Santa Barbara Unified School District
Board Policy

Community Relations

COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC

The Governing Board recognizes the district's responsibility to keep the public informed in timely and understandable ways 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.

(cf. 1000 - Concepts and Roles)

The Superintendent or designee shall use all available means of communication to keep the public aware of the goals, programs, achievements, needs and issues facing our schools. Members of the community shall have opportunities to become involved in the schools and to express their interests and concerns.

(cf. 1112 - Media Relations)
(cf. 1340 - Access to District Records)
(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)
(cf. 0510 - School Accountability Report Card)
(cf. 1113 - District and School Web Sites)
(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

In developing communications strategies, the Superintendent or designee shall take into account the needs of all members of the public, including those whose primary language is not English and those who are visually or hearing impaired or have other special needs.

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, and become involved in school activities.

(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)
Prohibition Against Mass Mailings at Public Expense

No newsletter or other mass mailing, as defined in Government Code 82041.5 and 2 CCR 18901, shall be sent by the district at public expense if such material aggrandizes one or more Board members. The name, signature, or photograph of a Board member may be included in such materials only as permitted by 2 CCR 18901. (Government Code 82041.5, 89001; 2 CCR 18901)

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 also incorporate strategies for effective communications during an emergency or other situation that may arise.

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 for communicating with each target audience, timelines, persons responsible for each activity, and budget implications.

The Superintendent or designee shall annually 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
35145.5 Board meetings, public participation
35172 Promotional activities
38130-38138 Civic Center Act
GOVERNMENT CODE
54957.5 Meeting agendas and materials
82041.5 Mass mailing
89001 Newsletter or mass mailing
CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 2
18901 Mass mailings sent at public expense

Management Resources:

CSBA PUBLICATIONS
Mass Mailings at Public Expense, Legal Advisory, January 2007
911: A Manual for Schools and the Media During a Campus Crisis, 2001
Political Activities of School Districts: Legal Issues, rev. 2001
Maximizing School Board Governance: Community Leadership, 1996

WEB SITES
CSBA: http://www.csba.org
California School Public Relations Association: http://www.calspra.org

SANTA BARBARA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Santa Barbara, California August 28, 2007; June 12, 2012