

YEARBOOK EVALUATION GUIDEBOOK



INDIANA HIGH SCHOOL **PRESS ASSOCIATION**

Established 1922 • Franklin College • Franklin, Indiana

SCHOOL NAME

YEARBOOK NAME

SCHOOL YEAR & NUMBER OF STUDENTS ON STAFF

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

ABOUT DISTINCTIONS, HOOSIER STAR

Judges may also award “Special Distinction” status to any section deemed to be innovative.

- *Superior: The staff has executed a cohesive and innovative yearbook with detailed coverage following journalistic standards.*
- *Excellent: The staff has created a functional and attractive yearbook journalistic in nature.*
- *Good: The staff has used basic concepts to publish a yearbook, but better planning, detail and design are necessary.*
- *Average: The staff has included some of the components of a yearbook but increased coverage and better writing and design are critical.*
- *Needs improvement: The staff has neglected basic concepts essential to yearbook planning and production.*

ABOUT THIS CRITIQUE

The Indiana High School Press Association provides this opportunity for annual critique as a way for staffs to gain detailed feedback about their yearbook. Because our judges are able to provide specific comments on a number of important topics, yearbook staffs can use this completed guidebook as a way to measure progress, discuss strengths and weaknesses and set goals for improvement. Staffs are encouraged to use this in planning their next publication.

In addition to providing specific suggestions, judges may recognize certain aspects of the book for special distinctions. As applicable, your judge will note comments at the end of the section earning special distinction.

Judges are invited to provide written comments on actual yearbook pages in addition to completing this guidebook so that staffs receive as much feedback as possible. Emphasis is on continued improvement. The IHSPA strongly encourages our judges to provide constructive comments in a positive manner to encourage, rather than discourage, students.

All yearbooks are different since they reflect attitudes of individual schools and their situations as well as changing times. For this reason, many of the guidelines and suggestions offered here are meant to provide a framework rather than a set of steadfast rules. The best staffs will continue to seek innovation and will regularly survey their readers to determine what best meets their needs.

All books achieving Superior or Excellent ranking based on this guidebook are considered Finalists in the IHSPA Hoosier Star competition. A separate judge evaluates all Finalists to determine winners, which are announced each fall at the IHSPA State Convention. Books earning Hoosier Star status are consistent with the IHSPA core values of truth, courage, integrity and freedom.

TIPS FOR JUDGES

- Please study the guidebook prior to evaluating a publication so you will have a solid understanding of the total concept.
- Annotate the publication in a bright color so the staff can recognize your comments easily.
- Be specific—but gentle—in your constructive comments so that no comment can be interpreted as sarcastic or hurtful.
- Please remember to cite outstanding work in addition to work that needs improvement.
- Keep in mind that the publication was conceived and produced months ago, so the most current trends may not be represented. As possible, describe trends and suggest how these may apply. Deduct points, however, if the book does not demonstrate concepts that all staffs should know.
- Use this guidebook to record your summaries and general comments with your evaluation for each category.
- Cite page numbers when referring to printed examples.
- Try to comment about each section of the book.
- Award special distinctions when work merits it.
- Provide examples and explanations why something is excellent or in need of improvement.
- Keep in mind that the newest trends may not appear in the book since its planning took place months earlier.
- Suggest ways the staff can incorporate trends for their next yearbook.

THEME & CONCEPT (select the box next to each standard met within the publication)

In addition to a verbal component, the theme sets a visual tone for the yearbook.

Used carefully and consistently, graphic elements reinforce the theme or concept.

Traditionally, 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.

Cover creates first impression of book and theme/concept and introduces visual identity with color, type and graphics.

Cover includes book title and year on front, and includes complete school name, city/state, book title, year and volume number on spine.

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

Title page develops thematic graphic elements introduced on cover and introduces related photo coverage.

Title page includes book title, volume number, year, complete school name and address (including phone number and website) and enrollment.

Opening/closing introduces/wraps up the book and school year.

Opening/closing uses graphic elements without simply repeating look of cover/endsheets.

Opening/closing includes specifics related to the school and year, including facts, figures and feelings.

Opening/closing includes verbal theme development and uses student quotes to tell the year's story.

Opening/closing includes more than one spread; is organized based on theme or concept.

Opening/closing does not identify staff, editor or adviser; is not used for any type of dedication (opening) or colophon (closing).

Divider pages introduce each section and create transitions between parts of the book.

