



# **COMMUNICATIONS HANDBOOK**

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# COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

The Faribault Public Schools communications department is responsible for the coordination and oversight of the district's communications efforts.

Faribault Public Schools communicates with a variety of stakeholders in District 656, including students, families, staff and community members. The department works to effectively share information through a variety of channels and capacities, including: Community engagement, internal communications, marketing, media relations, notifications and alerts, publications, public relations, social media, the Falcon App and our websites.

The department supports the district's fifth strategy, Family and Community Engagement, by keeping families and the community informed about the educational opportunities in our schools, the innovative programming taking place in our classrooms, and the great work of our students and staff.

This handbook serves as a communications resource for all FPS staff. Every staff member in FPS plays a role in supporting our communications efforts. Please email Matt Steichen at [msteichen@faribault.k12.mn.us](mailto:msteichen@faribault.k12.mn.us) with any questions.

Communications and Public Relations website:

<https://www.faribault.k12.mn.us/departments/communications>



Matt Steichen

Community Relations Coordinator

Communications Office, District Office

[msteichen@faribault.k12.mn.us](mailto:msteichen@faribault.k12.mn.us), 507-333-6152

# **BUILDING DIRECTORY**

## **District Office**

PO Box 618

710 17th St. SW

Faribault, MN 55021

Office: 507-333-6000

Fax: 507-333-6050

Website: <https://www.faribault.k12.mn.us/>

Facebook: [facebook.com/faribaultpublic](https://www.facebook.com/faribaultpublic)

## **Cabinet Contacts**

Superintendent's Office - 507-333-6016

Superintendent's Secretary - 507-333-6010

Teaching and Learning - 507-333-6008

Finance and Operations - 507-333-6059

Human Resources - 507-333-6006

Special Services - 507-333-6004

Community Education - 507-333-6005

## **Operations Contacts**

Technology and Innovation - 507-333-6065

Controller - 507-333-6021

Accounting Clerk - 507-333-6019

Accounts Payable - 507-333-6020

Payroll - 507-333-6022

Facilities - 507-333-6032

Food Services - 507-333-6773

Health Services - 507-333-6284

Student Services - 507-333-6067

Faribault Transportation - 507-334-5121

Transportation Specialist - 507-333-6014

Interpretation and Translations - 507-333-6463

Technology Support - [techsupport@faribault.k12.mn.us](mailto:techsupport@faribault.k12.mn.us) or 507-333-6063

# SCHOOL DIRECTORY

## Jefferson Elementary

922 Home Place  
Faribault, MN 55021  
Office: 507-333-6500  
Fax: 507-333-6544  
Website: [jefferson.faribault.k12.mn.us/](http://jefferson.faribault.k12.mn.us/)  
Facebook:  
[facebook.com/JeffersonElemS](https://facebook.com/JeffersonElemS)  
School Times: 8:15 a.m.-2:55 p.m.

## Faribault Middle School

704 17th St. SW  
Faribault, MN 55021  
Office: 507-333-6300  
Fax: 507-333-6400  
Website: [fms.faribault.k12.mn.us/](http://fms.faribault.k12.mn.us/)  
Facebook:  
[facebook.com/faribaultmsSchool](https://facebook.com/faribaultmsSchool)  
Times: 7:50 a.m.-2:44 p.m.

## Area Learning Center

2855 1st Ave. NW  
Faribault, MN 55021  
Office: 507-333-6187  
Fax: 507-333-6048  
Website: [alc.faribault.k12.mn.us/](http://alc.faribault.k12.mn.us/)  
Facebook: [facebook.com/faribaultalcSchool](https://facebook.com/faribaultalcSchool)  
Times: 8:20 a.m.-2:50 p.m.

## Faribault Education Center

340 9th Ave. SW  
Faribault, MN 55021  
Office: 507-333-6472  
Adult Education: 507-333-6473  
Multilingual Programming: 507-333-6463  
Website: [fec.faribault.k12.mn.us/Course](http://fec.faribault.k12.mn.us/Course)  
Registration: [faribault.ce.eleyo.com/](http://faribault.ce.eleyo.com/)  
Community Education Facebook:  
[facebook.com/fps.commed](https://facebook.com/fps.commed)  
Morning Classes: 9-11:30 a.m.  
Afternoon Classes: 12-3:30 p.m.  
Evening Classes: 5:30-8 p.m.

## Lincoln Elementary

510 Lincoln Ave.  
Faribault, MN 55021  
Office: 507-333-6600  
Fax: 507-333-6642  
Website: [lincoln.faribault.k12.mn.us/](http://lincoln.faribault.k12.mn.us/)  
Facebook: [facebook.com/LincolnElemS](https://facebook.com/LincolnElemS)  
School Times: 8:15 a.m.-2:55 p.m.

