

PRESS RELEASE BASICS

- Use letter head stationery, if appropriate, and type “Press Release” just below the letter head banner. If plain paper is used, type “Press Release” at the top of the page.
- Provide the name and phone number for the person the press should contact for additional information. Include the current date.
- The body of the press release should be double spaced.
- Provide a headline above the text of the press release. The headline should capture the essence of the reason for the press release .
- Include a dateline – i.e. where the news or event occurred or is being announced.
- Provide the Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How in the first sentence or two of the press release.
- Distribute the press release within a week of the news or event, if possible, and include the actual date that the news or event occurred. If the news or event happened more than a week earlier, use a term such as "recently" to indicate when the news or event occurred.
- Give some background, if necessary, on the organization or person.
- Keep your words simple and avoid jargon or acronyms.
- Each paragraph should have one or two sentences. Keep all sentences and paragraphs together – i.e. don't split a sentence or paragraph onto the next page.
- If you include quotes, be sure they are approved for use by the person to whom they are attributed. Journalists may simply lift the quotes from the press release rather than interviewing the individual directly.
- Keep your press releases short – one page is best, and no more than two pages at the most.
- If the release is two pages, insert “-more-“ at the end of the first page – this indicates that the reader should go to the next page. Insert a “-30-“ or “###” at the end of the release – this indicates that the reader has reached the end of the release.
- If you're going to email the release, save it as a Word document or Adobe PDF and send it as an attachment. Do NOT include the complete press release in the body of your email.

Below is an FSBA press release from a few years ago to illustrate the points provided above – **a few notes and tips are highlighted in green in the body of the press release.**

[Put your press release on letter head if you wish, but don't put a personal announcement/press release on official/business stationery or vice-versa]

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[If you are NOT using letterhead, simply put "PRESS RELEASE" at the top of the page]

PRESS RELEASE

For further information, contact:

Dr. Wayne Blanton [Be sure the contact person is prepared and can be reached at the number provided. If you provide a cell or home number, it indicates that the contact person is willing to be called at any time, day or night]
FSBA Executive Director
(850) 414-2578

July 3, 2008 [Provide current date - don't pre-date or post-date the press release]

[The headline should be appropriate for a journalist to use if writing about the news or event]

St. Johns County School Board member Beverly Slough elected FSBA president

TALLAHASSEE [Dateline - Location from which the press release is issued. In this case, the press release was issued in Tallahassee even though the event was in Tampa] -St. Johns County School Board member Beverly Slough [Who] has been elected [How] president of the Florida School Boards Association (FSBA) [What], the statewide organization representing school boards across the state.

Slough joins three other board members who were elected to FSBA offices during the association's recent conference [When and Why] in Tampa [Where]. They include: Joy Bowen, Leon County, president-elect; Lee Swift, Charlotte County, vice president; and Candace Lankford, Volusia County, Treasurer. In addition, Jeanne Dozier, Lee County, who served as FSBA president during 2007-08, will continue to serve as an executive officer as the Immediate Past President.

"We are extremely excited about Beverly's election. It is well-deserved," said Dr. Wayne Blanton, FSBA executive director. Slough has held several offices with FSBA, including vice president and president-elect.

- more - [Tells the reader there's more on the next page]

"I would like to thank you for the honor and privilege to serve as your next FSBA president," Slough said following her installation. "This association does a great deal to strengthen public education throughout the state of Florida."

FSBA is a nonprofit corporation representing all school board members in Florida. FSBA has been the collective voice for Florida school districts since 1930. Slough will serve as the association's president until June 2009.

-30- [Tells the reader that this is the end of the press release]