Divider pages develop graphic elements but look distinctly different from opening and closing spreads.

Divider pages include photo treatments related to each particular section that help develop the theme.

Divider pages include verbal theme development through spinoffs and use of student quotes to continue the year's story.

Divider pages vary based on content needs but should be consistent in design through type and style.

THEME & CONCEPT: OVERALL

RATING

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

- Special distinction*

JUDGE'S COMMENTS

COVERAGE (select the box next to each standard met within the publication)

Based on the theme, staff divided the book into sections as a way to organize content.

Traditional sections include student life, academics, people/album, sports, clubs/organizations and advertising.

Staffs chose to create new sections based on the book's concept or to provide cross-functional coverage.

Reference pages grouped separately.

With any type of section plan, staff focused on covering all students.

Yearbook not only found ways to cover each student as a person and personality.

Coverage of non-school activities is evident as a way to capture the full high school experience.

Student life coverage includes traditional school events such as Homecoming, Spirit Week, Prom in addition to daily experiences unique to the school and/or year.

The staff sought new coverage angles for this particular year.

Storytelling presented using a variety of methods, including narratives, pulled quotes, sidebars, infographics, timelines and photo illustrations as well as feature stories and captions.

Content is journalistic in nature, avoiding senior wills or superlatives.

Coverage incorporates a variety of angles to show behind the scenes of each topic with photos beyond the obvious.

Readers see before, during and after angles with answers to the 5Ws and H.

Academics coverage includes classes from each department and grade level with effort to include both required and elective courses. Photo coverage is diverse and incorporates labs, experiments, field trips, projects and special activities instead of desk shots. Students, not teachers, are the focus. Standardized testing, curriculum changes, vocational programs and post-secondary options are covered as well.

Sports coverage includes feature aspects of individual and team sports beyond season statistics. Coverage of practice and off-the-field activities supplement game photos. Each team is represented with a variety of photos and copy angles in addition to its team photograph, scoreboard and overall season record. (Reference pages may appear separately.)

Clubs and organizations are represented with action shots of various activities in addition to posed group photographs. Staff refrains from listing each group's goal or projects.

People pages in the album section include features or personality profiles. Coverage focuses on a variety of topics suited to all students, not just seniors.

Advertising pages include feature coverage to enhance reader appeal.

COVERAGE: OVERALL

RATING

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

- Special distinction*

JUDGE'S COMMENTS

LAYOUT & DESIGN (select the box next to each standard met within the publication)

Page layout reflects basic principles of design and incorporates techniques reflective of the times.

Readers' wants and needs are the focus.

Facing pages are designed as double-page spreads linked by a horizontal eyeline or connecting graphics.

Single page design used for topics less significant that do not merit double-page spreads.

Columns or grids are used and are consistent within each section.

White space is planned and used carefully throughout the book.

Internal margins are consistent within section. Yearbook's pages include multiple levels of white space, including Level 1 (1-3 points, used for packaging), Level 2 (traditionally, one pica, used for internal spacing) and Level 3 (rails used to isolate and emphasize modules).

Each spread has a dominant element as an anchor point. Within modular design, each secondary package has its own dominant element proportional in scale.

Photos vary in shape and size and should avoid odd shapes.

Captions are extensions of photos for maximum readability.

Pages within each section are consistent with basic graphic elements and type choices but do not appear visually monotonous.

Elements vary in size and position per spread, with use of specific coverage packages so that content dictates design.

Headline packages grab readers and lead directly to copy.

Captions are smaller than body copy and are consistent in point size and width per section.

Restraint in typography is evident; each section of the book may have its own fonts, but type is consistent per section and fits the book's personality and theme.

Staff pays close attention to details with widows, orphans and hyphenation.

Graphic elements enhance each spread's content rather than add distractions.

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

Clip art is used sparingly. Instead, photos may be used as icons or illustrations.

Use of color and/or spot color enhances design without distraction. On black and white pages, tints are used to create the same depth and variety.

Graphics are consistent within section and reflect overall tone of the theme to create unity.

Infographics, when used, include source information for data presented.

LAYOUT & DESIGN: OVERALL

RATING

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

- Special distinction*

JUDGE'S COMMENTS

WRITING & EDITING (select the box next to each standard met within the publication)

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.

Regardless of format, copy incorporates facts, figures and feelings.

Direct quotes from a variety of sources enhance the story.

