

HOOSIER STAR EVALUATION SERVICE



YEARBOOK  
GUIDEBOOK

IHSPA  
INDIANA HIGH SCHOOL PRESS ASSOCIATION

SCHOOL NAME

YEARBOOK NAME

SCHOOL YEAR & STAFF SIZE

EDITOR(S) IN CHIEF

FACULTY ADVISER(S)

EVALUATION CATEGORY

DIVISION I:  
*Under 1,000 enrollment*

DIVISION II:  
*1,000-2,000 enrollment*

DIVISION III:  
*2,000+ enrollment*

## BACKGROUND & INFORMATION

### NOTE: STAFFS SHOULD COMPLETE THE HOOSIER STAR APPLICATION (IHSPA.NET/FORMS-CENTRAL) TO SUPPLY BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR JUDGE.

The Indiana High School Press Association hopes staffs will use this guidebook and resulting judge's critique to enhance the overall quality of their student media outlet. Students and their advisers are encouraged to utilize the feedback during planning sessions and workshops to set high standards for their journalism program and better serve their audience.

The Hoosier Star rating is established by an evaluation of superior, excellent, good, average or in need of improvement. Journalistic works are judged against established standards of excellence and criteria that are included in this guidebook, and then are compared to other student media in respective enrollment divisions for IHSPA awards and honors. Judges may also recognize specific content and/or ideas as "special distinction" and identify the student-produced material that earned this honor.

Judges are asked to review this entire guidebook before beginning the evaluation and rate each of the criteria accordingly. Additionally, they are instructed to provide written feedback in a manner that encourages staffs to improve by using the guidelines. The IHSPA requires that comments be written in a constructive manner and not in a way that is deemed overly critical or unrealistic. However, anyone who believes their evaluation and/or rating to be unfair may request a second critique at no cost.

Overall, judges will be looking for student media outlets that:

1. *Combine a variety of storytelling formats to give the audience a well-rounded insight into the school and community;*
2. *Enhance the appearance with visuals appropriate for the format, incorporating current design trends;*
3. *Coordinate the overall coverage and content so a consistent, attractive and reader-friendly appearance is established and maintained throughout the school year;*
4. *Follow the highest standards of legal and ethical behavior such as those set forth by the Society of Professional Journalists, First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and Indiana academic standards for the Journalism and Student Media courses (<http://bit.ly/IndJourStandards>);*
5. *Adhere to the Indiana High School Press Association's core values of truth, courage, integrity and freedom.*

## HOOSIER STAR & DISTINCTIONS

*All "superior" and "excellent" ranked submissions are exceptionally well done. These student media outlets are entered into the Hoosier Star competition, the IHSPA's annual program that awards Indiana's very best in scholastic journalism. Judges other than those who conduct the initial evaluation determine Hoosier Star winners for each of the three divisions. Judges may also award "Special Distinction" status to any section deemed to be innovative.*

## THEME & CONCEPT

In addition to a verbal component, the theme sets a visual tone for the yearbook by carefully and consistently using graphic elements to reinforce the book's concept.

NEVER    SOMETIMES    USUALLY    FREQUENTLY    ALWAYS

Traditional theme development occurs throughout the book in six areas as a way to guide readers and create unity: cover, endsheets, title page, opening, dividers and closing. Conceptual development also occurs in storytelling techniques, photo treatments, coverage choices and overall organization of the book, such as how many sections or how topics are grouped.

NEVER    SOMETIMES    USUALLY    FREQUENTLY    ALWAYS

Cover creates first impression of book, theme/concept and visual identity via color, type and graphics. It also includes book title and year on front, and includes complete school name, city/state, book title, year and volume number on spine.

YES    NO

Endsheets serve as a bridge to connect book's cover and content through type and graphics.

YES    NO

Title page includes book title, volume number, year, complete school name, address (including phone number and website) and enrollment; and develops thematic graphic elements from cover.

YES    NO

Table of contents is accurate, appears early in the book (usually on front endsheet or opening) and includes listings for the book's major sections and reference areas.

YES    NO

Opening/closing includes visual and verbal theme development; specifics related to the school and year (facts, figures and feelings); graphic elements that avoid simply repeating look of cover/endsheets; more than one spread; no staff, editor or adviser identification; and an introduction/wrap up of the book and school year.

