

Time for a Change
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The role of a School Paper Adviser is a big responsibility in the school paper body. The SPA criticizes, advises, and always goes the extra mile to ensure that the potential of the writers be achieved, while at the same time making them realize that their power to voice out concerns are bigger than what they think to be.

The role of the school paper, as Republic Act no. 7079 mandates, is to develop students to become proper campus journalists. A journalist should always voice out opinions of the people in the same way that a campus journalist should always speak the opinion of his/her fellow schoolmates.

The annual school paper is the epitome of an attestation that the school paper body is doing its job. Nowadays, success of the editorial staff is based on contest winnings in press conferences.

Without a doubt, these contests uplift the skills of the writers to be competitive. A competition is always good, but there is always some drawbacks that comes along with it.

School paper advisers, and also the campus journalists resort to unethical ways that is not bound by the standards and ethics in the world of journalism.

A photojournalist in a contest comes and goes to his/her adviser during contests to ask for advice. If this is so, then it's better off to call it as the work of an adviser competing against the outputs of other campus journalists in the competition.

A school paper adviser provides monetary payment to outside entities for laying out the school paper, and sometimes even for articles to be included in their school paper is a truth that is hard for some to admit. Moreover, they do this with winning in mind, not for providing the students that the school cater the school paper they deserve.

Moreover, the adviser is not the writer. He/she is also not the layout artist. Insufficient knowledge in this craft, considering the expectations of the school administration can push the adviser and even the students to resort to unethical ways.

This profession is only for the most professionals. Students should always write and layout the school paper under the supervision of the advisers. Yet these contests brings unscrupulous and dishonest ways that the campus journalist and advisers may resort to doing just to achieve victory.

It is without a doubt that contest winnings bring glory to the school and individuals that worked for it. But it is much sweeter if it is done right—in the truest essence and proper ethics of journalism.

Advisers should go back to the roots. They must train students to think critically, write responsibly, and to believe in their abilities. A losing effort in contest with integrity is lot better than to win without it for at least when he/she fails, at least fails while daring greatly. Contests should be taken as an opportunity to improve, not just a shortcut for success.

Trophies, medals, and recognitions brings pride to the school. But these awards lose their value the moment the advisers and the writers lose their integrity. Journalism is and always will never be about contest winnings rather, it is always a commitment to truth and ethical responsibility.

Here's the thing: when school paper advisers do the work for their students, like writing their article instead of just editing, or even allowing outside help to do their work just for victory, then the adviser is no longer teaching excellence in journalism. The adviser is teaching dependence and dishonesty.