

High School Principal Survey

(308 principals)

1. For how many years have you worked in your current position at this high school?

61% Less than 5 years
22 6–10 years
8 11–15 years
8 More than 15 years

2. For how many years have you worked at this high school as some type of administrator?

46% Less than 5 years
26 6–10 years
12 11–15 years
16 More than 15 years

3. How important do you feel it is that ALL students participate in some extracurricular activities or clubs?

87% Very important
12 Somewhat important
1 Not too important
0 Not important at all
0 Don't know

4. How important do you feel it is that ALL students learn some journalism skills?

33% Very important
58 Somewhat important
9 Not too important
0 Not important at all
0 Don't know

5. Do you feel that school district officials are very supportive, somewhat supportive, not too supportive, or not supportive at all of students participating in extracurricular activities or clubs?

72% Very supportive
21 Somewhat supportive
2 Not too supportive
1 Not supportive at all
5 Don't know

6. Do you feel that school district officials are very supportive, somewhat supportive, not too supportive, or not supportive at all of the teaching and learning of journalism skills?

29% Very supportive
56 Somewhat supportive
9 Not too supportive
1 Not supportive at all
6 Don't know

7. Would you say that during your tenure in your current position the total number of extra-curricular activities or clubs has increased, decreased, or remained about the same? (Your best guess is fine.)

65% Increased
3 Decreased
33 Remained about the same
0 Don't know

8. Would you say that during your tenure in your current position the total number of student media clubs or publications has increased, decreased, or remained the same? (Your best guess is fine.)

36% Increased
5 Decreased
59 Remained about the same
0 Don't know

9. Would you say there during your tenure in your current position the total number of courses primarily dedicated to the teaching of journalism has increased, decreased, or remained about the same? (Your best guess is fine.)

25% Increased
5 Decreased
70 Remained about the same
0 Don't know

10. Do you think that your high school currently offers too many, not enough, or about the right amount of extra-curricular clubs or activities?

1% Too many
34 Not enough
65 About the right amount
0 Don't know

11. Do you think your high school currently offers too many, not enough, or about the right amount of student media clubs or publications?

- 0% Too many
- 46 Not enough
- 53 About the right amount
- 1 Don't know

12. Do you think your high school currently offers too many, not enough, or about the right amount of courses primarily dedicated to the teaching of journalism?

- 0% Too many
- 46 Not enough
- 53 About the right amount
- 1 Don't know

13–17. People tend to get their news and information from many different sources. How often, if at all, do you get news from each of the following sources?

From the newspaper?

- 70% Every day
- 20 Several times a week
- 7 About once a week
- 1 Less than once a week
- 1 Never
- 0 Don't know

From the radio?

- 74% Every day
- 17 Several times a week
- 5 About once a week
- 4 Less than once a week
- 0 Never
- 0 Don't know

From local television newscasts?

- 59% Every day
- 26 Several times a week
- 6 About once a week
- 6 Less than once a week
- 3 Never
- 1 Don't know

From national television newscasts?

- 46% Every day
- 33 Several times a week
- 12 About once a week
- 5 Less than once a week
- 3 Never
- 1 Don't know

From the Internet?

- 29% Every day
- 32 Several times a week
- 13 About once a week
- 16 Less than once a week
- 9 Never
- 1 Don't know

18. Do you read any weekly news magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek* or *U.S. News & World Report*?

- 62% Yes
- 38 No
- 0 Don't know

19. Do you feel that your school's administration is very supportive, somewhat supportive, not too supportive, or not supportive at all of students participating in extracurricular activities or clubs?

- 90% Very supportive
- 8 Somewhat supportive
- 1 Not too supportive
- 0 Not supportive at all
- 0 Don't know

20. The First Amendment became part of the U.S. Constitution more than 200 years ago. This is what it says:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

Based on your own feelings about the First Amendment, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: The First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees.

