Center Point-Urbana CSD

2022-23

District Communications Handbook

— August 17, 2022 —

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Last Reviewed and Updated: August 12, 2022	

Statements and General Information

Mission: Why We Exist

"The mission of the Center Point-Urbana Community School District is to develop successful, life-long learners by providing a safe and caring environment, a stimulating curriculum, and a dedicated staff working with supportive parents in a friendly, small-town atmosphere."

Notice of Nondiscrimination

It is the policy of the Center Point-Urbana Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of age (except for permitting/prohibiting students to engage in certain activities), race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or marital status (in programs), gender, socioeconomic status (in programs), creed, or genetic information (in employment) in admission or access to, or treatment in, its programs and activities, and in employment practices, pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and other applicable state and federal laws.

The District has adopted grievance procedures for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to sex discrimination pursuant to Title IX, please contact John Elkin, Title IX Coordinator, 202 West Main St, Urbana, Iowa, 319-849-1102, jelkin@cpuschools.org, or the U.S. Department of Education (attn. Assistant Secretary, Office for Civil Rights; 400 Maryland Avenue Southwest, Washington, DC 20202; 800-421-3481; OCR@ed.gov). If you have questions or a grievance related to any other provision of this policy, please contact John Elkin, 202 West Main St, Urbana, Iowa, 319-849-1102, jelkin@cpuschools.org.

Center Point-Urbana CSD's 2019 Communications NSPRA Audit

In 2019 the Center Point-Urbana CSD employed the National Schools Public Relations Association (NSPRA) to conduct a communications audit; the following strengths, growth areas, and recommendations were stated:

Strengths and General Perceptions (page 8)
- CPU is widely respected throughout region
- Students are described as "respectful and well-rounded"
- Staff cite taking much pride in working for the district
- One major strength of district is serving: Students with special needs
- The ability to handle student behavior issues
- CPU has a strong PBIS program

Challenges/Growth Areas (pages 10-11)
- Communication System intentionally designed to flow according to the Organizational Chart but currently not a fit for CPU due to:
  - Lack of consistency from principals and directors
  - Voids in communication to non-staff/parents due to inconsistency
  - Different systems per school (e.g. newsletters, teacher pages, etc.)
  - Families with multiple students in different buildings receiving same message (redundancy)
  - Overall lack of district messaging about "Who CPU Schools Are" including more "good news"

Other Notable Points (pages 9-15)
- Inconsistent use of district logos (branding)
- Inconsistent and unprofessional formatting
- Poorly written correspondence
- Limited sharing of "good news" (credits)
- Lack of structured system of who communicates what, when, & how
- Improve transparency (as allowed by laws, policy, liability, etc.)
- Siloed communication structure across district's schools exacerbates feeling about lack of knowledge of what occurs in other buildings
- Lack of acknowledgment or unrecognized accomplishments for all of the positives occurring in the district (students, staff, buildings)
- Staff and administration agree recognition is not systemic (but rather left to each individual manager)
- Lack of opportunity for staff to provide input, resolve questions, etc.
- Varied teacher-to-parent communication including slow or non-existent responses, not keeping grades updated online, etc.
  - Concern HS and MS relies on students themselves to communicate
  - Lack of opportunity for staff to provide input, resolve questions, etc.
  - No daily newspaper limits residents being informed
  - Social Media presence: official, unofficial, and affiliated accounts are numerous and inconsistent along with unregulated
  - Website upgrade and responsiveness

General Interpretations (pages 17-18)
- CPU CSD's reputation is vulnerable due to lack of strategic, proactive, and consistent communication
  - District leaders is compromised through lack of communication
  - Communication effectiveness lessens through a lack of planning and & consistency
  - Inconsistent internal communication impacts operations and morale
  - Opportunities DO exist for CPU to strengthen positive perceptions of the district

Recommendations (pages 19-50)
1. Make proactive and consistent communications a priority.
2. District Leadership enhances trust through communication and visibility.
3. Make internal communications and employee engagement a priority.
4. Standardize communications across buildings for stakeholders.
5. Organize and maximize the district's use of social media.
6. Address gaps and deficiencies with district/school websites

District Focus, Action Plans, and Leadership Structure

District Focus on Communications (6/28/22 School Board Meeting)
- Create an environment where communication is freely shared in and between buildings.
- Collaborative communication plan (have more people involved in the process).
- Create a framework with boundaries.
- Develop a communications committee within each building.
- Should be a point person within the district.
- Consistency between buildings.
- Increase technology use to create a free flow of information to create an environment of transparency and trust, measured by SCoPE survey results

