

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of the Virginia High School League's Publications Evaluation Service is to facilitate improvements in Virginia high school publications. The evaluator's comments and suggestions should be used primarily as guidelines to increase the effectiveness of your scholastic publication.

Your evaluation is a critique from another qualified person's perspective. That perspective includes many variables: education, experience, trends and even subjective preference. When submitting a publication for critique, there is an expectation of acceptance of results, whether or not you agree with or choose to implement them.

VHSL awards are presented annually at the VHSL Regional Media Championship. Publications are evaluated by out-of-state evaluators who are experts in scholastic publications: Suzanne Bardwell, Ann Bertoldie, Don Bott, Alexis Bunka, Pam Bunka, Eva Coleman, Kathy Craghead, Carolyn Crist, Leslie Dennis, Melissa Dixon, Susan Duncan, Allison Floyd, Kathleen France, Christina Geabhart, Donna Griffith, H. L. Hall, Mary Jessica Hammes, Nancy Hastings, Ken Henderson, Carole Henning, Marva Hutchison, Lisa Kritchman, J. Grady Locklear, Jim McGonnell, Janet McKinney, Amy Morgan, R. J. Morgan, Mitzi Neely, Casey Nichols, Sarah Nichols, Jane Robbins, Matthew Schott, Terry Sollazzo, Brian Thies, Lizabeth Walsh, Anne Whitt, Lori Wilken, Stan Zoller.

VHSL recommends that you submit your publication to other evaluation services in addition to the League's for additional comments and suggestions.

PUBLICATIONS EVALUATION SERVICES ENTRY POLICY

Yearbooks submitted for entry in the VHSL Publications Evaluation Services are considered officially entered only if the following conditions are met:

1. The VHSL Publications Evaluation registration form has been completed.
2. One copy of the yearbook produced that school year has been submitted.
3. The correct entry fee accompanies your entry.
4. Your entry is RECEIVED by the June 15 deadline. Summer and fall delivery yearbooks may be submitted until Sept. 30 if the June 15 deadline for registration and fees has been sent.

For additional information contact VHSL at 434-977-8475 or by e-mail at lgiles@vhsl.org.

STUDENT PUBLICATION: Work on a student publication should be one of the most challenging academic experiences a high school provides. Students not only learn to write for a real audience from original research, they receive training in editing, layout and design, photography, computer skills and business management. Beyond that, personal growth is achieved in responsibility, dependability, leadership, teamwork and ethical decision making. The product should be student produced, under the training and supervision of the adviser and other professionals. Since the purpose of the VHSL's program is to encourage schools to produce quality student publications, work done by individuals other than students at your high school must be clearly identified.

SPECIAL NOTE: No publication will be rated, nor will it receive an award if it uses obscene graphics or language (whether obvious, coded or disguised). No publication containing plagiarized or libelous material will be rated, nor will it receive an award. Publications should indicate that permission was given for use of copyrighted material (for example: used with permission by Associated Press).

REVISED: December 2014

GENERAL STIPULATIONS

On the following pages the evaluator will mark "Superior," "Excellent," "Good" or "N/I" (Needs Improvement) for each specific point as it pertains to your publication.

The categories are as follows:

1. Concept
2. Coverage
3. Design
4. Writing
5. Photography

The evaluation in each category will be separate. Yearbooks will also be rated in each category as to the overall quality of work relating to that evaluation criteria:

Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

The rubric shall be used as a guide, not a score card. Evaluation is not based on a point system. The check marks denoting Superior, Excellent, Good and Needs Improvement are ratings, not rankings. Ratings are defined as relative standings. Therefore, the final cumulative ranking given to the publication will be based upon, but not necessarily equal to, the number of Superiors, Excellents, Goods and Needs Improvements given to the publication.

RESULTS

Good sportsmanship is expected of all VHSL activities participants and includes conduct becoming to a participant and graceful acceptance of results.

If you have legitimate concerns with the results of your evaluation (e.g. your evaluation is incomplete), the League may review your evaluation. Please provide the League with a detailed letter stating your concerns and a copy of your Evaluative Criteria Booklet via e-mail, mail or fax within 14 days of the posted results.

Please note that disagreeing with the judge's findings is not justification for review and remember that the primary purpose of an evaluation is to provide information to a staff that will help it to improve its publication. Awards are secondary.

