



Responsible Office: Office of Communications & Community Engagement

BOARD POLICY 1160

COMMUNICATIONS, COMMUNITY RELATIONS, AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

PURPOSE

The Washoe County School District ("District") Board of Trustees ("Board") recognizes the District's need for planned, systematic and effective communication with all employees, parents/guardians, students and the community. In discharging this obligation, all techniques and media shall be selectively utilized to communicate information relating to the plans, programs, challenges and operations of the District. In addition, plans shall be implemented to actively engage the District's internal and external audiences, and whenever appropriate, to involve them in the decision-making process and to seek their input.

POLICY

1. The Board, Superintendent, and District staff should promote an authentic spirit of cooperation between the District, other local governments, families, students, and others in the community, and encourage sharing the responsibility for quality of education of students. Each District employee should endeavor to assist in improving communications between the District and the community.
2. An atmosphere shall be maintained which makes communication between the Board, administration, faculty and staff, families, students, and the community a vital force in the continuing improvement of the District. Definite steps shall be taken to maintain effective and authentic communications within the District, fostering an atmosphere of mutual purpose.
3. The Board encourages attendance by all members of the community at meetings of the Board and their committees. Opportunities for public comment shall be available at all such public meetings in compliance with Nevada's Open Meeting Law.
4. Family Engagement. The Board encourages parents/guardians, and family members to become actively involved in the District's work, to monitor progress in implementing the District's strategic plan, and to improve communications with parents/guardians. The District supports the establishment of parent-teacher groups at each school to promote family engagement in school activities.

5. Students. The Board values the input of students throughout the District and encourages student involvement. Structures will be implemented and maintained to integrate and solicit the opinions and advice of students in order to strengthen the learning environment.
6. Community Engagement. The District shall maintain channels of communication so that all segments of the community are informed of policies, programs, and goals of the District. In pursuit of these goals, working with and supported by District staff, principals will be encouraged to assume a leadership role in coordinating community groups to make their schools the center of neighborhood life. In concert, the District shall endeavor to involve the total community in all facets of the District's operations.
 - a. A continuing effort shall be made to obtain input from the community about the District, its schools, and programs. The District values constructive suggestions regarding its operations, capital improvements, policies and procedures. Some of the ways this input will be obtained include, but are not limited to, community meetings, surveys, email updates, and social media.
 - b. The Board and Superintendent will utilize community input when making decisions that will impact the community, students, and staff. The Board will do this by utilizing community advisory committees, conducting surveys, holding community forums, and meeting individually with internal and external stakeholders.
 - c. Because business and industry rely upon the public schools to prepare young people for responsible positions in the workforce, the District shall maintain communication and cooperation with representatives of the business and industry communities. This includes, but is not limited to, the District's high school signature academies, various internship and work experience opportunities, and stakeholder meetings.
 - d. The Board, central administration, and individual schools shall maintain a cooperative working relationship with service agencies and nonprofit organizations in the community committed to the welfare of young people to ensure that individual needs of students are met. The District is committed to partnering with those agencies to reach and provide service to the underserved populations in Washoe County.
7. Access to Programs, Services, and Activities
 - a. The District shall take appropriate steps to ensure that communications with applicants, participants, and members of the public with limited

English proficiency and/or disabilities are as effective as communications with others.

- b. The District shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination unless the District can demonstrate that making the modifications would present an undue financial burden and/or fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity.
8. To ensure a unified and consistent public identity, the District shall establish and maintain an official logo to be used on all communications representing the Board and/or the District, to include print, television, electronic, and internet applications.
9. The Superintendent shall adopt administrative regulations and/or procedures necessary to implement the provisions of this policy. This may include, but is not limited to:
- a. Procedures to ensure access to programs, services, and activities by staff, students, and the school community, as appropriate;
 - b. Maintenance of logo use and graphic standards, including ensuring availability to staff.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS & ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

1. This policy reflects the goals of the District’s Strategic Plan and aligns/complies with the governing documents of the District, to include:
- a. Board Policy 1140, Distribution and Display of Information and Materials to Students and Staff
 - b. Board Policy 1310, Political Activity in Schools
 - c. Board Policy 1500, Volunteers
 - d. Board Policy 1505, Visitors to District Property
 - e. Board Policy 5200, Family Engagement
 - f. Board Policy 5310, Student Voice
 - g. Board Policy 9100, Public Bodies

REVISION HISTORY

Date	Revision	Modification
------	----------	--------------

5/21/2008	1.0	Adopted
7/29/2014	2.0	Revised:
9/13/2016	3.0	Revised: removed Student Advisory Board reference; include accessibility language
5/22/2018	4.0	Revised: to include reference to use of the District logo
5/12/2020	5.0	Revised: Policy Template update