their legal rights, responsibilities and limitations. You’ll also find a quiz to test your knowledge on student press freedom and see the latest about The Year of the Student Journalist.

**What’s new with SPLC:** As the school year starts, we at the Student Press Law Center want you to know that we are ready to help you with anything that comes up. Need training on legal topics like copyright or libel? Use our brand-new Virtual Speakers Bureau to book an attorney who will video call your classroom and get the newsroom up-to-speed. We’ve also updated materials on our website (check out the new “Back to School” section!) And, as always, our attorneys are standing by to take your hotline calls and answer your questions whenever you need us. Go to [SPLC.org](http://SPLC.org) to set up a call or to access any of the many resources which can help make your return to school a smooth one.

SPLC and the world of student press freedom has been pretty busy this summer. An exceptionally productive New Voices year (two wins in Arkansas — protecting the rights of college journalists and a measure to cover all school-sponsored student “media” as opposed to all “publications — and 11 bills introduced nationwide) has continued into summer: the New Jersey bill was unanimously voted out of the Senate Education Committee in June, a bill was introduced in Pennsylvania in July, and New York continues to build momentum around their bill.

We’re proud SPLC’s amicus brief played a role in an important 9th Circuit Court of Appeals decision in July that the University of California at San Diego violated the First Amendment when it yanked funding for the student-run satire magazine, *The Koala*. The court held that if evidence shows that a subsidy was revoked to a publication based on its viewpoint, that can be just as much of an attack on the First Amendment as imposing a fine or fee. The case, which had been dismissed by the lower court, now lives to see another day.

You can get the latest updates on stories and successes like these on [SPLC.org](http://SPLC.org), by subscribing to our weekly newsletter and by following us on social media. We wish you a great start to the school year.

Write the story. We’ve got your back!



A stylized handwritten signature in black ink.

**Hadar Harris**  
SPLC Executive Director

# Inside this issue

6

The Year of the Student Journalist

8

Cheat Sheet: “The Talk”

9

Quiz: Student Press Law

10

Paying Student Journalists

15

Ask SPLC

**Find more online:**

*SPLC.org*

Much more SPLC content is available at *SPLC.org*, including:

- Monthly podcasts
- News stories about censorship, newspaper thefts and other trends
- Updates on New Voices (student press freedom) legislation

# LEGAL UPDATE

## Private schools like BYU should make their police records open to the public

By: Sommer Ingram Dean

Many private university police officers are armed and have the same power to arrest offenders as local and state police departments. But, they are often able to keep records documenting the details of an encounter secret from the public because open records laws don't usually apply to private universities. That's right, **a government actor armed with the power to enforce laws, make arrests, and even shoot to kill, can largely do so knowing the public won't have access to any record of it.**

In a brief filed June 2019 in the *Salt Lake Tribune v. Brigham Young University* case, the Student Press Law Center and other open-government organizations urged the Utah Supreme Court to uphold a district court ruling directing Brigham Young University, a private university, to make its law enforcement records open to the public.

Open records laws are among the most powerful tools student journalists can use in their reporting. These laws recognize that the government belongs to the people, so what the government does should be subject to public review. When student journalists use open records laws (sometimes referred to as freedom of information laws), they're doing the important work of holding government actors accountable for their decisions and behavior. Secrecy is often the

default, especially on college campuses, but the principles our nation was founded upon demand it should be the opposite.

Every state has made obvious the importance of public access to information about crimes and police activity related to those crimes by passing legislation that makes details of incidents reported to the police open to the public. Campus police are increasingly filling the role of city or county police. They respond to emergencies, arrest suspects and even sometimes use deadly force. It should go without saying that **crimes on college campuses are the subject of legitimate public concern** when students, faculty and their families have to worry about everything from hazing to sexual assault to mass killings.

At BYU, the police department has been deputized to perform state law enforcement functions. This case arose because the BYU police department was involved in a disciplinary case dealing with sexual assault. When journalists sought access to records that would provide a clearer picture of how the officers handled the case, BYU refused, arguing its police department was exempt from the requirements of the state open records law.

