



# **MEDIA TIPS AND TEMPLATES**

Edtech Advocacy Toolkit

**DECEMBER 2019**

### Purpose of Media Engagement

Media outlets, such as newspapers and other periodicals, can be leveraged to raise awareness of a specific policy issue. Use the tips and templates below to help a wide range of audiences understand the issue and propose specific policy recommendations.

### Letter to the Editor: Tips

The letters to the editor section is one of the most widely read sections of a newspaper or periodical. This section offers advocates a chance to reach a broad audience and provide readers with information and insights on unfamiliar issues and inspire readers to take action.

#### **BE PROFESSIONAL**

Letters should follow the submission rules of the publication. Language should be polite, but persuasive. The publication will need to authenticate the letter, so provide your signature and contact information.

#### **IDENTIFY YOURSELF AND KEEP IT BRIEF**

Most published letters are 200 to 250 words long and take a strong position on a topic recently covered in the publication. It is best to focus on what is most important rather than trying to address every aspect of the issue.

Start by introducing yourself and describe your role and expertise in educational technology. Follow up with short and clear points. State the case you wish to make using evidence-based details that are important to the specific readership of the paper.

#### **RELATE IT TO HOME**

Newspaper readers care about how an issue will affect them or their communities. Including references to local facts in your article increases the chances it will be published and draw the readers' interests.

#### **END WITH A CALL TO ACTION**

Ask readers to take a specific action and provide on-ramps. For example, urge them to call on policymakers to address an issue and suggest steps on how they may do so.

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## Letter to the Editor: Template

[DATE]

[NAME OF MEDIA OUTLET]

Attention: [EDITOR'S PREFIX] [EDITOR'S FIRST AND LAST NAME]

[ADDRESS OF MEDIA OUTLET]

Dear [EDITOR'S PREFIX] [EDITOR'S FIRST AND LAST NAME],

### **INTRODUCTION**

Introduce yourself and your background. State your reason for writing. If you are responding to articles written by the media outlet, use this section to reference the name of the outlet, the title of the article, the author's name and date of publication.

### **CASE**

State your case here. Cite evidence to establish credibility. Refer to the publication's previous letters to the editor sections to identify the appropriate length.

### **CONCLUSION**

End with a statement on why this issue matters and a strong call to action with specific steps.

Sincerely,

[WRITER'S SIGNATURE]

[NAME OF WRITER]

[WRITER'S TITLE]

[WRITER'S ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS]

[DAYTIME CONTACT INFORMATION]

## Letter to the Editor: Example

See ISTE Chief Learning Officer Joseph South's [op-ed](#) on net neutrality, published in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, for an example of a well-written piece that explains the implications of a particular policy decision.

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## Press Release: Template

A press release is an official statement from an organization designed to inform members of the media about new announcements or recent developments. It can be a useful tool to reach a wide audience with a message you wish to convey. Use the template below to write an engaging press release for your organization.

[LETTERHEAD]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[DAY, MONTH, YEAR]

### **HEADLINE**

Be creative and craft a punchy introductory sentence in 8-10 words, which delivers your core message. Use a title case.

### **SUB-HEADLINE**

You may optionally add the second-most important point here. Use a title case.

### **INTRODUCTION**

[CITY, STATE — ] Write a strong introductory paragraph that elaborates on the headline and sub-headline in a compelling way. If the announcement is to encourage participation at an event, be sure to include who, what, when, where, why and how.

### **BODY**

In 2 to 4 paragraphs (or 300 to 500 words), expand on the information provided in your introductory paragraph. Consider inserting a quote from a leading spokesperson, such as the chief executive officer, senior leader of the organization, primary researcher or other subject-matter expert. Be sure to insert hyperlinks to appropriate webpages where readers can find additional, related information.

### **CONCLUSION**

This wrap-up statement should reinforce the headline and point the reader to additional information.

### **PRESS CONTACT**

[NAME OF CONTACT PERSON AUTHORIZED TO SPEAK WITH THE MEDIA]

[JOB TITLE]

[NAME OF ORGANIZATION]

[PHONE/EMAIL/TWITTER HANDLE]

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### OPTIONAL BOILERPLATE

About [NAME OF ORGANIZATION]

Most organizations have a short paragraph (4 to 5 sentences) with background information about the organization, supplemented with the appropriate URL.

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### Press Release: Example

See an example of a recently-written [press release from ISTE](#), which announces the Wyoming Department of Education's support of the ISTE Certification program.