



PRINCIPALS COMMUNICATION *GUIDE*

A PUBLICATION OF THE EPISD
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

#DISCOVEREPISD 

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DISCOVER EPISD

EDUCATION THROUGH INNOVATION



EL PASO INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Introduction The El Paso Independent School District is committed to open, honest and on-going communication with our stakeholders. Cultivating and maintaining a two-way conversation with stakeholders is essential for building and rebuilding relationships in our community.

EPISD has undergone a tremendous shift in administration, pedagogy and culture in the previous three years. We have overcome significant challenges and continue to work toward rebuilding trust and relationships with our community. In two years, we succeeded in passing two elections, including a historic \$668 million bond, indicating toward a shift in public perception and an endorsement of the growing confidence in the new District management and vision.

This plan is designed to establish a comprehensive and integrated communications process for effective communication with all stakeholders using a variety of communications tools. It is aligned with the District's goals and the superintendent's strategic plan, EPISD 2020, to rebrand EPISD as a leading school District in the region. It also establishes EPISD as the school District to contact for experts on issues such as curriculum, school safety and accountability.

The Comprehensive Communications Plan is a working document that will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Office of Community Engagement.

The main goals of this plan are to:

1. Improve EPISD's image among all stakeholders – employees, students, parents, civic and elected leaders, the business community and the community at large – in this already established new era in the District's history. Establish EPISD's brand as a premier and innovative educational institution in the region, state and nation.
2. Provide focus and direction for sustainable, credible and transparent communication among all stakeholders including employees, parents & students, business partners and community.

Mission Statement The El Paso Independent School District graduates every student prepared for higher learning and careers to empower them as knowledgeable and engaged citizens, innovators, and drivers of a robust, bicultural economy.

Vision Statement The El Paso Independent School District will be a premier educational institution, source of pride and innovation, and the cornerstone of emerging economic opportunities producing a 21st century workforce.

Flow of Information - Why School Public Relations?

School public relations are critical to bridging communication between the District and all of its stakeholders. The role of the Office of Community Engagement is to help establish clear channels from which information flows to its vast audience.

The Office of Community Engagement strives to promote and champion the successes across EPISD's schools and various District initiatives and programs. It is the role of this office to keep the community informed of all programs, events and projects that create the fabric of the EPISD story.

EPISD Office of Community Engagement Mission Statement

The El Paso Independent School District Office of Community Engagement is committed to transparency, accountability and on-going communication with our stakeholders.

It is the mission of the Office of Community Engagement to

- Promote engagement between the District and all of its stakeholders, to include: students, parents, employees, taxpayers, elected officials, the media and the community at large.
- Educate our stakeholders on the value and benefits of proactive stakeholder engagement.
- Promote the message that we are the PreK-12 educational institution of choice within the region.

Stakeholders

Internal Audiences

- Students
- Certified Staff
- Principals
- Support Staff
- Central Office administrators

External Audiences

- Parents
- Taxpayers
- Business and civic leaders
- Media
- Elected officials

Media Relations

All communication and media interviews are coordinated by the Office of Community Engagement (See board policy GBBA (LOCAL) and the Administrative Reference Guide). Community Engagement is responsible for the District's relations with all local, state, and national news media. Inquiries from the news media, especially those that are controversial in nature.

Please contact our office if you receive any media requests or if you would like to invite media to your campus for an event. We will coordinate and help facilitate coverage.

All students must have parental consent before being photographed or interviewed by media. This includes coverage by Community Engagement staff. Media/photo releases are submitted at the time of registration and can be found under the *myreport profile*. The campus clerk or registrar who handles these reports can access these releases. We recommend running a report for each teacher at the start of the school year. Any student without consent should be removed from media opportunities.