Disclosure of incident reports helps journalists inform the public with details they may need

to know, highlight discrepancies between police records and public statements, track down witnesses as potential sources and ensure universities are reporting accurate crime statistics to students and the community.

**Without the benefit of these laws, private school police departments have no one to answer to but themselves.** Federal law only mandates bare-bones information about crimes be made public. The Jeanne Clery Act requires colleges that receive federal funding (which is generally most colleges, including private ones) maintain a crime log with a one-sentence description of any incident to which campus police respond. These logs, although they may be a helpful starting point, are not required

to include information like names of those involved or a description of the circumstances of the crime.

Private school police are tasked with carrying out one of the most fundamental government functions there is: enforcing laws and maintaining the peace. **It's important that the power they are granted to perform these duties no longer goes unchecked.**

The disposition of the Utah case will hold a great deal of weight as journalists across the country fight for access not only to campus police records, but to records of other private groups that perform fundamental government functions.





# 2019 YEAR OF THE STUDENT JOURNALIST



Spearheaded by the Student Press Law Center, the Freedom Forum Institute, the Newseum and a wide variety of partner organizations, we're celebrating The Year of the Student Journalist with high-profile national programming and local student-led initiatives. **Add your voice!**

 Student Press Law Center  @splc  @studentpresslawcenter



### Student Press Freedom Editorials

Write an op-ed about the importance of student media and student press freedom, we'll give it a signal boost!



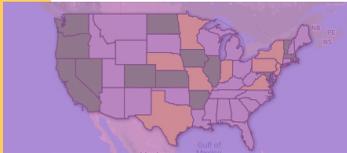
### The Newseum Front Pages Project

The Newseum is featuring student newspaper front pages at the museum and on the Today's Front Pages app. Submit your front page to [frontpages@newseum.org](mailto:frontpages@newseum.org).



### The Year of the Student Journalist Swag

Get shirts, mugs, water bottles and more at [SPLC.org](http://SPLC.org).



### The New Voices Movement

Learn how to join the fight for student press freedom in your state at [SPLC.org/new-voices](http://SPLC.org/new-voices).

Join the conversation and tell us what you've been doing for The Year of the Student Journalist by using:

# #studentpressfreedom



# It's time for “The Talk”

**Hello advisers!** A fresh, new school year is upon us. The newsroom is tidy, with story files nicely organized. The production schedule is taking shape and your students haven't missed a deadline. Story ideas and yearbook themes flow freely, having had a full summer to simmer. No one is mad at you.

But as we're told, **the time to prepare for an earthquake is before it hits.** So along with enjoying the relative peace that August/September brings, this is also the time to lay some groundwork and prepare for the nine or so months that follow and the possibility of the Big One (or Big Two or Three or Four) that might follow a controversial story. Unfortunately, as any veteran student media adviser knows, dealing with Big Ones is part of the job. **Preparing your students for such events before they happen should be a regular part of your back-to-school ritual.**

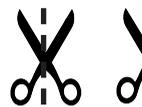
That's where “The Talk” comes in. At the start of each year, not long after handing out the course syllabus, it is important to **have a frank conversation with your students about the position in which you, as adviser, operate.** You support them; you believe in them; you will always strive to do your best by them. But you — unlike the students themselves — are also a school employee. And you need to remind them that sometimes an employee has to do things they'd rather not (or not do things they'd like to do) simply because their employer tells them to. It's important that students understand now — before the heat and emotion that comes with a censorship fight or some

other big blow-up — that they must be willing and able to take the leadership role should it be necessary to challenge administrative action. It is a student publication. Courts have made clear that in a censorship battle it is their legal rights — not the adviser's — that are at stake. If a fight must be fought, it must be their fight.

Remind them, too, that **employees often have to bite their lip.** If a protest is to be staged, if parents are going to be asked to call district officials or if calls from local news media need to be returned, that's not something you, as an employee, should do (or even encourage).

