

## **COMMUNICATIONS TO AND FROM THE BOARD**

The Board recognizes that appropriate communication procedures must be adhered to when communicating between Board members, district administration and members of the public. Public communication by the Board should always reflect positively on the district and serve the community by keeping it informed about the goals, programs and achievements of the district and its schools.

Staff members, parents and community members should submit questions or communications to the School Board as a whole, through the Superintendent or designee. Board member's questions or communications to staff or about programs will be channeled through the Superintendent's office. If contacted individually, Board members will refer the person to the appropriate channel of authority. Board members will not take private action that might compromise the Board or Administration.

### **Correspondence Received by the Board**

Written correspondence to the Board may be part of the public record.

Written communication from members of the public to the School Board pertaining to education may be published with the next available School Board agenda under the correspondence section.

Issues involving concerns specific to any single individual or containing inappropriate language will not be published. Comments should be appropriate for all audiences including school age children.

Correspondence must include first and last name, and a form of verifiable contact information such as email address and telephone number.

### **Board Member Use of Electronic Mail**

Electronic communications are an efficient and convenient way to communicate and can expedite the exchange of information. Board members shall exercise caution to ensure that these communications are not used to discuss, deliberate, or take action on Board business outside of a properly scheduled meeting. To ensure compliance with the Open Meetings Act, electronic communications by and between members shall not be used to conduct Board business but shall be limited to:

1. Disseminating information
  2. Messages not involving deliberation, debate, or decision-making; or
  3. Scheduling meetings and events
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Board Members may properly use electronic communications to provide:

1. Agenda item suggestions
2. Reminders regarding meeting times, dates, and places
3. Board meeting agenda or public record information concerning agenda items; or
4. Responses to questions posed by the community, administrators, or the school staff subject to the restrictions of this policy.

Board members shall make every effort to ensure that their electronic communication conform to Board Bylaw 7010, Public Statements. Unless authorized to speak on behalf of the full Board, a Board member should clarify that the member is speaking as an individual member, and not as an official Board or district spokesperson.

A Board member sending an electronic communication concerning the district shall copy the Superintendent or designee, who shall store the message consistent with the district's practice of record retention.

Board Members shall abide by the district's acceptable use policy when using district-issued devices or technology resources, including district Internet access on a personal device. While using district-issued devices or technology resources, there is no expectation of privacy for any Board member messages sent or received by email or other electronic communication, and these communications may be subject to public disclosure. Board members should keep public and personal communication totally separate.

School Board members shall also exercise reasonable care to assure that email and other records they create or accessed using district technology are preserved as needed in accordance with procedures developed by the State and Wrangell Public Schools for the preservation of governmental records.

### **Board Member Use of Social Media**

Social media can be a positive tool for fostering community engagement with the district, but this form of communication carries unique responsibilities. Board members desiring to utilize social media to communicate on matters of the district must adhere to the rules above. In addition, Board members must be cognizant to:

1. Board members shall make every effort to ensure that their social media posts conform to Board Bylaw 7010, Public Statements. Unless authorized to speak on behalf of the full Board, a Board member should clarify that the member is speaking as an individual member, and not as an official Board or district spokesperson.
  2. Post only content that the district has already released to the public
  3. Conduct yourself online in a manner that reflects positively on the district and on you as a publicly elected official
  4. Do not post anonymously about school business
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5. Immediately report harassing or defamatory communications to the Superintendent if they involve the district, its employees, or students
6. Retain a copy of your posts and what others post on your account if required by the district's records retention procedures; and
7. Immediately report to the district any potential security breach.

Board members should not use social media as a vehicle for communicating with each other outside of properly noticed meetings.

*Legal Reference:*

ALASKA STATUTES

40.25.110 - .220 Alaska's Public Records Act

44.62.310 - .312 Alaska's Open Meetings Act

Adoption Date:	October 3, 1988
Revised & Renumbered in Consultation with Legal Counsel:	April 18, 2011
Revised:	January 19, 2015
Revised using the AASB Sample Policy:	August 19, 2019
Revised:	May 16, 2022
Revised:	December 19, 2022

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