

## OE-9 Communicating With the Public

The CEO shall assure that the public is adequately informed about the condition and direction of the district.

### Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that we will ensure that all of our district stakeholders are kept aware of issues, programs, services and activities that affect operations and student performance in Palm Springs Unified School District.

The CEO will:

<b>1 Provide for timely information, appropriate input and strategic two-way dialogue between the district and the citizens that builds understanding and support for District efforts.</b>	<b>In Compliance</b>
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### Interpretation

I interpret this policy to mean that the board values the communication of important and relevant information to all district stakeholders (including parents, business representatives, civic and philanthropic organization representatives and all other community members) so that they are kept apprised of programs, activities and issues related to PSUSD in a time-sensitive manner. The methods for communication shall include opportunities for feedback and input from these stakeholders on issues and/or changes that affect students, parents and/or community members.

- “Timely information” means that the public receives information ahead of issues that affect them and feel encouraged to participate.
- “Appropriate input” means opportunities for affected stakeholders to participate in a dialogue that helps to shape the decision on policy issues that affect the community at large.
- “Two-way dialogue” means back and forth communication via the internet, website, phone, or in person.

### Indicators *(We will know we are in compliance when...)*

- a. At least 60 percent of representatives of the Superintendent’s Parent Advisory Committee attend and provide input at the majority of the three annual meetings.
- b. Board of Education members present “State of the District” talks and gather feedback with members of community organizations annually.
- c. E-mails to PSUSD website are responded to/routed within a 24-hour period.
- d. District radio shows/podcasts are broadcast and posted weekly. Weekly columns are published in the Neighbors section of Desert Sun, posted on Desert Sun website and shared via District social media.
- e. Facebook reach doubles each year. Twitter followers increase by 30 percent each year.
- f. New mobile application downloads increase by 30 percent annually

- g. Superintendent posts a monthly blog on the website.
- h. Family Engagement promotes and coordinates parent organization meetings and outreach.
- i. The Foundation for PSUSD will increase by 10 percent annually the number of public speaking engagements, direct mail solicitation and face-to-face meetings with community representatives, businesses and stakeholders.
- j. Sites and the District use the District's AutoDialer system to communicate with parents about attendance issues, emergency situations and major school and District events.

### **Evidence of Compliance**

- a. Each school has a representative serving on the Superintendent's Parent Advisory Committee, which began its 13th year this year. This committee allows for the Superintendent to hear directly from parents on what's working and what's not within the District and at individual school sites. This year's meetings were held on Sept. 30, 2020, March 10 and May 12. More than 60 percent of site representatives attended the meetings, and attendance in general was higher this year in the virtual platform. Topics addressed and shared included Family Engagement Center and family resources, a district overview from board member Madonna Gerrell, LCAP presentation and input and COVID-19 safety protocols and plans for hybrid instruction, summer learning and return for 2021-22 school year. In discussion with Dr. Swize at the final meeting of 2020-21 representatives were in favor of increasing the number of meetings to five per year with two of them held virtually and three in person.
- b. For the ninth consecutive year, Board of Education members spoke to civic organizations to provide a "State of the District" presentation including time for questions and answers and feedback from group members. A total of 12 meetings were held during this school year (all virtually) We did not hold a "Legislative Breakfast" during the 2020-21 school year due to COVID but will hold our fourth event this fall.
- c. Our District website provides an e-mail address that all stakeholders/interested parties can use to provide input/ask questions on any District matter. The Coordinator of Communications responds to and/or routes these emails to appropriate staff member(s) upon receipt. During the 2020-21 school year, the Coordinator of Community Outreach responded to 4,466 e-mails that came through the [info@psusd.us](mailto:info@psusd.us) and [webmaster@psusd.us](mailto:webmaster@psusd.us) addresses compared with 2,113 the year prior. The substantial increase came as a result of COVID-19 inquiries around technology and access needs and questions, which were sent to the info address and routed to Techs or Tech TOSAs. All emails were responded to directly or routed within 24 hours. We also have a "contact us" page on our website, and those inquiries are sent to and responded by the Coordinator of Communications. There were 390 inquiries sent to the website during the 2020-21 school year compared with 210 the previous year.
- d. The District's Coordinator of Communications and Community Outreach hosted weekly radio shows/podcasts each week during the 2020-21 school year. The show is called "You Learn Something New Every Day" and the podcast is uploaded each

