

9120 PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM (M)

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The Board of Education directs that all reasonable means should be employed to keep the community served by this district informed on matters of importance regarding district policies, finances, programs, personnel, and operations.

As a means of keeping the public informed about school needs and about actual results being obtained from the public's support of school programs, the Board of Education shall annually provide district citizens with a report describing the current state of the district, its progress toward Board-established goals and objectives, and other such accomplishments and information as may be deemed appropriate by the Superintendent. The report shall also include the commissioner of education's classification of each school within the district and that of the district as a whole if available.

The annual report shall be presented in clear and concise language and be buttressed as necessary by meaningful graphics in order that the significance of all information be easily understood by lay citizens.

The Board will determine which of its official actions have sufficient community impact and interest to warrant special release; the Board alone will release to the news media information about those matters of importance. The Board President may release information regarding Board actions of lesser importance as they have been recorded in the minutes of the Board meetings and upon the request of media representatives. The release of all other publications, photographs, and documents depicting the accomplishments of the students and staff of the district shall be approved by the Superintendent of Schools or designee.

The school district will not release or publish photographs or release other personal identifying information of an individual district student without the prior written permission of the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or from the adult student. Written permission slips for such release from each parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or adult student will be obtained by the Principal or designee for the students in their school building or by the Program Administrator for students in programs where a Principal is not assigned. These written permission forms shall be maintained by the Principal or Program Administrator. Group photographs of ten or more students may be released by the district without permission, but in no event will an individual student in a group photograph be identified by name and/or by other personal identifier without written permission from the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or adult student.



The Superintendent of Schools shall direct the implementation of an information program designed to acquaint residents of the community and the public generally with the achievements and the needs of the schools. At a minimum, information shall be disseminated regarding the district's educational goals; the district's guarantee of equal educational opportunity; the district's programs for basic skills improvement, Special Services, bilingual education, and English as a second language; and summary reports of the administration of statewide assessment tests. Every effort shall be made to foresee and avoid problems caused by misunderstanding or lack of information.

The public information program may include the publication and distribution of a district newsletter, meetings with parents or legal guardians and interested residents, a presentation and interpretation of the proposed annual budget, periodically distributed calendars and notices of events, the Superintendent's annual report, and student handbooks, as well as the release of news and photographs of school activities for publication.

The Superintendent shall develop guidelines governing taste, relevance, and the protection of privacy in the preparation of district publications.

Notices, publications, and other written materials may be prepared in languages other than English as and necessary and appropriate for understanding.

The Board of Education adopts the following strategies to minimize the cost of public relations as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-9.3(c)14 in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.2.

School district publications shall be produced and distributed in the most cost-efficient manner possible that will enable the school district to inform and educate the target community. The use of expensive materials or production techniques where lower cost methods are available, such as the use of multi-color glossy publications instead of suitable, less expensive alternatives, is prohibited.

The school district will not distribute, via mass mailings, telecommunications, social media, digital communications, or other means to the district community at large, publications that include communications from or the picture(s) of any members of the Board of Education within ninety one hundred days before any election in which any Board member is seeking any elective office or any election relating to school district operations held in the district, except that this provision will not impede distribution of communications related to routine or required business of the Board of Education.



Any publication(s) distributed by the Board via mass mailings, **digital communications** or other means to the district community at large within sixty days before any election in which any Board member is seeking any elective office or any election relating to school district operations held in the district must be submitted to the Executive County Superintendent for review prior to distribution to ensure that the public funds are being expended in a reasonable and cost-effective manner.

Public relations activities, such as booths at Statewide conferences, marketing activities and celebrations for opening schools and community events, and TV productions that are not part of the instructional program or do not provide information about district or Board operations to the public, that are excessive in nature are prohibited. All activities involving promotional efforts to advance a particular position on school elections or any referenda are prohibited.

Nothing in N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.2 and this Policy shall preclude the school district from accepting donations or volunteer services from community members, local private education foundations and local business owners to conduct or assist in public relations services. Examples include, but are not limited to: providing school district flyers, newsletters, or other materials containing school-related information of public concern to local businesses, public meeting places, or other local organizations to display or make available for dissemination; making school district related information of public concern available to local newspapers to publish related articles; and utilizing volunteered services of local community members, district employees, members of parent organizations or local businesses with expertise in related areas such as printing, advertising, publishing, or journalism.

The Board of Education will establish annually prior to budget preparation, a maximum dollar limit for public relations, as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-9.3(c)14. In the event it becomes necessary to exceed the established maximum dollar limit for public relations, the Superintendent of Schools shall recommend to the Board of Education an increase in the maximum dollar amount for public relations. Any increase in the maximum dollar amount shall require formal Board action.

N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.2

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Adopted: 20 April 2009

First Read: 24 July 2025

Second Read: 28 August 2025