NEVER    SOMETIMES    USUALLY    FREQUENTLY    ALWAYS

Divider pages introduce each section and transitions between parts of the book; graphic elements that look distinctly different from opening, closing spreads; consistent design through type and style; and verbal theme development via spinoffs and use of student quotes to continue the year's story.

NEVER    SOMETIMES    USUALLY    FREQUENTLY    ALWAYS

Index provides an accurate alphabetical listing of all people, topics, groups and advertisers in the book, and is designed for maximum readability in regard to column width and point size.

YES    NO

Colophon provides specific and technical information about the book and its printing such as name and address of printing facility, cover materials, paper weight, special inks or foils, type styles, computer software, previous awards, press run and cost of book to students.

YES    NO

Colophon or index includes a small section for acknowledgments.

YES    NO

## THEME & CONCEPT

### RATING

- Superior*
- Excellent*
- Good*
- Average*
- In need of improvement*
  
- Special distinction earned*

### JUDGE'S COMMENTS

## COVERAGE

Based on the theme, staff divided the book into sections as a way to organize content; reference pages grouped separately.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Staff provides cross-functional coverage with traditional sections (student life, academics, people/album, sports, clubs/organizations, advertising) and/or new sections based on the book's concept.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Staff focused on covering each student as a person and personality.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Coverage of non-school activities is evident as a way to capture the full high school experience while student life includes traditional school events such as homecoming, spirit week, prom in addition to daily experiences unique to the school and/or year.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

The staff sought new coverage angles for this particular year, and storytelling was presented using a variety of methods such as narratives, pulled quotes, sidebars, infographics, timelines, feature stories and captions.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Content is journalistic in nature, objective and avoids senior wills or superlatives.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Coverage incorporates a variety of angles to show behind the scenes of each topic with photos beyond the obvious, and readers see before, during and after angles with answers to the 5Ws and H.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Academics coverage includes classes from each department and grade level with effort to include both required and elective courses; photos that are diverse and incorporates labs, experiments, field trips, projects and special activities instead of desk shots; a focus on students, not teachers; and stories about standardized testing, curriculum changes, vocational programs and post-secondary options.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Sports coverage includes feature aspects of individual and team sports beyond season statistics; practices and off-the-field activities that supplement game photos; each team with a variety of photos and copy angles in addition to its team photograph; and scoreboards and overall season records (reference pages may appear separately).

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Clubs and organizations coverage includes action shots of various activities and posed group photographs, but refrains from listing each group's goal or projects.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Album/people and advertising pages include features and/or personality profiles that focus on a variety of topics suited to all students, not just seniors, and enhance reader appeal.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

**COVERAGE  
RATING**

- Superior*
- Excellent*
- Good*
- Average*
- In need of  
improvement*
  
- Special  
distinction  
earned*

**JUDGE'S COMMENTS**

## DESIGN

Page layout includes basic principles of design, techniques reflective of the times, awareness of readers' wants and needs and graphic elements that enhance each spread's content rather than add distractions.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Consistent use of columns/grids, internal margins and white space is carefully planned and apparent throughout the book.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Each spread has a dominant element as an anchor point, and modular design features secondary packages with its own dominant element proportional in scale.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Photos vary in shape/size, avoid odd shapes and include captions that advance the image's story through facts, figures and direct quotes.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Captions that are grouped and numbered when referring to a photo montage or special treatment are easy to locate, placed as close to their photos as possible.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Pages within each section are consistent with basic graphic elements and type choices but do not appear visually monotonous, and include elements that vary in size and position per spread, with use of specific coverage packages so that content dictates design.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Restraint in typography is evident. While each section of the book may have its own fonts, design is consistent per section, fits the book's personality and theme, provides headline packages that grab readers and lead directly to copy and includes captions smaller than body copy and consistent in point size and width.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Dropped caps, pulled quotes, text wrap and other effects are used to emphasize parts of the spread and create multiple entry points. Decisions reflect careful planning for enhanced readability.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Clip art is used sparingly; color and/or spot color enhances design without distraction (on black and white pages, tints are used to create the same depth and variety); and infographics, when used, include source information for data presented.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

# PHOTOGRAPHY

Strong photo coverage in terms of honesty, variety, composition, technical quality and design.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Photo coverage includes behind-the-scenes and before/after shots in addition to traditional images readers expect to see; a variety of pictures per topic to tell the full story; and storytelling photos that show action and reaction.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Posed photos are used sparingly or with a specific purpose, and traditional photos are not flipped and are edited carefully without changing the story captured.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Cut-outs or COB photos are used as a form of photo illustration but are anchored not cropped drastically. When used for infographics or emphasis, photo illustrations are used as such.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Altered photos (beyond COB's and cut-outs) carry a note of explanation in the caption.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Photos are individually labeled with photo credits. Book does not print "Submitted Photo" but instead obtains the photographer's name (parent, non-staff student, teacher, etc.).

