

COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC

The Board of Trustees recognizes the District's responsibility to keep the public informed regarding the goals, programs, achievements, and needs of the schools and District and to be responsive to the concerns and interests expressed by members of the community. The Superintendent or designee shall establish strategies for effective two-way communications between the district and the public and shall consult with the Board regarding the role of Board members as advocates for the district's students, programs, and policies.

(cf. 5020 - Parent Rights and Responsibilities)
(cf. 9000 - Role of the Board)

The Superintendent or designee shall provide the Board and staff with communications protocols and procedures to assist the district in presenting a consistent, unified message on district issues. Such protocols and procedures may include, but are not limited to, identification of the spokesperson(s) authorized to speak to the media on behalf of the district, strategies for coordinating communications efforts and activities, and legal requirements pertaining to confidentiality as well as the public's right to access records.

(cf. 1112 - Media Relations)
(cf. 1340 - Access to District Records)
(cf. 2111 - Superintendent Governance Standards)
(cf. 3580 - District Records)
(cf. 5125 - Student Records)
(cf. 5125.1 - Release of Directory Information)
(cf. 9005 - Governance Standards)
(cf. 9010 - Public Statements)
(cf. 9011 - Disclosure of Confidential/Privileged Information)

The Superintendent or designee shall utilize a variety of communications methods in order to provide the public with adequate access to information. Such methods may include, but not be limited to, District and school newsletters, mailings, the District and school web sites, social networking pages or other online communications technologies, direct email communications, mailings, notices sent home with students, recorded telephone messages for parent/guardian information, community forums and public events, news releases, meetings with education reporters and editorial boards, presentations at parent organization meetings, and meetings with representatives of local governments, community organizations, and businesses.

(cf. 0510 - School Accountability Report Card)
(cf. 1020 - Youth Services)
(cf. 1113 - District and School Web Sites)

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(cf. 1400 - Relations Between Other Governmental Agencies and the Schools)

(cf. 1700 - Relations Between Private Industry and the Schools)

In developing communications strategies, the Superintendent or designee shall take into account the needs of all members of the public, including individuals with disabilities and those whose primary language is not English.

(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities).

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that staff are responsive to requests by parents/guardians or members of the public for information or assistance and may provide staff with professional development in their "customer service" role as needed..

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

The Superintendent or designee shall provide multiple opportunities for members of the public to give input on District and school issues and operations. Community members are encouraged to participate on District and school committees, provide input at Board meetings, submit suggestions to District staff, use the District's complaint procedures as appropriate.

(cf. 1220 - Citizen Advisory Committees)

(cf. 1230 - School-Connected Organizations)

(cf. 1240 - Volunteer Assistance)

(cf. 1260 - Educational Foundation)

(cf. 1312.1 - Complaints Concerning District Employees)

(cf. 1312.2 - Complaints Concerning Instructional Materials)

(cf. 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures)

(cf. 1312.4 - Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures)

(cf. 6020 - Parent Involvement)

(cf. 9322 - Agenda/Meeting Materials)

(cf. 9323 - Meeting Conduct)

Mass Mailings at Public Expense

Newsletters or mass mailings regarding ballot measures, candidates, legislative activities, or any other campaign activities shall be sent and distributed in accordance with law and Board policy.

(cf. 1160 - Political Processes)

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A mass mailing is prohibited if all of the following criteria are met: (Government Code 89001-89002)

1. The mailing involves sending a tangible item, such as a videotape, record, button, or written document, which is delivered by any means to recipients at their residence, place of employment or business, or post office box.
2. The item features a Board member or includes the name, office, photograph, or other reference to a Board member and is prepared or sent in cooperation, consultation, coordination, or concert with the Board member.
3. The costs of distribution, or any costs of design, production, and printing exceeding \$50, are paid with district funds.
4. More than 200 substantially similar items, as defined in Government Code 89002, are sent in a single calendar month.

The above prohibition does not apply to the types of mass mailings specified in Government Code 89002(b), including, but not limited to: (Government Code 89002)

1. An item in which the Board member's name appears only in a roster containing the names of all Board members or in the letterhead or logotype of the stationery, forms, and envelopes of the district, a district committee, or the Board member
2. An announcement including only a single mention of the Board member's name which concerns a public meeting related to the Board member's duties or any official district event(s) for which the district is providing the use of its facilities, staff, or other financial support
3. A business card that contains only one mention of the Board member's name and no photograph of the Board member

However, any of the excepted mailings listed in items #1-3 above that meets the criteria for prohibited mass mailings shall not be sent within 60 days preceding an election in which a Board member to whom the mailing relates will appear on the ballot as a candidate. (Government Code 89003)

COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC

Comprehensive Communications Plan

The Superintendent or designee shall develop a written communications plan which establishes priorities for proactive community outreach to build support for district programs and issues. The plan shall identify specific communications goals aligned with the district's vision and goals for student learning. For each communications goal, the plan shall identify key messages, individuals or groups that can help the district achieve its goal, strategies tailored to each target audience, timelines, persons responsible for each activity, and budget implications.

(cf. 0000 - Vision)

(cf. 0200 - Goals for the School District)

As appropriate for each issue, target audiences may include parents/guardians, the media, local governmental agencies, businesses, community organizations and civic groups, postsecondary institutions, health care professionals, child care providers, community leaders, state or federal legislators or agencies, and/or other segments of the public.

The plan shall incorporate strategies for effective communications during a crisis or other emergency situation that may arise.

(cf. 0450 - Comprehensive Safety Plan)

(cf. 3516 - Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness Plan)

The Superintendent or designee shall periodically evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the district's communications plan and recommend to the Board whether the goals and key issues identified in the plan need to be revised to meet changing circumstances or priorities.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

7054 Use of district property or funds re: ballot measures and candidates

35145.5 Board meetings, public participation

35172 Promotional activities

38130-38138 Civic Center Act

48980-48985 Parental notifications

GOVERNMENT CODE

54957.5 Meeting agendas and materials

82041.5 Mass mailing

89001 Newsletter or mass mailing

COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 2

18901 Mass mailings sent at public expense

18901.1 Campaign-related mailings sent at public expense

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 28

35.101-35.190 Americans with Disabilities Act

Management Resources:

WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

California School Public Relations Association: <http://www.calspra.org>

Fair Political Practices Commission: <http://www.fppc.ca.gov>

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