

Public Information Program

Open and regular communication between the district and community builds trust and confidence. Regularly scheduled communications from the district to the communities it serves about student academic achievement, progress toward goals and other developments impacting district voters shall be part of the public information program. The district Communications Department will manage the public information program.

Such a public information program will provide for a district annual report, news releases at appropriate times, news media outreach for coverage of district programs and events, and regular direct communication between individual schools and the community members they serve. The Communications Department, working with individual departments and schools, will assist staff in improving their skill and understanding in communicating with the public. The superintendent will identify staff who have significant public information responsibilities and establish guidelines for their work. The guidelines will address such matters as authority for making releases and the nature and content of bulletins sent to parents, guardians and community members.

Confidential information about students or other staff will be released only as permitted by statute and district policies and procedures.

District Annual Report

The district Annual Report will include, but not be limited to:

- A. A district-wide summary of student performance measures towards state standards;
- B. Results of district-wide achievement testing; and
- C. Budget information, including student enrollment, classroom staff, support staff, administrative staff, and special levy expenditures.

Media Relations

All media outreach, response and coordination will be authorized and managed by the Communications Department. The district is encouraged to facilitate a positive and open relationship with news media organizations to support accurate coverage of schools, programs and activities. All media requests for access to schools, classes, buildings, programs, fields and activities will be considered with district priorities in mind. The district and schools should be receptive toward access by media representatives unless the presence of media on campus will deter from the educational environment of the school, classroom or activity.

The superintendent or their designee will authorize access and/or the release of information.

The following procedure relates to media protocols for the public information program:

- A. Media representatives will be supplied factual information at all times;
- B. District staff should not contact media or speak with media without prior approval of the superintendent or their designee;
- C. **Media Designee:** The communications director, as designated by the superintendent, is the primary district spokesperson who speaks on behalf of the district to the news media. The communications director, in consult with the superintendent and other district administration, may delegate which additional district personnel may serve as spokespeople to speak on behalf of the district;
- D. **Media Coordination:** All contact with the news media will be coordinated first through the district's Communications Department. The communications director, or their

designee, is the only individual who should initiate contact with the news media or respond to media inquiries and requests;

- E. **Media Response:** All incoming requests by media will be directed to the district's Communications Department for response. District staff may participate in media interviews if requested by the Communications Department. District staff will not initiate contact with media, regarding district schools, programs and activities, unless directed or authorized by the Communications Department. During regular school hours, all media representatives must report to the building office for identification and authorization before going to any part of the building or contacting any individual;
- F. **Media Outreach:** All requests for media outreach about schools, programs and activities will be submitted to the Communications Department for consideration. The district communications director, or their designee, will conduct all media outreach to ensure policies regarding student and staff privacy are followed and accurate information is provided. Staff members will secure authorization from the Communications Department before contacting media or providing information;
- G. **Student Privacy:** Student privacy rights shall be protected at all times. District staff will check parent or guardian consent information on file prior to any interviews or photographing by outside agencies. When the subject matter of the media or agency inquiry is of a sensitive or controversial nature, an additional release form requesting parent or guardian consent prior to interviews or photographs will be requested by district staff to protect student privacy and ensure parent or guardian consent;
- H. **Interview and Photograph Requests:** Students and staff should be informed that they have the right to deny any interview or photograph requests.

Communications Between Schools and Communities They Serve

Communications between individual schools and the communities they serve shall be open and informative. Communities served shall be generally defined, but not confined to, the parent community and surrounding neighborhood of the school location.

- A. Schools will send regular communication to parents and guardians of their school community about programs, activities and events.
- B. Schools may seek assistance and support from district communications for regular communications as well as emergency or other necessary occurrence.

Reports Required by Law or District Policy

All reports required by law or district policy shall be readily accessible to the public through the Records Department.

Date: 08.98; 12.11; 5.26