As part of this discussion (and — intentionally — at a time when there are no actual flames that your boss can accuse you of fanning) provide your students with a list of student media resources to which they can turn for help should you be required to take a step back. Give them contact information for your state student journalism group, the national Journalism Education Association, local newspaper editors or reporters. **Make sure they know how to find the SPLC's Legal Hotline.** Remind them that SPLC can provide free legal assistance and guidance not only for help on a censorship matter but for any media-law question that might come up during the year.

The bottom line is that **students must be willing to stand up to protect their own free speech rights, and having you fired for insubordination does no one any good.**



# SPLC QUIZ: Student Press Law

\*Key at the bottom. For more quizzes and explanations of answers, go to [SPLC.org/quizzes](http://SPLC.org/quizzes).

**1** Which Supreme Court case includes the language neither “students nor teachers shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate?”

- a. *New York Times v. Sullivan*
- b. *Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. School District*
- c. *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier*
- d. *Roe v. Wade*

**2** Which of the following types of information should be available under a state’s open records law?

- a. Budget records showing the salary paid to your city’s school district superintendent last year.
- b. Budget records showing the amount of money spent by St. Olaf’s Private School for Girls on roses to decorate the headmaster’s house last year.
- c. Individual medical forms filed with your public high school showing that all student athletes are healthy and eligible to play.
- d. All of the above

**3** You are editor of your high school student newspaper. Jennifer, a classmate you trust, told you that for the last few months her math teacher has been making inappropriate, sexually suggestive comments to her after class. She says there were no witnesses to any of their exchanges and she hasn’t reported the incidents. Which option do you consider the best?

- a. Because you believe Jennifer to be an honest person, you publish a story reporting her claims without any further investigation.
- b. You do not attempt to cover the story or the issue of sexual harassment at all. It’s just too risky.
- c. You contact the math teacher prior to publication and give him a chance to deny and respond to the charges, but otherwise publish Jennifer’s accusations as she relayed them to you.
- d. You publish a story about the issue of sexual harassment generally, using Jennifer’s accusation as an example. You do not use either Jennifer or the teacher’s names in the story and are careful to avoid including any other information that might identify them.

**4** Which of the following three statements about the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act is NOT true:

- a. FERPA prohibits a high school student newspaper editor from publishing student photos without parental permission.
- b. FERPA prohibits schools from releasing the “educational records” of students to third parties without a student’s (or in some cases, his parents’) consent.
- c. FERPA requires a school to provide a student (or in some cases, his parents) with a copy of his own educational records upon request.
- d. All of the above

**5** Pick out the student media law “myth” from among the following:

- a. The law prohibits news media from publishing the name or photo of a minor accused of criminal conduct.
- b. The law prohibits student media from publishing the name or photo of a minor student online without parental consent
- c. High school-aged students cannot — acting on their own, without their parents — validly consent to the publication of a story that could otherwise invade their privacy (for example, a 17-year-old pregnant student cannot consent to an interview about her experience without her parents’ permission).
- d. All of the above

## 0-2

### Welp.

We won’t confiscate your pen or keyboard, but you might want to do some reading about student press freedom.

## 3-4

### Not bad...

... but not great either. You’ve got some of the basics, but make sure to keep [SPLC.org](http://SPLC.org) bookmarked for all your legal questions.

## 5

### Outstanding!

You have an excellent grasp of the legal issues most likely to confront student media. Keep it up!

KEY:  
1 B  
2 A  
3 D  
4 A  
5 D



## With most student news organizations in financial jeopardy, can paying staff be a priority?

BY: MADISON DUDLEY

Journalists joke that no one goes into the profession to make money. This is even more true for student journalists.

For many, working for a student news organization is a financial sacrifice. They devote 20 to 40 hours a week to the newsroom, instead of taking a paying (or better paying) job.

With national student loan debt over a trillion dollars and a decrease in available post-grad jobs, is a byline enough for student journalists?