Social Media Guidelines For Faculty & Staff

Blogs, Wikis, Podcasts, Digital Images & Video Personal Responsibility

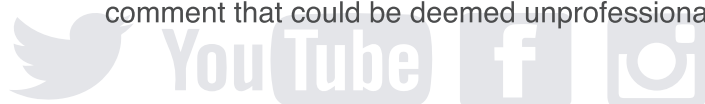
- EPISD employees are personally responsible for the content they publish online. Be mindful that what you publish most likely can be viewed publically.
- Your online behavior should reflect the same character traits you use in real life and face-to-face situations.
- What is inappropriate in your classroom should be deemed inappropriate on social media.
- Ensure that content associated with you is consistent with your work at EPISD.
- Do not post confidential student information.

Profiles & Identity

- Your profile and related content should be consistent with how you wish to present yourself with colleagues, parents and students
- Be cautious how you set up your profile, bio, profile picture, etc. This information may be viewed publicly and should reflect your character and position within EPISD.
- Select school-appropriate images.

Personal Use of Social Media such as Facebook, Twitter & Instagram

- EPISD employees are personally responsible for all comments/information they publish online.
- Comments related to the school should always meet the highest standards of professional discretion.
- Before posting photographs and videos permission should be sought from the subject when possible. Thought should be given as to whether the images reflect on your professionalism.
- Facebook and Twitter comments may not be protected by privacy settings. Employees should be aware of the public and widespread nature of such media and refrain from any comment that could be deemed unprofessional.



Partners In Education

Cultivating relationships with local businesses can pay off in many ways. Organizations see the positive impact their contributions make on students, and campuses build strong partnerships with companies that offer valuable resources.

Here are five basic steps to building a successful community partnership:

- **Identify Your Needs:** What do your students need the most? Determine your priorities and use your school improvement plan as a guide. Make a wish list of your top three to five resources.
- **Locate Potential Partners:** Review student enrollment cards for parent employment information or ask faculty and staff where their spouses work.
- **Approach:** Do your homework, and have a clear plan in mind before you reach out for how a company can help you. Explain how a partnership will benefit their business. Plan a big welcome on the day that company visits your school.
- **Recognize:** Nurture your partnerships. Say “thank you” often, and make sure everyone on campus knows when representatives are going to be there so they also can extend thanks. Ask partners to participate in campus events, and recognize them publicly.
- **Register:** Be sure your partner organization has filled out the appropriate application and is registered with the Office of Community Engagement.
www.episd.org/pie

Volunteers In Public Schools

Our volunteer family plays a huge part in making our District successful. Volunteers provide additional support to staff, faculty and students.

Volunteering gives parents and community members the opportunity to contribute to the children’s education and participate in providing a well-rounded education for all students. Volunteers enhance the instructional program.

Resources:

www.episd.org/programs/vips

See GKG (Local)-3, GKG (Legal)-4, (Regulation)-3

TV Studio

The television studio is part of our media and communications team and primarily serves to produce visual stories to promote the district. Videographers will be assigned to film stories by the media relations team.

The studio also serves as support for district and campus initiatives. Requests for tapings will be considered based on editorial criteria and district resources.

Website Help

Your school's website often is the first place parents and other community members look for news and information about your campus, so having an attractive and well-organized site is important. Keeping the site current also is critical to encouraging traffic and inspiring trust in the information, so it's a good idea to have at least one designated site manager and two back-up administrators on staff.

It's important for schools to develop their own content, but Community Engagement will also push web content related to various schools to the campus level. This requires less effort and helps keep school sites fresh.

Graphic Design

It's important to have polished, professional materials on hand to communicate your message to parents, community leaders, and the general public.

EPISD has made a number of useful tools available to employees, including a district Style Guide, templates and approved district seals and logos.

For assistance with graphic design and requests, please contact Community Engagement at 915-230-2556.

Branding Guidelines

Our brand communications guide helps present a unified image which is key to increasing EPISD's visibility and recognition. The EPISD Office of Community Engagement maintains the official identity guidelines, which define the elements that form the foundation of the EPISD brand. District staff, students and administrators should use these guidelines as a reference to maintain a consistent and effective identity in the communications and publications they produce. It includes basic rules and guidelines for formatting and the use of the approved district brand.