EVALUATOR: QUESTIONS AND SCORING

Please mark SUPERIOR, EXCELLENT, GOOD or N/I (NEEDS IMPROVEMENT) for each SPECIFIC POINT as it pertains to the publication. Include under the COMMENTS FROM THE EVALUATOR section any ideas or suggestions you have for improvement as well as praise for those things well done. When you have completed the entire section, please circle a rating based on your overall assessment of the quality of that section.

We do expect that final ranking--Trophy Class, First Place, Second Place and Third Place--will match up with a majority of Superior, Excellent, Good or Needs Improvement ratings. If it does not, please provide specific justification to help advisers and staffs to understand your conclusions.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Coverage criteria are listed according to traditional yearbook sections; however, traditional sections are not required. All of these areas must be covered within the book, regardless of organizational structure.

Unless otherwise noted, "photograph" should be interpreted as unposed action shot.

I. THEME/CONCEPT

A. Cover/Endsheets	Superior	Excellent	Good	N/I
1. The name of the book and year appear on the front cover. The name of the book, name of school, city, state, year and volume number appear on spine.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. <u>The theme/concept is introduced on the cover and spine and developed on the endsheets, title page, opening, dividers and closing.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. <u>Cover design reflects the quality of professional standards.</u> Colors used create a favorable impression. Type is attractive, readable.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Endsheets are plain or <u>theme/concept-related.</u> <u>Table of Contents may appear on the front endsheet.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

B. Theme/Concept	Superior	Excellent	Good	N/I
1. Theme/concept is contemporary and relevant to the students, the school and the year.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Theme/concept is <u>developed visually</u> on the endsheets <u>and/or opening spread(s)</u> with well-written, specific copy <u>that</u> gives <u>evidence</u> to validate theme/concept.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. <u>Opening</u> headlines, photographs and captions <u>develop</u> the theme/concept.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Opening <u>does not include</u> staff listing, message from the principal or dedication.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. <u>The book is logically organized in accordance with its selected theme/concept.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Dividers <u>introduce sections and develop</u> the theme/concept in well-written, specific copy.	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Divider headlines, photographs and captions <u>develop the theme/concept for</u> the section that follows.	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. Closing <u>coverage</u> concludes the theme/concept <u>development</u> in well-written, specific copy.	_____	_____	_____	_____

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

C. Reader Aids	Superior	Excellent	Good	N/I
1. Title page contains <u>theme/concept</u> , name of book, year, <u>volume number</u> , name of school, complete <u>street</u> address, <u>web address</u> , telephone number and school population.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. <u>Table of Contents</u> listing appears <u>on the endsheet or opening (not the title page) and accurately lists the first page of each section, the index and the closing.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. <u>Folios</u> specifically list the page's content.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Index is <u>a</u> continuous listing of <u>proper nouns that appear in the book: all people, groups, clubs, organizations, teams, places, businesses and story topics.</u> If ads are used, advertisers should be listed in the index.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Index is easily readable.	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Acknowledgments (<u>if included</u>) and colophon with pertinent information appear before the closing or on the rear endsheet.	_____	_____	_____	_____

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

COMMENTS FROM THE EVALUATOR:

STRENGTHS:

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

II. COVERAGE

NOTE: The following criteria are listed according to traditional yearbook sections; however, traditional sections are not required. All of these areas must be covered within the book, regardless of organizational structure.

A. Student Life		Superior	Excellent	Good	N/I
1.	The staff covers the <u>entire year</u> . Spring delivery books may cover spring activities in a supplement or in the next year's book.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2.	<u>Copy, headlines, photographs and captions</u> cover daily events as well as special events.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	Coverage reflects the unusual interests and activities of students so individual school differences are obvious.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	<u>Local, regional, state and national events are covered from the student/school perspective.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	<u>Community coverage shows student involvement as workers, buyers and volunteers in their community.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

B. Academics

1.	<u>Coverage features</u> the scope of the complete curriculum and the various programs in year-specific stories.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2.	Copy, headlines, <u>photographs</u> and captions <u>cover</u> the wide range of learning activities, focusing on students, NOT THE FACULTY.	_____	_____	_____	_____

