

Getting to know you: A road map to the SPLC

Most JEA members know of the Student Press Law Center (<http://www.splc.org>), but perhaps do not know how to get specific information. Highlighted here are the top 10 reasons, listed in reverse order, to learn how to navigate the SPLC site better.

Resources:

- **Legal FAQ:**
<http://www.splc.org/knowyourrights/legalfaq.asp>

- **FOI generator:**
<http://www.splc.org/legalassistance/foiletter.asp>

- **News (news flashes, SPLC Report, blog and podcasts):**
http://www.splc.org/news/newsflash_archives.asp?year=2011

- **Support the SPLC (donate, become a member, attorney referral network, how to get involved):**
<http://www.splc.org/support/>

- **SPLC multimedia:**
<http://www.splc.org/wordpress/> and <http://www.splc.org/podcasts/> and <http://www.vimeo.com/splc>



**JEA Scholastic Press
Rights Commission**

© 2011

10. Legal FAQ:

A long-standing section with links to a wide range of information, including:

- First Amendment and censorship
- Advertising
- Cyberlaw and online publishing
- Copyright
- Freedom of Information
- Libel and privacy

This section is a basic list of questions and answers to provide quick information about general issues. It's is easy to use and provides vital assistance.

9. FOI letter generator (online legal request form, virtual lawyer):

Listed under the Legal Assistance menu item, the FOI letter-generator is an invaluable resource that enables your students to enter basic source request information, hit return and have a FOI request personalized for their state. Public records are a tremendous source of information that will add depth and perspective to stories that can help school and community.

8. News Flashes/SPLC Reports:

Want to know what the latest is around the country with collegiate and scholastic journalism issues? The long-running compilation of News Flashes will help put censorship issues into perspective. Want to know how current incidents or issues compare with the past? The Flashes go back to 1996. For more than just briefs, the same link will give students access to information published in the SPLC

Reports magazine. Also available through this link is access to the SPLC blog and podcasts.

7. Support the SPLC:

As much as the SPLC has supported journalism students and advisers as the only legal assistance agency devoted exclusively to educating high school and college journalists about the rights and responsibilities embodied in the First Amendment, students and schools can return the favor financially.

The SPLC is a nonprofit, non-partisan 501(c)(3) corporation. As such, it is supported by contributions from student journalists, other interested individuals plus donations from foundations, corporations and other groups. Support of the SPLC is essential for students, advisers and communities to continue to receive SPLC services. Information in this section includes how to donate, how to become a member, how to become a friend of the SPLC, how to get involved and how to use the attorney referral network.

6. SPLC multimedia: the blog – SPLC_org/podcasts and SPLC's Vimeo channel:

Traditionally, the SPLC spread its messages through its magazine, its website and speaking engagements. Times have changed. The website and information available through it have been upgraded. A blog reaches its audiences quickly and is updated frequently.

Resources:

- **Know your rights:**
<http://splc.org/knowyourrights/>

- **On-site search engine (search is at the top of all pages)**

- **Classroom resources:** http://www.splc.org/legalassistance/legal_request.asp

<http://www.splc.org/classroomresources/classroomresources.asp>

- **Online legal assistance forms**
- **Personal support:** (staff contact information) <http://www.splc.org/aboutus/staff.asp>

Lastly, a blog gives those who face issues – and have solved them – a chance to speak out and inform. Add video through Vimeo, featuring Adam Goldstein, and the SPLC reaches more audiences more quickly.

5. Know your rights:

This section covers information for both college and high school journalists, provides legal guides and access to a law library of cases, regulations and state statutes. Special focus is also given to newspaper theft issues and state legislation.

4. On-site search engine:

The SPLC's on-site Google Custom Search Engine enables you to narrow your research and gain information on topics relevant to scholastic and collegiate journalists.

A quick search, for example, of prior review brought items from the News Flashes, from the SPLC Report and from other areas within the SPLC archives. At least 423 articles with links result from this search. All podcasts are also available through iTunes.

3. Classroom resources:

Clicking on this menu link brings a wealth of information, from presentations and handouts to homework information, which is made up of links to SPLC materials and information from other journalism organizations.

Teachers will find the First Amendment quizzes and PowerPoints on everything from libel to reporter privilege to be excellent resources – and they come with teacher notes. A link to the SPLC bookstore is also available here where the Law of the Student Press is available.

2. Online legal assistance forms:

Need information or assistance quickly? Two ways: use the contact information available here, or at any time of the day or night, complete the SPLC Legal Request Form.

1. Personal support:

Number one because you know the SPLC is there to help and have been since 1974 as the single best resource for legal issues in collegiate and scholastic journalism. Those needing personal support, information and assistance simply have to contact the SPLC by phone, e-mail and other means explained on the website.



Journalism meets the needs of the 21st century skill set

Resources:

http://www.naafoundation.org/upload/foundation_pdf/journalism-matters-exec-summary.pdf

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michael-koretzky/dear-students-even-if-you_b_626295.html

<http://www.jea.org/resources/pressrights/2008documents/2008ResponsibleJ/2008point4communication/Journalismskillsbuilding.doc>

Colorado Project:
21st Century Student
Outcomes and
Journalism

<http://www.ncte.org/standards>

<http://www.p21.org/>

Preparing Students for
the 21st Century

The skills students master through a strong and responsible journalism program immediately address the educational standards important to 21st century learners. Even for those students who do not pursue a career in journalism, student media programs cultivate the civic involvement and community awareness that effective schools strive to foster.

Journalism and student media programs enhance the quality of education in school communities while providing essential skills to those directly involved as student journalists. Coverage provided in student media fosters meaningful discourse on topics that may not be covered elsewhere, and establishes a public record of activities and events in the school.

“Journalism should serve the public in many important ways, but it can only do so if its practitioners have mastered an increasingly complex body of knowledge and specialized skills. Above all, to be a responsible journalist must involve an informed ethical commitment to the public. This commitment must include an understanding of and deep appreciation for the role that journalism plays in the formation, enhancement and perpetuation of an informed society.” (from the World Journalism Education Association)

In many classrooms, students only look at theoretical concepts without application, however, when students make decisions for their publications while “being self-disciplined, acting responsibly, applying ethical principles, and setting and assessing goals,” they practice the real-world skills that will prepare them for college and the workforce.

The value of scholastic journalism transcends the traditional classroom walls. Because student journalists actively pursue topics of interest to the school and local community,

valid discussion of important topics often occur.

“The government has a compelling interest in educating all of its citizens. Education of the citizenry is and always has been a preeminent goal of American society. Reaching back through the collective memory of the Republic, the fundamental importance of education in the design of our system of government rapidly becomes clear. Article III of the Northwest Ordinance states in part: “Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged.” In *Yoder*, the Supreme Court adopted Thomas Jefferson’s often expressed belief that education was a “bulwark” against tyranny. Specifically, the Court stated: Thomas Jefferson pointed out early in our history, that some degree of education is necessary to prepare citizens to participate effectively and intelligently in our open political system if we are to preserve freedom and independence. Further, education prepares individuals to be self-reliant and self-sufficient participants in society.” (from *Murphy v. State of Arkansas*)

Finally, scholastic journalism continues to be on the technological cusp. Because student media often tells stories in a myriad of ways: using pictures, text and graphics to enhance content and delivery while embracing the most recent technological developments.