CPU Action Plan
1. **CPU Communications is a priority for all staff in their respective roles.**
   - *Make proactive and consistent communications a priority.*
   - *District Leadership enhances trust through communication and visibility.*
   - *Make internal communications and employee engagement a priority.*

2. **CPU will employ use of systemic communication platform framework.**
   - *Standardize communications across buildings for stakeholders.*
   - *Organize and maximize the district's use of social media.*

3. **CPU will engage in a continuous progress monitoring review as well as an audit at the end of the year.**
   - *Address gaps and deficiencies with district/school websites.*

Center Point-Urbana CSD Communication Leadership Structure
- Point of contact regarding Board Policies is the Superintendent
- Designated Communications Coordinator is the Assistant Superintendent
- Every District/Building/Department leader serves as that entity's Communications Director with specific roles, responsibilities, and actions as it relates to implementing and ensuring fidelity of the District's Communication Plan

Communications for the Organizations of Meetings: Calendar Invites
- One major way leaders and/or staff members who organize and facilitate meetings is to use the "Calendar Invite" option that is embedded in Google/Gmail
- As a general rule, whoever is organizing and leading a meeting should:
  - Put the event on their Google Calendar
  - Invite all parties to the meeting including relaying the following information:
    - Time(s)
    - Location
    - Any agendas, notes, attachments, etc.

Social Media: Roles of Page Administrators
- Only Administrators/Directors or an approved designee will be assigned the role of **Page Admin** as part of the leadership role that also includes the vetting / screening process.
- It is recorded which **Page Admin or IP Address/Geolocation** posts what (accountability).
- Employ the "1-3-1 Principle:"
  - *Write Once*
  - *Review/Edit 3 Times*
  - *Post Once*

Platforms, Framework, and Information

<u>**Platforms**</u>
Tier 1:
- Official District Accounts includes <u>CPU website</u>, <u>Infinite Campus Messenger</u>, <u>School Email</u>, <u>Social Media Accounts</u>, and <u>Media Outlets</u>.
    - CPU Website…………………………….   www.cpuschools.org
    - Student Information System (SIS)………   Infinite Campus
    - School Email……………………………   (FirstInitialLastName)@cpuschools.org
    - Facebook...   @CPUSchools
    - Twitter…………………………………   @CPUSchools
      @CPUActivities
    - Media Outlets……………………………   KGAN (Channel 2)
      KWWL (Channel 7)
      KCRG (Channel 9)

| Messaging Platform Guide: Email vs. Campus Messenger ||
Email	**Messenger**
Individual or small group or class communication	Large groups (classes), buildings, and entire district

Tier 2:
- Current District Affiliated Accounts includes various mediums including Smore, Remind, SeeSaw, etc.
- Staff may keep using what is already being used but <u>Tier</u> <u>1</u> <u>use</u> <u>is</u> <u>priority</u>!)

<u>**Communications Framework**</u>

Positive News Social Media Website	Notifications Email/Campus Messenger Social Media	Resources Website	Crisis / Crucial Email/Campus Messenger Social Media Media Outlets*
● Accomplishments ● Success of anyone in school ● In the classroom ● Fun photos ● Partnerships ● Community connection ● Why CPU is great	● Press Releases ● Event schedule change ● Teacher or coach to parents or students ● P-T Conferences ● Surveys ● Board of Education ● Capital improvements	● Lunch Menu ● Handbooks ● Calendar ● Policies ● Staff directories ● Links to schools and their resources, etc.	● Weather-related delays or closings ● District Statements for incidents, etc. *Generally only used for school delays and/or cancellations*

<u>**Types of Posts**</u>
- **Announcement:** A notice or message about a function or activity.
- **Statement:** Official statement or position of the District or a Building; the statement is the statement.
- **News:** Updates or information about an event, function, etc.
- **Various:** Includes Conferences, Assemblies, Employment Opportunities, etc.

<u>**The First Amendment and Public Entities / Schools**</u>
The First Amendment protects citizens' free speech from censorship by public entities such as schools. In order to remove postings made by the public, schools need to ensure that their decisions are reasonable and content neutral. **<u>Content neutral</u>** means that the content or viewpoint of the speech does not factor into the decision to remove the post. Thus, schools should not remove posts or ban users just because comments are negative or critical.