Sunday afternoon. Our radio show airs each Sunday morning on KGX and KWCY (AM and FM). The podcast/radio show is produced each week by students in the Digital Arts Technology Academy (DATA) under the direction of instructor Bryce Johnson. This year's two senior interns began their work prior to the start of the school year and edited shows remotely the entire year. They trained three new incoming seniors who produced a few shows over the summer and will resume when we go back to recording in-studio in mid August. Desert Sun Neighbors columns were written, published and posted online each week (many of which were cover stories) and reposted on District social media.

- e. The number of followers on our Facebook page increased from 4,624 to 5,703 (increase of about 23 percent) during the past year. A Twitter page was launched in 2013. A total of more than 460 tweets were posted during the past year. Followers have increased from 1,292 in May of 2020 to 1,448 in July of this year (an increase of about 12 percent) We launched our psusdnews Instagram account two years ago and have increased followers from 964 to 1,265 in the past year. An average of at least two or three two news or information items are posted to each social media platform daily.
- f. We launched our mobile application in the spring of 2019. There were a total of 334 new downloads in the past year. As of May 20, 2021 there have been 915 downloads of the mobile app.
- g. The Superintendent posted a blog each month during the 2020-21 school year. While many of the columns focused on COVID-19 status updates, other topics included asking for feedback and input on distance learning, completion of the census, hybrid program, vaccinations and announcement of the new superintendent of schools. Our new superintendent posted his first blog on July 1, 2021.
- h. Family Engagement Coordinator Ruby Rivera supervises and/or facilitates several Parent Advisory and Action Committees that meet several times (most monthly) throughout the year. These groups and their descriptions include:
  - African American Parent Advisory Council (AAPAC)
  - District English Learner Advisory Council (DELAC)
  - Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)
  - PTA Council/Parents In Action: Parent Teacher Association Council and Forum for all PTA/PTG/PTO members
  - PTA Latino: Sub-Committee Stakeholder group that is part of the Palm Springs Council of PTAs
  - LGBTQ+ PAC: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning Parent Advisory Council
  - School Site Councils
  - LCAP Parent Ambassadors: Stakeholders that provide input regarding LCAP goals and budget
  - Family Engagement District Advisory Council (FEDAC): Reviews District Family Engagement Policy bi-annually
  - Family Engagement Teacher Advisory Council (FETAC): Receives training to support school site family engagement policy and assessment of school site family engagement climate

- Coordinated Early Intervention Support (CEIS): Addresses issues of inequity and disproportionate data
- Desert Hot Springs Alliance: Collaboration between One Future Coachella Valley, PSUSD, city politicians and community businesses and nonprofit leaders to address the issue of chronic absenteeism in DHS
- PAC President & Superintendent forum: quarterly meetings with Superintendent and Parent Advisory Council Presidents

i. The Foundation continued with the pivot they made in March of 2020 in its strategic marketing strategies due to the COVID-19 with the development of the COVID-19 Relief Fund. All print, TV and social media communications were focused on our students' and their families' needs. The Fund purchased school supplies for students to use at home during distance learning. In fall of 2020, a partnership was negotiated with KESQ to air a musical variety show (produced by MTU) to air weekly through December. The show launched with the theme "Save the Arts" which gave The Foundation a strong program to push visibility through social media platforms. It was such a success that KESQ invited MTU to continue "Front Row Center" into 2021. The campaign drove audiences to learn more about The Foundation and PSUSD. In December, the Foundation launched "Gift Cards for Families," which raised additional funds for gift cards to help families purchase personal care and household items. Addendum A at the end of this report, shows media and social media generated by the "Front Row Center" show in addition to numbers of people reached by various advertising campaigns and end-of-year direct mailing.

j. Each school in the district issues two attendance Auto Dialer calls daily (one in the morning for safety purposes to report that a student did not show up for school, and one in the afternoon to report the student's absence either for the day or for specific periods (secondary). While there were 3,639 attendance calls generated during the 2019-20 school year, only 325 were issued during the past school year. The total number of Auto Dialer notifications were 3,639 with the majority coming from school sites, Family Engagement Center and Nutrition Services, In addition to direct outreach to parents via Auto Dialer calls and emails, the system is also used to post to our mobile app, some social media posts and direct email to parents.