### (STUDENT) JOURNALISM'S FINANCIAL CRISIS

Student papers across the nation are fighting to stay financially afloat. In the last several years:

- In Dallas, Southern Methodist University's previously independent *The Daily Campus* ended its print edition and moved into the university's school of communications.
- Clemson's *The Tiger* went 100 percent digital.
- *The Daily Orange* at Syracuse University went from weekly to four days a week
- *Columbia Daily Spectator* at Columbia University

in New York went from a daily to a weekly print edition.

Job opportunities after graduation are also limited because the entire industry is struggling. Commercial dailies have undergone financial consolidations and convulsions since the turn of the century. In July 2018, the Pew Research Center reported almost a third of large newspapers in the United States experienced layoffs in 2017 and overall, newsroom employment has dropped almost a quarter since 2008.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts a nine percent decrease in jobs between 2016 and 2026, resulting in the loss of more than 4,000 positions. They estimate the median pay for journalists, correspondents and broadcast news analysts to be \$40,910 per year.

### THE PROBLEM WITH BEING A SCHOOL EMPLOYEE

The Fair Labor Standards Act set the base U.S. federal minimum wage at \$7.25 an hour, and many states and cities surpass that pay. But legally, most student journalists don't have to be paid, let alone meet minimum wage, because they technically serve the

community, not an employer.

Jeremy Cole, an attorney who specializes in litigation, labor and employment for Flaster Greenberg, PC in Cherry Hill, N.J., said student journalists can easily be categorized in ways that allow the school to not pay them. That can mean classifying a student-run publication as a club, or giving student journalists primary beneficiary status.

Courts have held that student journalists aren't employees of the school they attend, according to Student Press Law Center Staff Attorney Sommer Ingram Dean. This is not to cheat journalists out of money, but rather to protect their First Amendment rights and prevent a financial power dynamic between administrators and student journalists.

Having student journalists on the university payroll could create a conflict of interest that puts independent journalism at risk, Dean said. She used the example of when student publications report on issues of sexual harassment or assault. For these types of stories, journalists rely on being able to make promises of anonymity to the sources they interview. It is critical for the student journalists to be able to keep their sources anonymous in order to tell these stories. However, if students are considered employees of the school, they would likely fall under mandatory reporter status. Mandatory reporters are required to report any instances of sexual misconduct to a school authority or Title IX officer, which would create a problem for student journalists who have promised to keep their sources confidential.

To avoid these issues, if student journalists at public schools do get paid, it should be done through a "nontraditional employee/employer" relationship, which protects the university from being sued for libel, and students from being censored.

At private schools, which do not automatically fall under First Amendment protections, student journalists can be considered employees. This leaves private school papers with the difficult decision of risking editorial

independence by being essentially controlled by the college, or risking financial ruin without the university's backing.

(For more information, see *Work for hire? A guide to the legal issues involved when student journalists become 'employees'* at [SPLC.org](http://SPLC.org).)

It's no surprise student newsrooms struggle to pay staff, and pay them well.

## NO PAY

Tim Dodson is editor in chief of the University of Virginia's *The Cavalier Daily*. He oversees about 350 contributors. None, including Dodson, get paid a cent. "It's a labor of love," Dodson said.

*The Cavalier Daily* stays afloat through ads and donations from alumni. The paper is a non-profit and the staff are volunteers. The paper barely makes enough money to function.

The paper is not connected to any academic department, and UVA doesn't have a journalism school. Most of the staff works on assignments between classes. "If people were paid it would be a more serious commitment," Dodson said.

In dealing with this reality, Dodson worries about the diversity of his newsroom and financially strapped students who cannot volunteer. "Are we able to really

ALYSSA HURLBUT



“I’m hearing from my editors that ‘I can’t work here if I don’t get more hours.’”

TIM DODSON



reach out to students from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds?”

Then there are small “start-up” papers like the *Marist Circle* at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. Until last year, the *Marist Circle* did not have a print product, a website, or any real staff. Instead there was a one-credit course so students could sporadically write content. Editor-in-Chief Alyssa Hurlbut said that starting the fall 2018 semester, the *Marist Circle* has been printing once a week.

The *Marist Circle*’s staff get “priority points” that go toward housing. Students collect priority points through the number of clubs and student organizations they are active in, varsity sports they play, how good their grades are, etc. Working for the *Marist Circle* earns two priority points.