- **CPU's Facebook and Twitter Notices**
  Please note that the function to make comments and/or reply to district posts is no longer enabled as the district does not have the administrative staff to consistently monitor replies or comments to our posts, particularly ones that may contain profanity, vulgarity, false or misleading claims, exaggerated statements, and material omissions.

Communication Standards

The following standards exist for both administrators and teachers and apply to CPU CSD's Communication Plan:

Standard 1: Demonstrates ability to enhance academic performance and support for implementation of the school district's student achievement goals.
a: Provides multiple forms of evidence of student learning and growth to students, families, and staff.
g: Communicates with students, families, colleagues, and communities effectively and accurately.

Standard 5: Uses a variety of methods to monitor student learning.
b: Communicates assessment criteria and standards to all students and parents.
e: Provides substantive, timely, and constructive feedback to students and parents.

Standard 8: Fulfills professional responsibilities established by the school district.
e: Collaborates with students, families, colleagues, and communities to enhance student learning.

Iowa Standards for School Leaders (ISSL)
Criteria for: Developing, Effective, or Highly Effective
Standard 1: Mission, Vision, and Core Values
- Communicates the school vision, mission, and core values to stakeholders
- Identifies and communicates a set of core values that recognize the importance of student-centered education.
- Articulates and advocates a core set of values that defines the school's culture, vision, and mission while supporting the imperative for student-centered education, high expectations and student support; equity, inclusiveness, and social justice; and continuous improvement.

Standard 2: Ethics and Professional Norms
- Communicates using basic oral and written communication skills and demonstrates an understanding of context.
- Leads with interpersonal and communication skill, social and emotional insight, and understanding of all students' and staff members' backgrounds and cultures.

Standard 3: Equity and Cultural Responsiveness
- Models and communicates a belief that each and every student can achieve at high levels and seeks and shares examples of successes among staff in order to challenge low expectations and fixed mindsets.
- Initiates courageous conversations about diversity and culture and the impact on student learning; corrects intolerant statements and behaviors. Builds capacity of staff to engage in courageous conversations.

Standard 4: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
- Communicates rigorous student learning expectations, assessment information, and instructional practices
   to parents, students, teachers, and other stakeholder groups.

Standard 5: Community of Care and Support for Students
- Recognizes positive contributions of both students and staff.
- Intentionally seeks input and collaborates with diverse internal and external partners to support the academic success, and social, emotional, and physical well-being of each student.

Standard 8: Meaningful Engagement of Families and Community
- Communicates with families and community members about student learning, the importance of education, and the school.
- Communicates to staff the need for engaging families.
- Employs a variety of strategies for open communication with all families and community members to the benefit of the school, community, and individual students.
- Holds self and staff responsible for actively engaging with families and community members to support student learning and social and emotional well-being; promotes family engagement as an instructional strategy.

Standard 10: School Improvement
- Communicates school improvement goals to the school community.
- Provides staff descriptive feedback related to the goals identified in the plan.
- Proactively seeks feedback

Center Point-Urbana CSD Communications Team

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3" style="background:yellow">District
District-level includes information for all stakeholders including school delays, closures, and crises/crucial events</td></tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt Berninghaus
Superintendent</td>
<td>John Elkin
Assistant Superintendent</td>
<td>Julie Klawiter
Registrar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>

- District voice for CPU's vision, mission and core values to stakeholders.
- Serves as spokesperson for media.
- Communicates district-wide information to the School Board, staff, and community.
- Makes decisions about weather-related delays and cancellations.

</td>
<td>

- Serves as the District's Communications Coordinator.
- Updates social media for District-level announcements.
- Oversees and updates District-related webpages
- Infinite Campus Coordinator for the District

</td>
<td>

- Sends out weekly District Updates.
- Updates social media for District-level announcements.
- Updates District-related webpages
- Oversees Infinite Campus for District-level responsibilities.

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<table>
<tr><td colspan="4" style="background:#ffffcc">Schools
Building-level includes information for families as related to programs and services.</td></tr>
<tr>
<td>Rob Libolt
High School Principal</td>
<td>KC Tupa
Middle School Principal</td>
<td>Jon Hasleiet
Intermediate Principal</td>
<td>Sarah Tobiason
Primary Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">

- Principal serves as spokesperson for the school's vision, mission and core values for stakeholders.
- Communicates important events, news, or information.
- Updates social media for significant events and topics.
- Handles school announcements.
- Updates Infinite Campus student/family directory information.
- Oversees and updates respective school webpages.

