

<b>Section:</b>	<b>District Administration</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Communications and Public Participation</b>

**Purpose**

To promote effective and open communication and dialogue with the Mission School District community, the individual school communities, and stakeholders.

**Policy**

Mission Public School District will foster effective communications and the building of positive relationships with the school community and stakeholders through proactive communications and public participation in decision-making processes.

Mission Public Schools supports public participation in decision-making, and will:

- Inform, consult, involve, collaborate and/or empower the Mission school community and stakeholders in decisions regarding proposals, programs, activities, initiatives, or policies and procedures that impact the school district, individual schools, students, employees, trustees, or other stakeholders;
- Provide opportunities for the Mission school community and stakeholders to exchange information and ideas and participate in decision-making processes using a variety of interactive communication processes; and
- Gather public feedback through proactive and interactive public participation processes, acknowledge input, and inform stakeholders of decisions made and the reasoning behind those decisions,

**Guidelines**

1. The Board and Schools will post all publicly available school district and school-specific information on the appropriate website. Information that is protected from public disclosure in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* will not be made available.
2. The Board will provide information regarding participation in decision-making on projects, initiatives, new or updated policies and procedures, or other significant issues that require public engagement through websites and other electronic means in addition to requesting participation at public meetings.
3. Schools are expected to engage the school community and parents in decisions regarding programs, procedures, and other guidelines that affect the school and students. Schools are also expected to inform the public, parents, and stakeholders of school-related activities, events, and programs through various means, in addition to the school website.
4. Promotion of school achievements, projects, and special events are encouraged and may be shared through social media, media releases and other correspondence as well as school websites.

5. The Board shall establish and maintain positive relationships with media and respond to media requests in a timely manner.
6. The Board Chair, or in the absence of the Chair the Vice-Chair, is the official spokesperson on issues relating to the Board and political matters. The Chair may appoint a designate to speak in place of the Chair.
7. When the Board Chair, Vice-Chair, or designate, communicates on behalf of the Board or the School District, they will ensure that all statements made are true and accurate and comply with privacy legislation, school district policies and procedures, and notify Trustees of the communications or statements in a timely manner.
8. The Board Chair will ensure Trustees are apprised of requests or communications with other political entities in a timely manner.
9. Trustees are to refer all media requests regarding school district business or Board decisions to the Board Chair.
10. The Superintendent, or designate, is the official spokesperson on all matters relating to operations. The Superintendent or designate will represent the Board and the school district generally.
11. When the Superintendent or other school district staff speak for the school district, it will be the individual's responsibility to ensure that all statements made are true and accurate and comply with privacy legislation, school district policies and procedures, and notify Trustees of pertinent communications with or statements made to the media, in a timely manner.
12. Principals or designates are to refer all media requests received directly at the school to the Superintendent.
13. School Principals are to advise the Superintendent of issues that are serious in nature that may impact the school or the School District or generate public or media interest.
14. Communication processes within Schools and Departments are the responsibility of all employees. Processes shall be clear, consistent, responsible, and supportive of the Board's plans, strategies, and priorities.

**Date of Original Board Approval: December 14, 2021**

**Date Amended:**

*Legal Reference: Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*

*Cross Reference: (other policies, and procedures)*