- 7% Strongly agree
- 17 Mildly agree
- 20 Mildly disagree
- 52 Strongly disagree
- 4 Don't know

21. Overall, how would you rate the job that the American educational system does in teaching students about First Amendment freedoms?

- 6% Excellent
- 56 Good
- 27 Fair
- 10 Poor
- 2 Don't know

22. Overall, do you think the *press in America* has too much freedom to do what it wants; too little freedom to do what it wants, or is the amount of freedom the press has about right?

- 40% Too much freedom
- 3 Too little freedom
- 56 About right
- 1 Don't know

For each of the following statements, please circle if you agree or disagree that someone should be allowed to do it. . .

23. People should be allowed to express unpopular opinions.

- 71% Strongly agree
- 28 Mildly agree
- 1 Mildly disagree
- 0 Strongly disagree
- 0 Don't know

24. People should be allowed to burn or deface the American flag as a political statement.

- 9% Strongly agree
- 14 Mildly agree
- 13 Mildly disagree
- 62 Strongly disagree
- 1 Don't know

25. Musicians should be allowed to sing songs with lyrics that others might find offensive.

- 18% Strongly agree
- 25 Mildly agree
- 28 Mildly disagree
- 28 Strongly disagree
- 1 Don't know

26. Newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of a story.

- 56% Strongly agree
- 24 Mildly agree
- 14 Mildly disagree
- 5 Strongly disagree
- 2 Don't know

27. High school students should be allowed to report controversial issues in their student newspapers without the approval of school authorities.

- 8% Strongly agree
- 17 Mildly agree
- 29 Mildly disagree
- 46 Strongly disagree
- 1 Don't know

28. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

“Americans don't appreciate First Amendment freedoms the way they ought to.”

- 27% Strongly agree
- 47 Mildly agree
- 16 Mildly disagree
- 5 Strongly disagree
- 6 Don't know

29. Are the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment something you personally think about or are they something you take for granted?

- 56% Personally think about
- 43 Take for granted
- 1 Don't know

30. What about most people in the United States—do you think the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment are something people specifically think about or are they something they take for granted?

- 5% Personally think about
- 92 Take for granted
- 3 Don't know

Below are a series of statements about how people might try to exercise their rights under the First Amendment. In each case please indicate whether you think under current law Americans have the legal right or not to do these things:

31. Under current law, do Americans have the legal right to burn the American flag as a means of political protest?
(Please circle Yes or No.)

- 69% Yes
- 31 No

32. Under current law, do the courts have the right to send reporters to jail for refusing to reveal a news source?
(Please circle Yes or No.) (Correct answer depends on state.)

- 67% Yes
- 33 No

33. Under current law, does the government have the right to restrict indecent material on the Internet? (Please circle Yes or No.)

- 50% Yes
- 50 No

34. Under current law, does someone have the legal right to shout "fire" in a crowded arena as a prank? (Please circle Yes or No.)

- 2% Yes
- 98 No

Finally, please answer the following questions for classification purposes only. . .

35. What is the highest level of education that you have attained?

- 0% High School diploma
- 6 Bachelors
- 68 Masters
- 13 ABD (all but dissertation)
- 7 Doctorate
- 2 Post-doctorate
- 3 Other
- 0 Don't know

36. Have you ever received any formal instruction in the First Amendment?

- 69% Yes
- 32 No (GO TO QUESTION 39)

37. IF YES, would that have been before high school, during high school, and/or after high school? (Circle all that apply.)

(Responses add up to more than 100% due to multiple mentions. Total number of responses = 294)

- 19% Before high school
- 60 During high school
- 73 After high school
- 0 Don't know

38. What year were you born? _____

- Age
- 12% 28–38
 - 33 39–49
 - 47 50–60
 - 8 61–71
 - 0 72+

39. Are you male or female?

- 75% Male
- 25 Female

40. Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino?

3% Yes

97 No

41. What is your race?

92% White/Caucasian

7 Black/African-American

0 American Indian/Alaska native

0 Asian

1 Some other race

Thank you for your participation.