EPISD Seal

The EPISD seal should be used on official stationery, badges and other formal correspondence on behalf of the District. It should also be used on all promotional materials representing the district. The Seal was developed by the Office of Community Engagement and features a stylized bell tower, a star in motion and the name of the school district. The bell tower is that of Central School, the very first school in the El Paso Public Schools System – the predecessor of the El Paso Independent School District. Central School closed early in the 20th century, but its legacy remains as the foundation of the commitment El Pasoans made to the education of their children. The seal celebrates the District's history as the Keystone School District in El Paso, but it also marks the beginning of the future of education in the region and EPISD's role in creating world-class graduates.



Branding Assets

Available for download at www.episd.org/branding

- Approved EPISD Seal

EPISD SEAL



EL PASO
INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL DISTRICT

The EPISD seal should be used for authenticating official district documents, such as diplomas, transcripts, certification of board actions, trustee and superintendent publications, and other official correspondence. The seal should also be used on promotional and marketing materials (such as brochures, posters & flyers).

To ensure the integrity of the seal, here are some guidelines:

- Do not modify the seal's colors, content, or graphic elements.
- The approved seal can be downloaded from episd.org/branding.
- Maintain the seal's proportions. The scale/size of the seal may be adjusted to fit the needs of the layout; do not stretch or distort it.

For promotional and marketing materials, the EPISD seal is required and should be prominently displayed. Please contact the Community Engagement Office for assistance regarding the proper set-up, format and colors of the logo for vendors.



Outdated/Incorrect Logos

Discontinue use of all previous and outdated logos, seals, slogans or department identities. These will no longer be used. Materials bearing them should be replaced with the new appropriate logo as soon as inventories expire. Contact EPISD Community Engagement for more information and for help with updating your materials. Outdated logos are not limited to those shown here.



El Paso
Independent
School District





• PowerPoint Template & Tips



PowerPoint Template available for download at www.episd.org/branding

Recommended font - Helvetica Bold for titles and Helvetica Regular for body text.
One thing at a time - The audience will almost instantly read every slide as soon as it is displayed.

No paragraphs - Most presentations fail when there are large amounts of content on each slide. The presentation is not a stand-alone document. Your slides are the illustrations for your presentation, not the presentation itself.

Use images sparingly - Try to avoid using PowerPoint’s built-in clipart. If you need branding images, contact the Community Engagement Team at gwarren@episd.org.

Over design - Avoid the temptation to dress up your pages with effects and focus instead use the template provided by Community Engagement.

Aa Typography

HEADLINE OPTIONS

Futura Medium
Helvetica Regular
Helvetica Bold

BODY TEXT OPTIONS

Helvetica Regular
Helvetica Oblique



Color palette

EPISD Blue, Yellow and Slate are the official colors and primary palette used to represent El Paso ISD. They can be found on both official communications such as business cards, letterhead and presentations, as well as in a broad range of marketing materials. Blue, yellow and slate should dominate all El Paso ISD-endorsed identities such as logos and promotional graphics.



Deep Blue PMS 282
WEB: #002147



Slate PMS 7544
WEB: #8996a0



Yellow Pantone Yellow
WEB: #ffde00



Email Signature

A consistent, organization-wide email signature is a key part of our brand identity. Use basic contact information, font is Sans Serif, font color is #747f8b. Instructions on setting up your email signature is provided online at www.episd.org/branding. Please note that emails and email signatures are a reflection of the work you do for EPISD. Therefore additional information on signatures — including quotes, verses, messages and images — are not permitted. An exception may be made for email signatures with quotes and/or messages related to pedagogy and education.

First & Last Name	(14pt size)
Title	(12pt size)
Department or Campus	(12pt size)
PHN 915-000-0000	(12pt size)
CELL 915-000-0000	(12pt size)



- **District Stationery**

Official District letterhead, envelopes and business cards are available for school, office, and department use and can be ordered from the EPISD Print Shop. *Letterhead can be downloaded online at www.episd.org/branding*

- **District Business Cards**

Either the EPISD Seal or EPISD logo may be used on District business cards.



- **Campus Stationery**

Campuses may have their own custom letterhead, envelopes and business cards featuring their official logo. Please contact Community Engagement to request a custom design. Once stationery is designed, it will be available to order from the EPISD Print Shop.