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Photos are in clear focus and not stretched or skewed. Contrast is good in black and white while process photos have sharp, vivid color.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Group and team photos have subjects lined in rows, with shortest rows in front; appear on a page large enough that faces are clearly identifiable; and are secondary to action photos on each spread unless grouped together in a separate reference section.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Staffs experiment with photo collections such as a collage, montage or photo series, but these follow basic design principles and adhere to regular photo guidelines with captions included.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS



## DESIGN RATING

- Superior*
- Excellent*
- Good*
- Average*
- In need of  
improvement*
  
- Special  
distinction*

## PHOTOGRAPHY RATING

- Superior*
- Excellent*
- Good*
- Average*
- In need of  
improvement*
  
- Special  
distinction*

## JUDGE'S COMMENTS

## WRITING & EDITING

Stories presented in a variety of ways, including feature stories, narratives, summary sidebars, factoids, Q/A or quote boxes, timelines and other forms of alternative copy.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Copy incorporates facts, figures and feelings; direct quotes from a variety of sources that enhance the story and represent all possible story angles; a focus on students, not teachers or coaches; and details that differentiate this year from previous years, but year designation and “this year” are avoided.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Copy is journalistic in style, free from editorializing; has attention-getting leads that vary, avoiding labels, summaries and questions; avoids school name, initials and mascot when possible; and mostly presented in past tense.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Facts and figures add meaning to copy related to costs, percentages, times, scores and survey results. Sources are provided for all statistics given.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Pages include headlines with maximum readability (avoids vertical type, hyphenation, odd line breaks and crossing a non-double truck spread gutter), secondary/deck headlines that provide detail to the story and bylines accompanying student work.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Headlines hook readers, lead them directly into copy, reflect the spread’s content, are written in present tense and attempt creativity through literary devices (alliteration, pun, etc.) instead of labels.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

While secondary packages on each spread have mini-headlines or subheads, these do not compete for attention with the primary headline package.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Captions avoid stating the obvious (“pictured here” or “left to right”). In multi-sentence captions, the first sentence is in present tense to capture the photo’s action, while subsequent sentences are in past tense to provide background information.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Staff pays close attention to spelling and punctuation to eliminate error.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Style is consistent throughout in terms of capitalization, abbreviation and quote attribution.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

Copy is concise and free of editorializing, generalizations or statements that may be libelous.

NEVER     SOMETIMES     USUALLY     FREQUENTLY     ALWAYS

## WRITING & EDITING

### RATING

- Superior*
- Excellent*
- Good*
- Average*
- In need of  
improvement*
  
- Special  
distinction  
earned*

### JUDGE'S COMMENTS

# SECTION RATINGS

## THEME & CONCEPT

- Superior*
- Excellent*
- Good*
- Average*
- In need of improvement*

## COVERAGE

- Superior*
- Excellent*
- Good*
- Average*
- In need of improvement*

## DESIGN

- Superior*
- Excellent*
- Good*
- Average*
- In need of improvement*

## PHOTOGRAPHY

- Superior*
- Excellent*
- Good*
- Average*
- In need of improvement*

## WRITING & EDITING

- Superior*
- Excellent*
- Good*
- Average*
- In need of improvement*

## AREAS OF DISTINCTION

- Theme & Concept*
- Coverage*
- Design*
- Photography*
- Writing & Editing*

## OVERALL RATING

- Superior*
- Excellent*
- Good*
- Average*
- In need of improvement*

**JUDGE  
NAME**

**PREFERRED MAILING ADDRESS**

**PREFERRED EMAIL**

**JUDGE'S FIVE (OR MORE) WAYS TO IMPROVE**

**JUDGE'S FINAL COMMENTS**



# IHSPA

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