The *Marist Circle* gets funding via the student government. The only way it could pay staff would be to break away from club status, a move Hurlbut says they can’t afford. She would like to see a three-credit course that could draw in more students.

## EDITORS GET PAID

University of Oregon’s *The Daily Emerald* and Colorado State’s *Rocky Mountain Collegian* follow nearly identical payment strategies.

Both schools have independent media groups that manage the finances of all campus student media. These groups are comprised of students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members. They oversee finances and set semester budgets.

Both papers receive the majority of their funding through advertisement sales and student fees. Both pay their editors and designers hourly, but most contributors are volunteers.

“Whether we get paid or not is just a reality of journalism,” said *The Daily Emerald*’s Editor-in-Chief Zach Price. “We all really enjoy the work that we do here.”

## ZACH PRICE



## HALEY CANDELARIO



Candelario said she has cut staff hours to stay within budget.

There is a price to be paid for this decision.

“I’m hearing from my

editors that ‘I can’t work here if I don’t get more hours,’” Candelario said.

Many students work second or third jobs and some have stopped working for the paper.

Candelario has a second job herself. “And even when I am at my other job or in class, I’m still working on the paper.”

Some private schools like Brigham Young University and Westminster College, both in Utah, place student media in the curriculum.

“Our newsroom is an academic lab,” said Steve Fidel, faculty director for *The Daily Universe*, the student paper at BYU. Fidel, a former reporter, said the paper is run like a professional newsroom. Fidel said in his years working at BYU, the university, which owns that paper’s logo and name, has never intervened with content.

Students at Westminster have to take two prerequisite courses before they can take “College Media — *The Forum*” and work in the student newsroom.

Editor positions at both *The Forum* and *The Daily Universe* are paid, and have set hours.

Editor-in-Chief of *The Daily Universe*, Camille Baker, works an average of 20-25 hours weekly. She feels she’s paid equal to her work.

Stephanie Held is editor in chief of *The Forum* and said all six of her editors are paid \$8.50 an hour. Utah minimum wage is \$7.25. The amount of hours depends on the position — editor in chief receives the most.

At both private schools, students are paid through the human resources department and are considered university employees.

## EVERYONE GETS PAID

Gage Miskimen, editor in chief of *The Daily Iowan* at the University of Iowa, said he is fortunate enough to pay every member on staff, including freelance reporters and photographers.

The daily paper, with a circulation of more than 8,000,

## CAMILLE BAKER



## GAGE MISKIMEN



is funded through advertisements, donations, and student fees. *The Daily Iowan* is an institution within Iowa City, and serves the campus, city and county, Miskimen said. The paper celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2018.

“Personally, *The Daily Iowan* takes up most of my time,” said Miskimen, who oversees a staff of 120-plus. “If I’m not in class, I’m in the newsroom.”

Miskimen dedicates at least 40 hours a week to the paper, sometimes 50 or 60. Editors are salaried and others paid by the piece.

Despite the payment guarantee, Miskimen said many staffers have jobs outside of the paper.

“Sometimes I’m not going to pay myself as much because I want to be able to pay my other editors and reporters more,” Miskimen said, “the fact that we can pay everybody something is really great.”

Matt Neuman, editor in chief of the *Montana Kaimin* at the University of Montana, said that while his entire staff is paid, he is still stressed.

“I’m overwhelmed, just generally, all the time,” said Neuman. He is a senior who has dreams of being an investigative journalist at a well known publication; for now, he has his hands full as the steward of a 115-year-old publication.

*Montana Kaimin* is funded through a \$7 student fee collected at the start of the academic year by student government — it takes \$100,000 to fund the paper for a year. The University of Montana has an enrollment decline of 30 percent in recent years and ad sales are abysmal, he said.

Neuman is technically paid \$9 an hour, but since he ends up working well beyond his allotted hours, he earns less than half the minimum wage.

“I can almost pay my rent on my pay,” Neuman said. “Almost.”