## Roosevelt Elementary

925 Parshall St.  
Faribault, MN 55021  
Office: 507-333-6700  
Fax: 507-333-6734  
Website: [roosevelt.faribault.k12.mn.us/](http://roosevelt.faribault.k12.mn.us/)  
Facebook: [facebook.com/RoosElementary](https://facebook.com/RoosElementary)  
School Times: 8:15 a.m.-2:55 p.m.

## McKinley Early Childhood Center

930 4th Ave. NW  
Faribault, MN 55021  
Office: 507-333-6460  
Fax: 507-333-6830  
Website: [mecc.faribault.k12.mn.us/](http://mecc.faribault.k12.mn.us/)  
Facebook:  
[facebook.com/mckinleyfaribault](https://facebook.com/mckinleyfaribault)  
Morning Classes: 8:45 a.m.-11:15 a.m.  
Afternoon Classes: 12:45 p.m.-3:15 p.m.

## Faribault High School

330 9th St. SW  
Faribault, MN 55021  
Office: 507-333-6100  
Fax: 507-333-6111  
Activities Office: 507-333-6210  
Records: 507-333-6207  
Guidance Office: 507-333-6200  
Website: [fhs.faribault.k12.mn.us/](http://fhs.faribault.k12.mn.us/)  
Facebook: [facebook.com/faribaulths](https://facebook.com/faribaulths)  
School Times: 8:15 a.m.-3:05 p.m. (8:44 a.m. start on Thursdays)

# MISSION STATEMENT

Faribault Public Schools provides a high-quality and equitable education that nurtures, inspires, challenges, and empowers all students to engage and grow as learners and citizens.

## Strategies

Student-Centered Learning: We will address individual student learning in innovative and challenging ways.

Equity: We will commit to a high-quality education for every student.

Mental Health and Safety: We will ensure our schools focus on the social and emotional well-being and safety of students and staff.

School Climate: We will foster unity, respect, and connectedness within our schools.

Family and Community Engagement: We will engage families and the community to help our students grow as learners and citizens.

## Core Values

Integrity: We align our actions and words with our mission.

Respect: We value ourselves and each other across all differences.

Excellence: We commit to continuous learning and improvement.

Adaptability: We engage in flexible, continuous, and purposeful change based on data.

Responsibility: We use our human, financial, and physical resources in support of our mission.

Engagement: We act with values-driven purpose to achieve our mission.

Collaboration: We leverage resources and talents among all stakeholders as a way to advance our mission.

The Faribault Public Schools Strategic Plan 2020 is a guiding document created by staff and community stakeholders to help the school district successfully serve the needs of our community. The Strategic Plan is reviewed and refined regularly to reflect on progress made and address changing needs.

# **BRAND STANDARDS**

## **A brief history of branding**

The term “brand” originates from the method cattle ranchers used to identify their animals. As the industrial revolution took off, companies used branding to differentiate themselves from the many other competing products that suddenly became available to consumers. A brand has come to be associated with an organization’s reputation, or how it is perceived by the public. It is created and influenced by how the public interacts with and experiences an organization.

## **The Faribault Public Schools brand**

Faribault Public Schools’ brand has been designed to reflect our all-around standard of excellence in academics, athletics and the arts. In displaying the Falcons mascot and our traditional colors, we celebrate the rich history of our school district and carry it on toward a promising future. In order to maintain this connection, it is critical that all parties utilizing any of the Faribault Public Schools brand elements follow the guidelines put in place to maintain consistency and our brand standard.



# TYPEFACES

## TYPEFACES

These fonts should be used for all materials for the Faribault Public School District. These typefaces are Google fonts, so they are universal and can be used for both print and digital (web) applications.

### HEADLINES

#### Neue Aachen Pro Bold

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
1234567890 !@#\$%^&\*()?**

#### Neue Aachen Pro Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
1234567890 !@#\$%^&\*()?

### BODY COPY

#### Montserrat Extra Bold

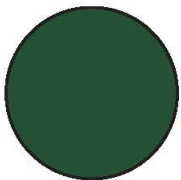
**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
1234567890 !@#\$%^&\*()?**

#### Montserrat Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
1234567890 !@#\$%^&\*()?

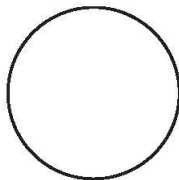
## COLORS

The official colors of the Faribault Public School District are Pantone 350, White and Black. The CMYK formula should be used for applications such as Newsletters or flyers. RGB and HEX formulas are for Digital applications such as websites and social media.



