

DIVISION COMMUNICATIONS

Background

The gathering and dissemination of information regarding Division priorities and operation will increase the awareness, trust, understanding, and support of education in the Division and broader community.

Definitions

Authorized Administrator – refers to an individual granted the credentials and responsibility to manage and oversee official social media pages.

Crisis Communications – refers to the coordinated gathering and dissemination of urgent information during an emergency or sensitive event affecting a school or the Division.

Social media – refers to a broad category of interactive, internet-based technologies and platforms that facilitate the creation, sharing, and two-way exchange of user-generated content within virtual communities and networks.

User – refers to an individual who maintains a registered account or profile on a social media site to consume, create, or interact with digital content.

User Representing the Division – refers to any digital presence, account, or content that uses the Division's or a School's name, branding, or logo, or is intended to communicate on behalf of a school, department, or the Division.

Procedures

1. The Division will promote an effective two-way communication system internally and externally which encourages:
 - 1.1 Student learning;
 - 1.2 Recognition and reporting of student achievement and success;
 - 1.3 Accurate, timely information about budget, policies, programs, administrative procedures, achievements, decisions and critical issues;
 - 1.4 Understanding of decisions and actions;
 - 1.5 Programs and practices designed to provide an open climate which will elicit ideas, suggestions and reactions from the community and employees alike;
 - 1.6 An effective working relationship with the news media.

2. An organizational environment will be established whereby all Division staff members are aware that they share the responsibility for communication of Division and school policies, procedures, programs and activities to Trustees, parents, other members of the educational staff, community members, and local agencies or businesses.

Crisis Communications – Internal Communications

1. In the event of an emergency or crisis affecting a school, PRSD staff must notify their school Principal, who will then initiate the relevant process outlined in their School Emergency Response Plan.
2. To limit the spread of inaccurate or misleading information, staff and students are not to use their cell phones unless instructed to do so by the Principal. All external communication must be coordinated through the Superintendent.

Crisis Communications – External Communications

1. External Communications procedures are outlined in AP 151: Media Relations.

Division and School Websites

1. The Division's strategic vision for its websites centers on streamlining external communications with school communities through a unified approach to enhance accessibility, security of information, and professional boundaries.
2. The School and Division websites shall serve as the primary, authoritative source for all school-specific information, reducing the reliance on third-party apps and social media sites. The objective is to have the website act as the central hub for news, calendars, and educational resources. By housing critical updates and documents on the public-facing website, the Division ensures transparency and maintains professional boundaries, providing a consistent experience for PRSD staff, families, and the community.
3. Recognizing that many students and parents access information via mobile devices, all Divisional and School websites must adhere to responsive design standards.
4. To ensure an inclusive environment for all community members, including those with visual, auditory, or motor impairments, all Divisional and school websites must adhere to current Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).
5. To ensure Divisional consistency, every school website must maintain, at a minimum, a standardized set of information requirements, including:
 - 5.1 School and Administration Contact Information.
 - 5.2 School staff names and titles.
 - 5.3 School specific branding.
 - 5.4 School Council contact information and meeting dates.

- 5.5 Updated School and Division calendar.
- 5.6 Required School reports, such as the School Annual Education Results Report and Education Plan.
- 5.7 Link to Bus Route alerts.
- 5.8 School news.
- 5.9 Link to the Division website.

Responsible Use of Social Media

1. The Division recognizes social media as a valuable tool for enhancing communication and engagement with the greater school community. When used responsibly, these platforms provide a dynamic space for schools to celebrate student success, highlight innovative educational work within the building, and foster a sense of pride and connection among staff, families, and community members.
2. The Division recognizes the importance of maintaining clear and professional boundaries in the use of social media. As such, there is to be no interaction or correspondence between PRSD staff and students on social media sites.
3. Social media sites will be inaccessible on all PRSD networks from Monday to Friday, 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM.
 - 3.1 Exceptions can be made for specific staff computers requiring social media access for community communication and engagement. Such exceptions can be requested through the School Operations helpdesk and will require approval from the Director of School Operations.
 - 3.2 If a student has a personal device with a data plan or access to a non-PRSD Internet service, they can bypass PRSD Internet filters to access social media during the school day. Any use of social media on a personal device by a student during the school day in any school setting will be treated as a breach of this administrative procedure.
4. No user is authorized to use personal social media accounts to represent a school, school council, school athletics team, department, or the Division.
5. All school, school council, school athletics teams, department, or Division representation is limited to approved social media accounts, profiles and pages, as set up by the Division's Communications Coordinator.
6. All social media accounts or pages created for any school marketing purposes including school council communications or athletics promotions, must be set up by the Division's Communications Coordinator.
7. The Communications Coordinator must remain on all social media accounts or pages as one (1) of the minimum of two (2) authorized administrators of the account who holds the responsibility to manage the page.

- 7.1 A member of the school administration team must be one (1) of the minimum of two (2) authorized administrators of the account who holds the responsibility to manage the page.
 - 7.2 Social media accounts and pages may have as many additionally approved authorized administrators as deemed necessary by the school administration team and Division's Communications Coordinator
8. The school or Division's official name and/or logo needs to appear in the profile image or description for all school or Division social media accounts and pages. The School's name and logo may not be edited or altered in any way for use on social media sites.
9. Users representing the Division will not disclose confidential student information, images, or confidential school, department, or personnel records on social media sites.
10. Users representing the Division will not use social media sites to be defamatory or harassing towards any person and will not espouse or support any position, opinion, or statement that is contrary to Board policies and Division administrative procedures.
11. Users representing the Division will not engage in behavior or comments that would reflect negatively on a school, or the Division's reputation or the reputation of any person employed with or holding elected office with the Division.
12. Users participating in social media activities will respect copyright laws, not only in relation to the content produced on the social media sites, but also in relation to the software that enables them to operate.
13. Users participating in social media activities acknowledge that all information posted to sites is subject to the provisions of the *Access to Information Act* (ATIA) and *Protection of Privacy Act* (POPA).
14. Any use of social media by a user must be consistent with the duty of loyalty each user owes to the Division and must not transgress any law or civil duty of care owed to the Division or any other person. Breach of this requirement will be considered conduct that is subject to action by the Division, and the Division will take such action as it considers is warranted.

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Reference: *Education Act* s. 33, 52, 53, 55, 60, 67, 196, 197, 204, 222, 225, 256

Access to Information Act

Protection of Privacy Act

Funding Manual for School Authorities s. L

Board Policy 11 – Board Delegation of Authority

Board Policy 12 – Role of the Superintendent

Administrative Procedure 101 – Annual Education Results Report

Administrative Procedure 102 – School Education Plans and Annual Reports

Administrative Procedure 132 – Emergency Closure of Schools

Administrative Procedure 133 – School Bus Transportation During Cold and Inclement Weather

Administrative Procedure 158 – Division Visual Identity
Administrative Procedure 180 – Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy – (under review)
Administrative Procedure 456 – Role of Communications Coordinator