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

C. People

1.	Every spread includes <u>student life coverage with</u> related headlines, copy, <u>photographs</u> , and captions in addition to portraits. <u>Faculty coverage features more than just academic situations.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
2.	Senior achievements <u>may</u> appear on the spread with the portraits <u>or in a separate reference section.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	Names appear in alphabetical order with first name, then last name.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	Faculty portrait spreads list full names, titles, exact subject taught, and sponsorship of activities (coaching or advising), <u>which may appear in a separate reference section.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	Coverage is balanced among grade levels.	_____	_____	_____	_____

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

D. Sports

1.	Coverage includes <u>all school teams and topics such as</u> game action, practices, sideline activities, the coaches and fans. <u>Intramural and individual sports may be covered.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
2.	Girls sports and JV/minor sports have been covered fairly.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	A scoreboard provides <u>the numerical result of</u> each <u>competition and the</u> team's <u>overall</u> W/L/T record. Scoreboards may appear on the same spread as the coverage <u>or in a separate reference section.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

E. Clubs/Organizations

Superior

Excellent

Good

N/I

1. Coverage of clubs/organizations includes related headlines, photographs of the groups' activities, captions and body copy.

2. Coverage features the events and activities of the school's clubs and organizations throughout the year but does not focus on goals, objectives or mission statements.

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

COMMENTS FROM THE EVALUATOR:

STRENGTHS:

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

DRAFT

III. DESIGN

A. Spread Design

	Superior	Excellent	Good	N/I
1. <u>Design enhances overall appearance by utilizing a column or grid plan in placement of body copy, photographs and captions.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Each spread has a <u>clear center of visual interest and a hierarchy of coverage is evident.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Pictures contrast in size and shape, but the design avoids oddly shaped pictures that detract from the spread or distort the photograph.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. <u>External and internal margins</u> are consistent.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Negative space/white space is planned, avoiding placement that calls attention to itself.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Action of photographs faces into the gutter and avoids splitting faces.	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Graphics used on the spread unify, separate or emphasize individual elements <u>and neither overpower nor detract from spread content.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. Portrait <u>panels</u> form a solid rectangle with names to the outside.	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. Headsizes and backgrounds are reasonable, uniform and consistent.	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. <u>Group</u> photographs <u>do</u> not <u>dominate</u> the spread.	_____	_____	_____	_____
11. <u>Business, personal and/or</u> senior ads show consistency in design presentation avoiding ornate or distracting graphics.	_____	_____	_____	_____
12. <u>Credit is given to photographers, writers and page designers but should be the smallest point size on the spread.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

B. Typography

1. <u>Headlines and reader entry points effectively lead the reader into the copy.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. <u>Headline type in each section is consistent within family, size and design and is related to theme/concept.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. <u>The staff uses both primary and secondary headlines: primary heads to attract and interest the reader and secondary heads to give specific information based on the content of the story.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. <u>Copy is readable and proportionate to headline and caption size.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Each photograph has a caption or an identification line <u>that is logically placed. Group captions are acceptable, provided photos and captions are clearly identified.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Captions are set with consistent font size and leading <u>and begin with effective type devices.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Any reverses and overprints are readable.	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. Scoreboards use consistent <u>design elements: type, point size, alignment</u> and leading.	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. All <u>group photographs</u> are identified by the name of the sport/ <u>club</u> in distinctive type. <u>All rows are designated front and back using contrasting type.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

COMMENTS FROM THE EVALUATOR:

STRENGTHS:

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

IV. WRITING

A. Body Copy - General Guidelines	Superior	Excellent	Good	N/I
1. Staff avoids the use of school's name, its initials, mascot's name, "this year," or a specific year.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Each copy block begins with a lead that hooks the reader. Leads vary so that patterns have not been established.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Writers avoid editorializing and give sources for all opinions expressed.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Sentences are brief and paragraphs short. No copy appears as a single short or long paragraph.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Transitions provide continuity so that the reader moves smoothly from paragraph to paragraph.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Quotes from students tell something specific about the year and are free of generalities and statements that would be true of any school or any year.	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Staff uses proper attribution for all quotations.	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. Staff avoids use of indefinite terms such as "many," "some," "a lot," "numerous," "several," "various," "few," and "a variety."	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. Staff avoids cliches.	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. Staff avoids the use of passive voice.	_____	_____	_____	_____
11. Titles, quotes, numbers, etc. follow a consistent style (i.e. AP style guidelines).	_____	_____	_____	_____
12. All copy consistently follows acceptable rules of grammar, mechanics and usage.	_____	_____	_____	_____