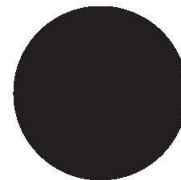
#### Pantone 350

**C: 79 M: 0 Y:100 K: 75  
R: 41 G: 81 B: 53  
HEX: # 295135**



#### White

**C: 0 M: 0 Y: 0 K: 0  
R: 255 G: 255 B: 255  
HEX: # ffffff**



#### Black

**C: 0 M: 0 Y:0 K: 100  
R: 0 G: 0 B: 0  
HEX: # 000000**

Use Neue Aachen Pro Bold for headlines on large-scale products printed by third parties like catalogs and brochures. If that font is not available, use Alfa Slab One for headlines. If Alfa Slab One is not available, use Montserrat Extra Bold.



# LOGO USAGE

Our goal is to establish a consistent brand that reflects our school pride as well as our commitment to excellence in academics, athletics and the arts. Only official logos should be used when representing Faribault Public Schools. Altering logos in any way is prohibited.

Approved logos and design elements can be accessed by staff via Google Drive: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/OAAKeNnVLnVkcUk9PVA>

Logo requests from the media or other entities outside Faribault Public Schools should be made to the communications and public relations office at 507-333-6152, or to the activities office at 507-333-6210.

Do not use non-approved versions of any district logo, alter any portion of the brand elements, or use the logo or elements in non-approved colors. If you notice anyone in your building is using an old logo or a logo that is not of high quality, please make sure you let them know and ask them to remove the logo.

## Official logos

The Falcon is the official mascot of Faribault Public Schools. The Falcon logo can be used on uniforms, fashion gear, signs, banners, sport-specific designs, club-specific designs and other products. There are two versions of the Falcon logo, one with the word Faribault across the middle and one with the word Falcons. Both are acceptable to use as given projects dictate. Variations of the logos with different file types and pixel-per-inch (PPI) ratios are available. Separate logos with and without transparent backgrounds, and for print and digital, are also available.



## Mastheads

Each school has its own masthead featuring the Falcons logo and the name of the school. This is to be used at the top of official items such as letters to parents.

## Logo variations

Each school has its own horizontal logos, stacked-text logos and round logos for use as needed. Variations of the Faribault High School crest with different file types and pixel-per-inch (PPI) ratios are available in the Faribault High School folder.

## Slides

Templates for Powerpoint and Google Slides presentations are available in the graphics folder. These templates should be used for any presentation to staff, parents or the school board, along with the official Faribault Public Schools colors and fonts.

# DISTRICT MAILINGS

Any piece of mail that is going out to all students or staff should be held to the standards listed below:

- Should be reviewed by the communications office before going out.
- Should be submitted for review at least two days before it is expected to go in the mail.
- Should be reviewed by the principal.
- Letters from a principal should always include contact information on the last line.
- Letters should have your school letterhead and follow the style outlined in this handbook.

## **Documents**

All documents created and displayed publicly or distributed by FPS staff should be copy edited and use the approved logos, colors and typefaces. This includes posters or flyers to promote an event or program, sign-up forms, and event programs (for athletics, fine arts and other school-sanctioned activities).

## **School-wide and district-wide emails**

All FPS staff members have the ability to send school-wide and district-wide emails. This should only be done if the information being shared is time-sensitive and relevant to the majority of recipients. Otherwise, staff should send building-level information to their school newsletter administrator so they can disseminate it to the appropriate audience (internal to staff or external to families) via newsletter. District-wide emails should be reviewed and approved by a building administrator.

## **Infinite Campus messages**

Each school may use Infinite Campus at its discretion to provide information to families. If the message needs to be translated, follow the process outlined on Page 20. All messages should be reviewed and approved by the building administrator before being sent. The communications office should be informed of all Infinite Campus messages so they can be coordinated with the district-wide messaging schedule.

# FLYERS

## **Internal flyers**

All staff will follow these guidelines when creating a document.

- What is the goal of the project? Is this document helping FPS meet that goal? Does it clearly provide the information and message you want to convey?
- Information to include: who, what, where, when and why.
- What is the title of the project? Does it need to be included?
- Don't be afraid to leave open space in your design.
- Use black and Falcon green as accent colors.
- Use approved fonts.
- Place text on a contrasted background so it's legible.
- Don't use copyrighted material without permission.

## **Design Support**

To request assistance with a project that involves graphic design, contact the communications office. For single page documents, a first proof will be provided within 1-3 days. Multi-page documents and documents that require professional design and printing need at least 5-10 business days.

## **Outside flyer distribution request**

Flyers submitted for distribution or posting by outside groups or organizations should be made to the community education office.

