

## Official Journalism Enrollment “Cheat Sheet”

### The Benefits of Journalism

Journalism at Marshall High School is an intensive program designed for motivated and passionate students to hone their communication, leadership, and business skills. It is an opportunity for students to channel their creativity in a way that gives back to the school community. As members of the newspaper or yearbook staff, students become part of a professional, completely self-sufficient team that must work together to reach common goals and create a final product of which they can be proud. The skills gained through scholastic journalism are prized by college admissions officers and human resource professionals alike because of their real-world applicability. Meeting deadlines, budgeting, interviewing, writing, presenting, collaborating—these are all valued abilities in the post-high school world that students can practice right now through the study of journalism.

### Who Should Join?

A student should consider joining the program if any of the following are appealing:

- Being part of the newspaper or yearbook staff
- Having the opportunity to see one’s name in print
- Learning how to write something *other than* a literary analysis
- Meeting new and interesting people
- Becoming part of a close-knit, caring community
- Learning to be a leader amongst one’s peers
- Being around some of the school’s most passionate and creative students
- Learning to use the same professional computer software and photographic equipment that *real* newspaper and magazine editors use every day
- Examining the role of the media in our society
- Improving one’s understanding of the world and helping to improve *other* people’s understanding of the world
- Having an outlet to express one’s opinions and talk about the topics one is truly interested in

### Does a Student Need to Take Journalism 1 to Join a Publication?

Generally speaking, Journalism 1 is a prerequisite for Journalism 2/3/4 (newspaper) or Photojournalism 1/2/3 (yearbook). However, current juniors or sophomores with strong work skills and genuine interest in learning the ropes may be allowed (with instructor discretion) to “skip” the introductory course and join a publication class directly. In most cases, the introductory class (Journalism 1) is still the best option for current eighth graders and freshmen, who often need the extra time to hone their skills before joining the more rigorous publication classes.

[SEE BACK FOR A DESCRIPTION OF THE “IDEAL” JOURNALISM STUDENT  
AND OTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS]

## **The Ideal Student**

Because Journalism is an intense, team-driven program, it is imperative that students enrolled in the courses *want* to be there. There is little to be gained for a student who is not interested in putting in the substantial effort necessary to be successful.

With that one caveat in mind, there are a number of qualities that indicate a student might be a good fit for the program. In no particular order, these include:

- The ability to meet deadlines
- Self-regulation and commitment
- Honesty, maturity, confidence, and professionalism
- Strong writing skills
- Willingness and ability to work frequently during lunch or after school
- An interest in photography
- Solid interpersonal skills
- Ability to accept criticism
- Attention to detail
- Being able to work well under pressure
- Good listening skills
- An interest in computers and/or graphic design

## **What About IB?**

Although Journalism and Photojournalism are not IB courses, many IB diploma candidates have successfully gone through the program. Nearly all students on the newspaper staff, for instance, took at least one IB-related class in 2012. As long as students are willing to work hard and stick to their deadlines, it is certainly possible to fit Journalism into an IB student's schedule. The IB coordinators are happy to work with any student who needs assistance with this. Plus, newspaper and yearbook staffers earn CAS hours for all the time they must spend both during and after school to get the job done.

## **Dismissal and Instructor Objection**

The journalism instructor reserves the right to deny any student's request to join the newspaper or yearbook staff based on personal observation, prior class performance, or any other criteria relevant to a student's ability to meet the program objectives. Joining the newspaper or yearbook is a requirement for all students enrolled in Journalism 2/3/4 or Photojournalism 1/2/3. (Journalism 1 students may contribute to either publication at the instructor's discretion.)

The instructor also reserves the right to dismiss any student from either publication staff for failing to meet its rigorous standards of conduct or for violating journalistic ethics. Working on the newspaper or yearbook is a privilege and all students must contribute their fair share in order to maintain the success of the program.