<p><b>2 Prepare and publish, on behalf of the Board, quarterly progress reports to the public that includes the following items:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a. Data indicating student progress toward accomplishing the Board’s Results policies;</b></li> <li><b>b. Information about school district strategies, programs and operations intended to accomplish the Board’s Results policies;</b></li> <li><b>c. Revenue, expenditures and costs of major programs and a review of the district’s financial condition</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>*In Compliance</b></p>
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**Interpretation**

I interpret this policy to mean the Board values reports to stakeholders that demonstrate progress made toward academic achievement including achieving proficiency in English, reading at grade level, speaking clearly and fluently, writing clearly, meeting or exceeding state standards in core academic disciplines and using technology and the arts effectively. Reporting to the public shall also include progress made in the areas of citizenship and personal development. The public reporting shall include methods for accomplishing the stated results along with the costs associated with carrying out these strategies, activities and programs.

**Indicators** *(We will know we are in compliance when...)*

Stakeholders are informed of student progress through PSUSD Supplement.

**Evidence of Compliance**

\*Due to the pandemic resulting in no on-campus activities and no state testing in the spring of 2020, we did not publish our “Supplement from the Palm Springs Unified School District” as we usually do from spring of 2020 through spring of 2021. We did publish our annual tribute to the graduating class of 2021 in May of this year, and we have returned to a regular bimonthly schedule with our next publication containing 2021-22 school year information and publishing on July 28. The publication (published in English and Spanish) is inserted into the full run of the Desert Sun, and copies are sent to each school site and district departments for members of the public to pick up. The report is also posted on our website as well. The publication includes articles, information, photos and reports about District programs, activities and services. Our October issue will resume this year as our annual “State of the District,” focused on results data including SBAC and LCAP-related initiatives.

<b>3 Ensure that parents are adequately informed about their children’s progress.</b>	<b>In compliance</b>
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**Interpretation**

I interpret this policy to mean that the board values that parents are kept up-to- date on how their students are performing in the classroom as related to mastery of academic state standards, citizenship and personal development.

**Indicators** (*We will know we are in compliance when...*)

- a. 100 percent of parents receive quarterly report cards.
- b. An average of at least 75 percent of elementary parents and 30 percent of middle school parents attend parent-teacher conferences and receive report cards at elementary and middle schools.
- c. Grades, homework attendance are posted on ParentVue by 100 percent of teachers and accessed by an increasing percentage of parents each year.
- d. At least 60 percent of parents who respond to Panorama survey questions relative to “school connectedness” provide positive responses.

**Evidence of Compliance**

- a. All classroom teachers provided parents with quarterly or trimester report cards.
- b. The elementary parent conference attendance (held virtually and by phone) rate averaged 80.2 percent (about the same as the previous year) for fall and spring of 2020-21 school year combined. A few principals reported higher attendances and said they were considering keeping the virtual option for conferences in the future Middle school parent- teacher conference attendance average was 57 percent (down from 73 percent).
- c. The ParentVue portion of Synergy, our student information system provides parents with the opportunity to view information about their child’s schedule, attendance, classroom news and cafeteria purchases and account balances. Additionally, at the secondary level, parents can also view their students’ assignments and grades. Students have also been given StudentVue accounts and can even submit homework to their teachers online through the system.

A total of 4,028 parents (up from 2,994) representing 6,944 students (32 percent, up from 23.4 of total district students the prior year) accessed their account at least once during the 2020-21 school year. A total of 6,133 parents (up from 5,392) have accounts, with 257 created in the 2020-21 year. The total number of times the system was accessed was 291,617 (up from 213,421). Of the parents that accessed their accounts, 204 (down from 487 the prior year) were newly created for the 2020-21 school year.

