

COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

I. PURPOSE

Effective communications and public relationships are essential for the success of the Cambridge-Isanti Schools as a public entity. The purpose of this policy is to ensure effective, results-oriented communications with a goal of increasing awareness, understanding, interest in, and support for the students, staff, programs, and goals of the district – a learning community committed to educate, empower, and inspire every student, every day to achieve their full potential, and develop well rounded individuals to become responsible citizens.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The School Board is committed to providing factual, honest, accurate, and timely information and engaging stakeholders in the mission of the district. All school and district communication will be guided by our Bluejacket values: honesty, respect, responsibility, self-discipline, and compassion.

The School Board directs the administration to implement a communications and public engagement program with the goal of stimulating understanding of the goals, needs and accomplishments of the organization in fulfilling its mission for students.

The School Board understands the district's communication program can only be effective if everyone in the organization accepts responsibility for communicating effectively, building relationships, marketing the organization, and serving as ambassadors of the district as they meet and greet people during their daily work.

III. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The School Board is responsible for ensuring a planned and effective two-way communications and public relations program. The School Board authorizes the expenditure of public funds to support communication goals.
- B. The School Board delegates to the Superintendent or designee the development and coordination of a public relations and communications program in accordance with School Board policies.
- C. The responsibility for effective building level or department level communications lies with the principal or department supervisor.
- D. All school employees serve as representatives of the schools during their daily work. Employees have a responsibility to communicate accurately and effectively about their school, the District, or issues within the realm and scope of their

professional responsibility and knowledge. District employees should make appropriate efforts to be knowledgeable about the District, its programs, services, accomplishments, challenges, plans and priorities.

IV. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The school district's public relations and communications efforts will:

- A. Encourage formal and informal communications;
- B. Be a planned, systematic flow of information among school employees, parents and community members;
- C. Provide clear channels for individual and public inquiry, input, feedback, and resolution when ideas, questions or problems arise among students, staff, parents, and community members.
- D. Communication channels will include a wide range of platforms such as the district website, social media, email newsletters, emergency alert systems, print publications, and in-person engagement opportunities, ensuring accessibility and consistency across audiences.
- E. Be guided by the pursuit of truth, accuracy, and fairness. Incorrect information shall never intentionally be released. Unintentional release of incorrect information shall be rectified immediately upon discovery.
- F. Protect and respect the privacy of students, families, and employees. Students and staff private data shall not be released, except as provided by law or by other Board policy.
- G. Inspire District employees and School Board members to act in concert with Policy 209 (Code of Ethics), Policy 306 (Administrator Code of Ethics), and Policy 403 (Discipline, Suspension and Dismissal of School District Employees) (in public and in private).
- H. Use positive, inclusive language and personalized communication, which are the most effective communication practices for understanding and support.
- I. Leverage appropriate communication technologies to efficiently and effectively communicate across generations and engage stakeholders.
- J. Strive for openness in decision-making, provide appropriate access to public information, and respect the First Amendment, the ideal of free inquiry and the opinions of others.
- K. Ensure all major change initiatives or new programs have a written communications plan, which anticipates constituent issues, needs, and expectations in addition to District needs.

Source: Cambridge-Isanti Schools

Cross References: Policy 205 (Open Meetings and Closed Meetings)
Policy 206 (Public Participation in School Board Meetings/Complaints about Persons at School Board Meetings and Data Privacy Considerations)
Policy 209 (Code of Ethics)
Policy 306 (Administrator Code of Ethics)
Policy 403 (Discipline, Suspension and Dismissal of School District Employees)
Policy 406 (Public and Private Personnel Data)
Policy 428 (Respectful Workplace)
Policy 515 (Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records)

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