

105 SCHOOL DISTRICT PUBLIC RELATIONS AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

I. PURPOSE

This policy ensures that Waconia Independent School District 110 maintains regular and ongoing communications throughout the community.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Waconia Independent School District 110 is committed to partnering the community, families, students and employees. District 110 will coordinate and share regular and ongoing communications through a variety of means, including: e-newsletters, videos, website, social media, e-mail, printed materials and face-to-face communications. At the direction of the Superintendent, the Director of Communications will manage communications with all audiences and oversee interactions with media at all levels.

III. INFORMATION SHARING

A. Coordination of Communications

The Director of Communications preserves, manages, and promotes the image and brand of District 110. Decisions are guided by the Strategic Roadmap, Communications Plan and Brand Guidelines.

Objectives of the Communications Plan

1. Provide consistent, relevant and engaging communications to all key audiences.
2. Increase awareness and trust by delivering communications in convenient, user-friendly platforms.
3. Develop a network of internal and external storytellers.
4. Increase story frequency on all platforms.
5. Create district-wide storytelling culture based on honesty, authenticity and transparency.

Target Audiences

1. Parents

Internal Communication

Classroom Level – teacher/school/parents

External Communication

Marketing and Public Relations – teacher/school/community

2. **Community**

This broad audience includes everyone regardless of whether they currently have or previously had children in the district.

3. **Students**

Student pride deepens and confidence grows when they see the accomplishments of their school, teachers and classmates being celebrated in the community on a regular basis.

4. **Staff**

Teachers and staff are among the frontline ambassadors of our brand.

5. **Online Community**

Social media includes all of the above stakeholders.

B. Building Level and Program Specific Communications

1. Individual school sites and specific district-sponsored programs will provide regular communications to their stakeholders by sharing information about their activities, events, curriculum, assessments and goals as needed. The preferred method of communication is a branded and formatted weekly e-newsletter. When necessary, these site/school specific communications will include district-level messaging provided by the communications office. District-level communications will be consistent throughout ISD 110 and any proposed changes to the message must be approved by the communications office.

2. The primary source of regular communications will be web/email based with the recognition that District 110, individual school sites, education programs, and extra-curricular activities will ensure that families, community members and employees who do not have access to electronic sources will receive shared communications.

C. Communication Standards

The Director of Communications, at the direction of the Superintendent, establishes communication standards for employees and is responsible for developing and maintaining relationships with media.

1. In collaboration with the Superintendent, the Director of Communications is responsible for working with staff and community partners to identify, develop, produce, write and publish/post/upload stories about District 110.
2. Media inquiries – local, metro, national – are all referred to the communications office.
3. Story pitches must be sent to and approved by the communications office prior to the media being contacted.
4. The communications office must be immediately informed of media presence at any building in the district.
5. Regarding ongoing activities, such as a sports band-related related events, one approval will cover the season.

IV. DISTRICT 110 SPOKESPERSON

A. Official Spokesperson

The Superintendent is always the main spokesperson for the District unless otherwise directed by the Superintendent. In situations where the School Board needs representation in the media, the Superintendent will work with Board leadership to determine who should speak to the media. The Superintendent and Communications Director will prep the School Board spokesperson with talking points.

B. Crisis or Emergency Situation

The District 110 Crisis Communications Plan dictates the processes and protocols during an emergency situation, including the spokesperson for District 110.

V. MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS WITH STUDENTS

Media may not contact or interview students on any of the school campuses or at school-related events without permission from one of the following:

1. Director of Communications
2. Leadership at the school level (principal, assistant principal)
3. Program Leader (Activities Director, coach, Director of Community Education)

A one-time Sports/Activities/Community Ed permission blankets the entire season/class/event for media inquiries pertaining to normal developments. Media inquiries involving sensitive information must be referred to the Director of Communications. Even with District permission, parent or guardian permission may still be required. Permission status may be changed for any student at any time throughout the course of the season/class/event.

Cross References: District 110 Policy 406 (Public & Private Personnel Data)
District 110 Policy 423 (Employee-Student Relationships)
District 110 Policy 434 (Teacher Evaluation)
District 110 Policy 515 (Protection & Privacy of Pupil Records)
District 110 Policy 519 (Interviews of Students by Outside Agencies)
District 110 Policy 524 (Internet Acceptable Use and Safety)
District 110 Policy 806 (Crisis Management Policy)

Policy Adopted: March 10, 1997
Policy Amended: July 9, 2001 / July 2007
Policy Revised: August 2014, December 2018, October 2022
Independent School District No. 110
Waconia, MN