A total of 14,885 (up from 12,434 students) used StudentVue at least once, and a total of 21,708 students (up from 17,302) students have accounts. TIS created 826

student accounts during distance learning. Only 124 students do not have accounts. (5,091 don't have accounts up from 3,562). A total of 14,885 students (up from 12,434) used StudentVue at least once, and StudentVue was accessed a total of 2,594,458 times (down from 2,771,765 the previous year).

d. For the third consecutive year, we surveyed our families through Panorama. The survey took place in February. One of the areas addressed with all groups (including families) is "Sense of Belonging (School Connectedness).

- A total of 2,986 family surveys (down from 6,815 in 2020) were completed. A total of 94 percent provided favorable responses overall (same as 2020).
  - 93 percent of respondents said they feel welcome to participate at their school (down 1 percent from 2020)
  - 97 percent responded that school staff treats them with respect (up 1 percent)
  - 94 percent responded that school staff takes their concerns seriously and responds to their needs in a timely manner (up one percent from last year)
  - 93 percent responded that staff welcomes their suggestions (same as last year)
  - 95 percent said that school staff is helpful (down one percent from last year)
  - 95 percent said their child's background is valued at their school (same as last year)

We also conducted a Distance Learning survey during the pandemic when students were at home to collect family-school communication during that time. A total of 2,611 parents completed that survey with 73 percent responding favorably regarding the family-school connection during Distance Learning.

- 66 percent of respondents said the communication from the school has been helpful during this time
- 72 percent said they were felt comfortable communicating with the school
- 75 percent said they were satisfied with the frequency of communication from their child's teacher(s)
- 77 percent reported that it was easy to get in contact with their child's teacher(s)

<b>4 Appropriately inform the affected areas of the community about proposed and current District capital projects</b>	<b>In compliance</b>
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**Interpretation**

I interpret this policy to mean that we shall ensure that the community is informed reasonably in advance of proposed capital projects in their community before action is taken by the Board to award the contract. The Board has provided a policy exhibit that ensures consistent implementation of this sub-policy.

**Indicators (*We know we are in compliance when...*)  
February 2020 – February 2021**

- a. For small projects (adding portables or electronic marquees) principals, teachers, parents and homeowners within 500 feet of school address receive letter of notification of project.
- b. For small projects, paid notification in the newspaper seven days prior to Board approval of contract.
- c. For large projects principals, teachers, parents and homeowners within 500 feet of school address receive letter of notification of project.
- d. Paid notification in the newspaper 20 days prior to Board approval of contract.
- e. For large projects, board meetings and public hearings are held.

**Evidence of Compliance**

- a. Letters of notification were sent to parents, teachers and homeowners within a 500-foot radius for the following small electronic marquee projects (April 2020): **Phase 2 (Middle School) Marquee Project at Desert Springs, James Workman, and Painted Hills Middle Schools and City jurisdiction. Phase 3 (Elementary School) Marquee Project at Bella Vista, Bubbling Wells, Cabot Yerxa, Della S. Lindley, Katherine Finchy, Rancho Mirage, Rio Vista, Sunny Sands, and Vista Del Monte Elementary Schools, and City jurisdiction.**
- b. Paid legal notices were published seven days in advance of board action for the following small electronic marquee projects (August 2020): **Phase 2 (Middle School) Marquee Project at Desert Springs, James Workman, and Painted Hills Middle Schools. Phase 3 (Elementary School) Marquee Project at Bella Vista, Bubbling Wells, Cabot Yerxa, Della S. Lindley, Katherine Finchy, Rancho Mirage, Rio Vista, Sunny Sands, and Vista Del Monte Elementary Schools**
- c. Teachers, parents and homeowners within 500 feet of school address received letter of notification of the following large projects (March 2020): **Mount San Jacinto High School Solar Project, and Rio Vista Elementary School Solar Project**
- d. Paid notification in newspaper 20 days prior to Board approval of the following contract (April 2020): **Phase 2 and 3 Marquee Project**
- e. Board meeting public hearings were held for the **Mount San Jacinto High and Rio Vista Elementary solar projects in April 2020**