- **Campus Business Cards**

Only the official campus logo should be used on school business cards. Clip art, and copyrighted logos or images are not acceptable.

Mass Notification

Mass notification allows you to quickly reach parents through all of our communication channels — email, phone, text, social media and mobile app push notifications. Whether sending emergency information, daily activity updates, or student specific data, your messages will be easy to send, monitor, and track. You can even create, schedule and send messages no matter where you are—right from your smart phone or tablet.

When to message

- Emergency/Crisis situations
- School updates
- Activity reminders
- Inclement weather

Best Practices

Standard School Messages

These are messages about school activities, welcome messages, school closures, general calls to parents:

- Make sure you are in a quiet place, and use a land line if possible.
- At the beginning of the call always identify who you are and where you're calling from.
- Always leave a number and contact information in case they have questions.
- Try to keep your calls between 30 – 45 seconds.
- Always listen to your message before sending it.

Emergency Calls

This message should have the following points:

- Identify yourself/campus
- Let parents know the children are safe
- Give parents a brief description of situation.
- Provide any necessary instructions (For instance, don't come to the campus; pickup available at...)
- Let the parents know that you will send a follow up call after the event.

Send a follow up once incident is resolved. Call should come from the principal.

This message should have the following point:

- Identify yourself
- Let the parents know that the kids and staff did a great job following all safety instructions.
- Give them a brief description (approved by communications) of the incidents.
- Give the parents contact information in case they desire to call.

Engaging with parents and staff via messaging is one of the easiest and most efficient ways to keep everyone informed. Here are a few tips to help you make your school-to-home communications for effective.

Tips for effective messaging

- A Professional-sounding message will flow smoothly and is easy to read. Always write out your message and have someone else read it to make sure it really says what you want it to.
- Practice recording your message in order to find the most effective speaking volume for your voice. The distance from the phone or microphone affects the quality of the message. Experiment and find what works best for you.
- Be as professional as possible, but don't be afraid to have fun. You can deliver important information and still put a smile on parents' faces.
- Always start your message by identifying who you are and why you are calling. You want the recipients to know why the message is so important to them.
- Repeat important information such as dates and times of events throughout your message so that recipients have time to write it down.
- Don't be afraid to make two calls about an important topic—1st call being the notification of the event or activity and the 2nd call the reminder.
- Make sure you are in a quiet place, and use a land line if possible.
- At the beginning of the call always identify who you are and where you're calling from.
- Always leave a number and contact information in case they have questions.
- Try to keep your calls between 30 – 45 seconds.
- Always listen to your message before sending it.

EPISD 2020 Strategic Plan

EPISD recognizes that in order for students to be equipped for their lives and future, they need more than incremental improvements - they need a system that puts learners at the center. "What should EPISD students know and be able to do?" and "How can

we create a system of schools that will get them there?" This plan was developed through a collaborative process designed to respond to those questions, build upon existing strategic priorities and make a strategic shift.

Strong Foundation We leverage a strong foundation and continuous improvement processes to ensure quality learning in every classroom every day.



Student Learning Goals Supporting EPISD students as they become...



Critical, Knowledgeable & Creative Thinkers



Informed Problem Solvers



Effective Bilingual Communicators



Responsible Leaders & Productive Citizens



Socially & Emotionally Intelligent Individuals



EL PASO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Trent Hatch, Board President

Bob Geske, Vice President

Al Velarde, Secretary

Susie Byrd

Diane Dye

Chuck Taylor

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Juan E. Cabrera

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The El Paso Independent School District does not discriminate in its educational programs or employment practices on the basis of race, color, age, sex, religion, national origin, marital status, citizenship, military status, disability, genetic information, gender stereotyping and perceived sexuality, or on any other basis prohibited by law. Inquiries concerning the application of Titles VI, VII, IX, and Section 504 may be referred to the District compliance officer, Patricia Cortez, at 230-2033; Section 504 inquiries regarding students may be referred to Verna Ball at 230-2829.