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

B. Body Copy - Content Specific Criteria

1. With coverage that is included every year, copy uses <u>unique angles and</u> specific details <u>that</u> capture the story, making it different from the year before.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. <u>Academics</u> copy stresses student involvement in the learning process, not the content of the curriculum.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. <u>Academics and club/organizations</u> copy stresses events of the year and avoids purposes, goals, aims.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. <u>Club/organization</u> copy is more than a list of officers and sponsors or a reiteration of aims, purposes or goals.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. <u>Sports</u> copy shows consistent use of the apostrophe.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. <u>Sports</u> copy is more than a summary of the scoreboard, featuring <u>unique</u> angles.	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. <u>Sports</u> copy omits apologies, editorial comments, alibis, congratulations and predictions about the next season.	_____	_____	_____	_____

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

C. Captions - General Guidelines

	Superior	Excellent	Good	N/I
1. Captions begin with impact leads that vary in grammatical pattern.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Based on reporting, captions answer all reader questions (who, what, when, where, why and how), using more than one sentence when needed.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Captions must identify all individuals in the photograph. When six or more are pictured, a group identification is acceptable.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Captions consistently follow acceptable rules of grammar, mechanics and usage.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. The action of the photograph is explained in present tense; the remainder of the caption is in past tense.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Captions do not make derogatory or slanderous remarks about individuals, groups or the school.	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Sports captions vary in presentation to avoid a pattern, include the results of the action depicted and report the score and winner of the game/meet/match.	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. In sports captions, players should be identified by name, number and position, including opponents when possible.	_____	_____	_____	_____

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

D. Headlines - General Guidelines

1. Headlines tell something specific and avoid generalities which could be used any year. <u>L</u> abel headlines are not used.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Headlines employ descriptive nouns and active verbs that fully and accurately describe the nature of the spreads they highlight.	_____	_____	_____	_____

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

COMMENTS FROM THE EVALUATOR:

STRENGTHS:

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

V. PHOTOGRAPHY

A. General Guidelines	Superior	Excellent	Good	N/I
1. Photographs other than portraits and group photos are substantially the work of students.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. <u>Photographs have excellent contrast and/or color tones.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. <u>The staff uses photographs that are clear, sharp, and high resolution.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. The staff has cropped photos effectively <u>with an understanding of composition.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Staff chooses pictures which use different techniques that add impact to the photography (e.g. - high angle, low angle, side lighting, back lighting, leading lines, repeated shapes, framing, etc.)	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Staff avoids all mugging and posed shots, <u>not to be confused with storytelling portraiture.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Photographs feature a variety of students <u>representative of the diversity of the school's population.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

B. Content Specific Guidelines

1. Photographs show students at school, in daily routines, at special events and in the community.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Staff <u>credits all</u> photos purchased from outside sources (i.e., wire services).	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. <u>Photographs</u> avoid shots of the entire classroom, many shots of only one person, similar activities and obviously posed shots.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Photographs feature a wide range of learning action: labs, tests, research, field trips, special assignments, etc.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Individual portraits avoid profiles, "environmentals," props (roses, hands folded, books) and tilts.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. <u>Sports photography includes</u> sideline shots, practices and different games (matches, meets) and features different types of action.	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Club/organization candid shots show members <u>involved in events and activities</u> , not just seated at meetings.	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. Group <u>photographs</u> are arranged to focus on faces <u>for the purpose of identification. No props are used. Large groups have been divided into more than one photograph.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. Groups are cropped to the waist of those on the front row and just above the heads of those on the back row and to the left and right of those on the sides.	_____	_____	_____	_____

COMMENTS FROM THE EVALUATOR:

STRENGTHS:

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

RATING (circle one): Superior / Excellent / Good / Needs Improvement

EVALUATOR'S SUMMARY

TOTAL SCORING

- I. Concept
- II. Coverage
- III. Design
- IV. Writing
- V. Photography

RATING

- S E G N
- S E G N
- S E G N
- S E G N
- S E G N

EVALUATOR'S OVERALL RATING: _____

EVALUATOR'S OVERALL RANKING: _____

(Please provide a final ranking of Trophy Class, First Place, Second Place or Third Place based on the individual section ratings as well as the overall rating. Generally, Superiors=Trophy, Excellents=First, etc.)

EVALUATOR'S GENERAL COMMENTS:

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