</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4" style="background:#d9d9d9; text-align:center">Teachers / Staff</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">

- Communicates important news or information as related to students, learning, grades, behavior, and social emotional

</td></tr>
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<table>
<tr><td colspan="3" style="background:#dce6f1">Departments
Department-level includes information for families as related to programs and services.</td></tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Kriegel*
7-12 Activities Director</td>
<td>Brenda Wyse
Food Service Director</td>
<td>Troy Burkhart
Transportation Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td colspan="2">Logan Holtz & Will Engelbrecht
Director of Custodial Services & Director of Maintenance</td>
<td>Melissa Hocking*
Director of School Improvement & Special Services</td>
</tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">

- Communicates important events, news, or information.
- Updates social media for significant events and topics.
- Oversees department's webpages and communicates changes to be made to the Assistant Superintendent

* Responsible for updating respective Department webpages

</td></tr>
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CPU CSD's "Tights and Loose" Communication Guidelines

The Tights (Non-Negotiables)	The Looses (Flexible As Decided By Teams)
1. CPU staff will respond to communications (email, phone messages, etc.) within **24-48 business hours*** depending on the nature of the communication. This may/can include getting back to a stakeholder with a message such as, *"I can't answer you right now, but I will get back to you by (set day/date)."* * Does not include weekends and/or holidays	1. Teachers/staff may directly communicate with parents and guardians using a variety of platforms including either Tier 1 (in-person, phone, school email, Infinite Campus Messenger) or Tier II (Remind, SeeSaw, Smore, etc.).
2. Each school will develop a Communications Committee that collaboratively focuses on the District Communications Plan and Priorities including the use of the established framework, goals, formatting standards.	2. Communication Committees per building will collaboratively design, implement, and progress monitor their communications plan as they see fit according to age-and-grade level appropriateness.
3. The leader of each entity (District Office, Schools, and Departments) will develop, implement, and communicate with those they serve the **minimum number of internal weekly or monthly communications** using official district platforms.	3. A variety of staff may / should be involved in CPU's Communication Framework for the sharing of Positive News (accomplishments, successes, fun photos, etc.) and Notifications (press releases, surveys, etc.).
4. Each District entity (District Office, Schools, and Department) will develop, implement, and communicate with stakeholders the **minimum number of external weekly or monthly communications** using official district platforms.	4. District entities (District Office, Schools, and Departments) may seek feedback from stakeholders and/or parents/guardians as necessary according to their specific programs and services.
5. Each major District entity (District Office and the four schools) **will communicate via Social Media at least one (1) post per week during the school year** using official district Tier 1 accounts.	
6. The District will engage in **ongoing reflection, progress monitoring, and an end-of-the-year audit** by seeking feedback from stakeholders via the SCoPE survey as part of the continuous cycle of improvement.	

Social Media (Facebook & Twitter): Communication Formatting Standards & Guidelines

Documents As Supplements / Links
1. All documents need to be posted / shared as a PDF (**not** Word, etc.).
2. The Why is because the PDF format is a universally readable format for various platforms (iPhone, laptop, etc.)

Social Media Post Formatting: Intro, Body, Closing
Please put a space ('Return x2) after the Intro and Body (so there is a space between the Intro, Body, and Closing

Post Formatting:

INTRO: HOW	WHO (ENTITY)	WHAT (TYPE)
In all **CAPS**	DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL MIDDLE SCHOOL INTERMEDIATE PRIMARY FOOD SERVICE TRANSPORTATION	ANNOUNCEMENT VACANCY NEWS CONFERENCES ASSEMBLY FREE & REDUCED APPLICATION BUS ROUTES
BODY: HOW	**THE POST**	
"Normal writing rules" including capitalizing proper nouns, lower case, punctuation, etc.	*A short yet informative post about your WHAT / TOPIC. Use the "Billboard Principle" while keeping in mind (for Campus Messenger notifications) the Open Rate of an email vs. text by using:* ● Simplicity is the key ● Do your best to stick to one message or idea ● Be short and sweet ● **NOTE:** If you have a lot of information to share, use a link (to a document or webpage in the CLOSING	
CLOSING: HOW	**MAJOR COMPONENTS**	
"Normal writing rules" including capitalizing proper nouns, lower case, punctuation, etc.	*Short closing including if relevant:* ● Links to a webpage, resource, or document if the WHAT contains a lot of information ● Who to contact directly if needed (this will assist with the direct flow of communication) ● Anything else pertinent or necessary for "closure"	