Covering students, not teachers or coaches, is the focus.

Yearbook includes quotes to represent all possible story angles, beyond the obvious sources such as the Homecoming queen or varsity football captain.

Leads are attention-getting and vary, avoiding labels, summaries and questions.

Emphasis is on details that differentiate this year from previous years, but year designation and “this year” are avoided in copy.

School name, initials and mascot are avoided.

Copy is presented in past tense.

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

Copy is journalistic in style, free from editorializing.

Stories include bylines to recognize student writers.

Headlines are designed to hook readers and lead directly into copy.

Headlines reflect the spread’s content and are written in present tense.

Headlines are designed for maximum readability, avoiding vertical type, paying attention to hyphenation or odd line breaks and avoiding the gutter.

Headlines attempt creativity through literary devices (alliteration, pun, etc.) instead of using labels.

Pages include secondary headlines that provide detail to the story.

With single-page design, each facing page has its own headline; headlines appear similar in type style but are not tombstoned.

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

All photos have some type of caption information to identify those pictured.

Expanded captions add to the story by answering all 5Ws and H, and when possible, also include direct quotes.

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.

Captions avoid stating the obvious and refrain from phrases like "pictured here" or "left to right."

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.

For group photos, rows are designated in consistent format from front to back with contrasting type.

Captions appear in smaller type than other copy and set apart by bold type or other graphic device.

Staffs must pay close attention to spelling and punctuation to eliminate error.

Style is consistent throughout the publication in terms of capitalization and abbreviation.

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

WRITING & EDITING: OVERALL

RATING

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

- Special distinction*

JUDGE'S COMMENTS

PHOTOGRAPHY (select the box next to each standard met within the publication)

Book reflects strong photo coverage in terms of honesty, variety, composition, technical quality and design.

Pages include photos displayed within the design principles of dominance and balance. While a variety of shapes and sizes is desirable, odd-shaped photos are avoided.

Coverage includes behind-the-scenes and before/after coverage in addition to traditional photos readers expect to see.

Photo content is varied per topic to tell the full story. For example, academics shots include field trips and lab work instead of all desk shots. Sports photos include practices or off-the-field activities, and game shots include both offensive and defensive action.

Posed photos are used sparingly or with a specific purpose.

Emphasis is on storytelling photos that show action and reaction.

When used for infographics or emphasis, photo illustrations are used as such.

Traditional photos are not flipped and are edited carefully without changing the story captured.

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

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.).

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

Organized group and team photos have subjects lined in rows, with shortest rows in front.

Group photos appear on a page large enough that faces are clearly identifiable.

Organized group and team photos are secondary to action photos on each spread unless grouped together in a separate reference section.

Cut-outs or COB photos are used as a form of photo illustration but are anchored not cropped drastically.

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.

PHOTOGRAPHY: OVERALL

RATING

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

- Special distinction*

JUDGE'S COMMENTS

SPECIAL DETAILS (select the box next to each standard met within the publication)

Special sections and reader services throughout the book are consistent and theme related.

Table of contents is accurate and appears early in the book, usually on the front endsheet or in the opening.

Table of contents coordinates with the book's visual identity through color, type, graphics

Table of contents includes listings for the book's major sections and reference areas

Index provides an accurate alphabetical listing of all people, topics, groups and advertisers in the book.

Index is designed for maximum readability in regard to column width and point size

Index includes photos and quick-reads or some type of feature coverage to enhance these pages

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

Colophon or index includes a small section for acknowledgments.

Colophon does not appear on the parting page of the book.

Specialty sections incorporate similar graphic elements to fit with overall book personality while providing distinctive design and coverage topics not featured elsewhere.

SPECIAL DETAILS: OVERALL

RATING

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

- Special distinction*

JUDGE'S COMMENTS

FINAL EVALUATION: SECTION RATINGS

THEME & CONCEPT

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

LAYOUT & DESIGN

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

PHOTOGRAPHY

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

COVERAGE

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

WRITING & EDITING

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

SPECIAL DETAILS

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

FINAL EVALUATION: AREAS OF DISTINCTION

- Theme & Concept*
- Photography*
- Writing & Editing*
- Layout & Design*
- Coverage*
- Special Details*

FINAL EVALUATION: OVERALL RATING

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

FINAL EVALUATION: JUDGE'S ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

JUDGE NAME

JUDGE EMAIL



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