**Teacher talking points for each scenario:**

Use these talking points when discussing the scenario with the students.

**Scenario 1:**

A student was cited for alcohol consumption at a football game. You have a photo of him being driven away by his mother. In the photo, his mom is obviously irritated, and he holds up his citation.

**Talking points:** A lot of this is going to depend on context. If you run a story about a continuing alcohol problem at your school, this would be more pertinent, and perhaps you could work to make sure no one in the photo is identifiable. If you are simply reporting about a single student who was cited, you would have to heavily consider the impact on this student and the student’s family and your role in publicizing a mistake he or she made.

**Scenario 2:**

A teacher’s assistant for one of the physical education teachers walked into the wrestling room to get something for another teacher, and found one of the married physical education teachers having sex with another married woman.

**Talking points:** What real value does this have to your school community? This would be good gossip, but you would expose yourself to a lot of risk by running this story.

**Scenario 3:**

The quarterback of your team has not played the last three games. You found out and verified through several reliable sources, including some of his friends, that he was benched for stealing from teammates’ athletic lockers.

**Talking points:** The quarterback is a higher profile person in your community, and therefore, running this story may have significant news value. However, simply relying on his friends as sources would be insufficient. The school is not going to give you any information because of data privacy laws. Can you get a police report? Can you get the quarterback to talk to you? Can you trust him to be a reliable source?

**Scenario 4:**

One of your friends has tried to connect with administrators in your building after school, and has discovered each of them leave within the first 15 minutes after the bell rings.

**Talking points:** Your principal is a high profile person in your community and is accountable to them, so the story has some news value. This would require your staff to do some research, such as checking in the office every day for an extended period of time (one month?), requesting the administrator’s calendar for the last month, personally trying to schedule meetings with him or her, checking the administrator’s contract to find out what the language says about hours. You may have to present your data to the superintendent and ask for her comment. Your staff will have to consider how they approach the principal for a comment on the story.

**Scenario 5:**

Two 15 year-old boys in your school were cited during winter break for blowing up mailboxes. You are shocked to find out they are being charged with a felony, which will have implications for them beyond high school. You want to run a story about the charges and interview the boys, while withholding their names. One of the mothers calls and threatens to withdraw her students from the District if anything runs at all in the paper. How do you decide what is fair, while balancing your right to print.

**Talking points:** This is a difficult one as you have been presented with an ultimatum. Running a story on the charges may be socially responsible in that it could prevent other students from making the same mistake. Also, it is free expression and shows social responsibility to the truth. However it may be nearly impossible to run the story without other students piecing together the names of the students. Will you have access to a police report? Since this happened outside of the school day and off school grounds, does that diminish its newsworthiness for your student body?

**Scenario 6:**

The coach of the football team (a teacher in your building) has just named his son (a junior) as the quarterback over last year’s backup, who is a senior this year. Several parents have voiced frustration, and several students have quit the team as a result. How do you enter into the discussion?

**Talking points:** This could be done more responsibly as a part of a larger story on coaches who have children on their teams, but the implicit meaning is the student is undeserving of his position. How can you prove this? Who will your sources be? How can you avoid sour grapes reporting?