## WHAT NOW?

“If you want quality news, you have to pay for it,” said Bernard Lunzer, president of the NewsGuild since 2008. The NewsGuild is a labor union connected to the Communication Workers of America that represents over 25,000 reporters in the United States, Puerto Rico and Canada, and organizations such as the *Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*

and *The New York Times*.

“Students should be paid at a fair [wage] to the work they do,” Lunzer said. “Students should be making a set amount of \$15 an hour.”

Lunzer compared the student reporter fight for pay to that of interns and college athletes. In January 2018, the Department of Labor released new internship guidelines that make it easier for employers to have unpaid interns.

Lunzer said it’s not appropriate to ask student journalists to make such a big time commitment and not pay them, because for many it’s not financially sustainable. “You can’t ask people to make that kind of sacrifice,” Lunzer said.

But at the end of the day, it isn’t necessarily about what’s fair, it’s about

what students are willing to put up with.

Almost all of the students interviewed for this article said they don’t see a way to improve their paper’s pay system, and either said they’re lucky to be paid at all, or don’t see paying staff as a viable option.

Lunzer said both collegiate and professional journalism have shown a general apathy toward change and unwillingness to push for better pay. In order to improve pay, there would need to be large-scale mobilization from students, with support and funding from advocacy groups and professional journalists, he said.

“There’s a lot of sympathy for students from those already in the trenches,” Lunzer said, but stressed the difficulties of motivating people. He said journalists are particularly hard to convince to become their own activists.

“Journalists need to fight for themselves,” Lunzer said. He noted that younger journalists are more willing than past generations to take political action and stand up for press rights.

Lunzer said the best scenario is for campuses with a strong community of journalists to unionize, but he recognizes that is not possible for most schools because of lack of resources and funding.

“Journalism is a community good. It’s the base for democracy,” Lunzer said. “Universities cry out for quality news.”

“But at the end of the day, it isn’t necessarily about what’s fair, it’s about what students are willing to put up with.”

BERNARD LUNZER



NOW JUST \$125



## BECOME AN SPLC MEMBER

Your publication can support the Student Press Law Center's vital work, including our legal hotline.

[SPLC.org/member](http://SPLC.org/member)

# OUR EXPERTS. YOUR NEWSROOM.

SPLC is excited to announce our new **Virtual Speakers Bureau!** Starting Fall 2019 you can book a media law expert to train your newsroom on pre-set topics like copyright, public records or high school student press freedom. You choose the time and the topic; SPLC provides the speaker.

[SPLC.org/speakers](http://SPLC.org/speakers)





# ASK SPLC

**Q:** I'm the editor of my public community college newspaper. We are called a club or organization, not a free press. We have been censored by being told what topics we can write about. Our adviser frequently kills stories because he says the quality is poor, even though I and my section editors have cleared it for publication. When we tried to have conversations with our adviser about what's being done wrong, we were shut down. **We need your help.**

**A:** At a public college or university (community colleges are treated exactly the same as their 4-year counterparts) the law is clear: Student editors are responsible for determining the content of their media organization as long as the content is lawful (e.g., not libelous or obscene, etc.) and doesn't seriously disrupt school (a pretty high bar.) School officials — including a faculty adviser — must keep their hands off and do nothing (including messing around with funding, threatening your jobs and engaging in other forms of indirect censorship) that is an attempt to censor, control, punish for or otherwise manipulate such content. The law is on your side; don't take no for an answer.

That said, as a journalist, you should also make reasonable attempts to engage your adviser (and fellow editors/journalists) when they raise questions or express concerns about your stories. It is a crucial part of the story development and editing process. Sometimes you have to check yourself and realize that you can, and must, do better. We can always learn new approaches and perspectives from others, no matter what their position or station in life.

**For help understanding libel, copyright, making ethical editorial decisions and dealing with censorship, go to [SPLC.org](http://SPLC.org).**

Every week, Student Press Law Center attorneys answer a frequently asked question about student media law in **Ask SPLC**.

Keep up with **Ask SPLC** by subscribing to our weekly newsletter.

For immediate help, contact the SPLC Legal Hotline.

See the full archive of Ask SPLC questions and submit your own:  
**[SPLC.org/AskSPLC](http://SPLC.org/AskSPLC)**

## STUDENT PRESS LAW CENTER

1608 Rhode Island Ave NW, Suite 211

Washington, D.C. 20036

Phone: (202) 785-5450

Website: [splc.org](http://splc.org)



### Jan. 1 – July 31 Donors

The Student Press Law Center gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the following organizations and individuals for helping us defend the free press rights of student journalists.

As a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, the SPLC depends on donations from those who are committed to its vision and work. All donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Questions? Contact Diana Mitsu Klos at [dmk@splc.org](mailto:dmk@splc.org).

To support our work, visit  
[SPLC.org/donate](http://SPLC.org/donate)

— — —

#### **\$100,000 or more**

The Democracy Fund, Robert R. McCormick Foundation, Yellow Chair Foundation

#### **\$75,000 to \$99,999**

Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation

#### **\$50,000 to \$74,999**

Sandler Foundation (in memory of Nick Ferentinos)

#### **\$10,000 to \$24,999**

Journalism Education Association, Hugh M. Hefner Foundation

#### **\$5,000 to \$9,999**

Center for Scholastic Journalism — Kent State University (co-sponsor of the Courage in Student Journalism Award)

#### **\$1,000 to \$4,999**

Candace and John Bowen, Mark Goodman, Loretta Mince, David McCraw, Ohio Scholastic Media Association, Mark Stencel, Western Association of University Publication Managers

#### **\$500 to \$999**

Benjamin Cotton, Ryan and Elizabeth Gunterman, Kathleen Deakins, Timothy Jasonowski, Catherine Robb, Quill and Scroll, Margaret Sullivan

#### **\$250 to \$499**

Richard Blumenstein, Robert Choy, Michaela Galluzzo, Illinois Journalism Education Association, Kettle Moraine Press Association, Michael Koretzky, Ava Lubell, Stephen Lambert, Carl and Ann Schierhorn, Kelly Wilkerson

#### **\$100 to \$249**

Jerry Appel, Karen Bosley, Lee Brooks, David Clark, Christie Cosky, Margery DiCesare, Thomas Eveslage, Forge Press Yearbook — Colonial Forge High School, Annette Ghee, Lauren Lawley Head, High Tide and Pilot — Redondo Union High School, Mike Hoefner, Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, Johnston High School Journalism Program, Paul Kandell, North Platte High School Journalism Program, Danielle Kass, Eileen Kramer,

Ben Leubsdorf, Katharine Martin, Beatrice Motamedi, Northeastern Illinois University Student Media Organizations, Nick Ochsner, Katina Paron, Pawesehi Yearbook & Pwestpathfinder.com — Parkway West High School, University of Pittsburgh Pitt News, Frank Philpot, John David Reed, Rachel Robson, Brian Rollins, Spinnaker Media — University of North Florida, Sara Stone, The Bruin Voice — Bear Creek High School, The Bulldog Bugle — Animo Jefferson Middle School, The Clipper — Everett Community College, The Express — San Juan High School, The Gatepost — Framingham State University, The Lynx Liberator — Rhodes College, The Muse — Alexander W. Dreyfoos School of the Arts, The Reflector — University of Indianapolis, The Reporter — Miami Dade College, The Spoke — Conestoga High School, The Standard — Missouri State University, Susan Tantillo, Erik Uglund, Ursus yearbook — Granite Bay High School, Virginia Association of Journalism Teachers and Advisers, Wendy Wallace West Side Story — West High School, Stan Zoller

#### **Gifts were made in honor of:**

Candace Bowen, Dennis Brown, Ben Cotton & Abigail Fisch, Kathi Duffel, Brenda Field, Mateo J. Gold, Hadar Harris, Liz Levin, Josh Miller, Scott Sternberg, Susan Tantillo, David Zeeck

#### **Gifts were made in memory of:**

Dave Adams, Marjorie Brooks, Jim McKinney, Janet Zamboni