- Flyers received by schools should be submitted to the community education office for review before being distributed or posted.
- All flyers need to feature the following disclaimer: This event, class, activity or matter is not sponsored or endorsed by the school district and is not printed at district expense.
- Approved flyers will be distributed to students and/or shared in the community education flyer email.

# NEWSLETTERS

## **Newsletter expectations**

Each school keeps students, families and staff informed by regularly sharing newsletters throughout the school year. Frequency will vary between the elementary and secondary levels and between internal and external newsletters, but should be consistent (weekly, every other week, monthly). Smore is an online tool with an easy-to-use drag and drop interface used to create online newsletters.

The district newsletter, Around 656, is sent out monthly from the community relations coordinator to all staff, parents and students through Infinite Campus, email, the district social media sites, and the Falcon App, during the school year.

## **Administrator role**

Building administrators are responsible for overseeing their school's newsletters, coordinating with departments and groups on submission of content, and ensuring all staff members know what information to submit for newsletters, and how and when to submit it.

Here are some examples of good newsletter content:

## **Internal Staff Newsletter**

Calendar with upcoming events, staff birthdays, meetings, theme days, etc; Videos from events; Awards; Shout-outs to staff for a job well done; Schedules; Announcements; Links; Professional development opportunities; Staff Spotlights; Birth announcements, wedding announcements and celebrations of other personal and professional milestones; Inspirational quotes. Submissions from district departments (communications, technology, teaching and learning, operations, buildings and grounds, etc.).

## **External Parent Newsletter**

Calendar with upcoming events; lunch menu; Photos of theme days and other events; Staff Spotlights; Alumni Updates; A message from the principal; Information on student resources; Updates on projects or changes around the building; Information for parents on attendance, winter weather notices, conferences, etc.; Submissions from district departments (communications, technology, teaching and learning, operations, buildings and grounds, etc.).

## **Sharing the newsletter**

Internal newsletters can be distributed to staff by sending the Smore link via email to your specific building's email group. External Newsletters can be shared with your students and their families by sending the Smore link in an email and message via Infinite Campus. The web link should be shared as part of an introductory paragraph that lets parents know what they will find in the newsletter.

In addition to sending out the parent newsletter on Infinite Campus, the link and a PDF of the newsletter should be shared with the technology department so it can be posted on the school website. The introductory paragraph and link should also be sent to your school's social media administrator or the district communications office so it can be shared on the school Facebook page. For Smore training or assistance, contact the communications office.

# PRINCIPAL MESSAGE

Your principal's message is one of the first things families look for when they visit your school website. It should be used as an introduction to your school. The message should be updated at least three times per year: at the start of the school year, midway through the school year, and at the end of the school year. To update your message, send it to the communications department or technology department.

## Guidelines for crafting your message

- Be warm and welcoming. People who want to learn more about your school will read this, so make a good first impression.
- Don't reference times (yesterday, last week) unless they're dates (Oct. 3). The message needs to last half the school year without sounding dated, so it's okay to write in more general terms.
- Include important reminders, like how to register a student over the summer or to make sure you return your benefits form.
- It doesn't have to be long. It's more important that it's fresh.
- Include information specific to your school and the culture in your building.

Principal

Assistant Principal

Office Staff

Michael Meihak  
Principal  
[507-333-6313](tel:507-333-6313) | [Email](#)

Your middle school years should be filled with opportunity and preparation. We strive to provide classes that give you a solid base of knowledge as well as the chance to explore other classes that will open doors of opportunities for years to come. We also strive to provide you with a safe and welcoming environment.

We work hard at these goals each and every day. The entire staff at FMS promises to do our best to give you the skills to prepare yourself for life. We also ask that you commit to doing your best and to work as a team to make this year a year to remember. Be creative, take charge, be a positive leader, dream big, and enjoy the experience of Faribault Middle School.

Mr. Meihak

# SUBMITTING CONTENT

One of the main purposes of the communications department is to share with the community all the great things going on in Faribault Public Schools. All staff are encouraged to develop your sense of newsworthiness, whether something is important or interesting enough that people will want or need to know more about it. Here are four things to consider when determining if something is newsworthy:

**Proximity:** Things happening in local schools are always close by (check)

**Human interest:** Is it personal? Is it emotional? Work that involves kids almost always meets this criteria (check)

**Timing:** Is it happening now or soon? Does it tie into something bigger?

**Significance:** Is what's happening relevant? Does it affect a lot of people? Does it pass the "so what?" test?

Things that meet these criteria happen in Faribault Public Schools EVERY DAY! So please keep an eye out for things that are newsworthy and take action. And don't be afraid to share what's going on in your own classroom! Stories with a visual element are especially effective. To submit content or share an idea, contact the communications office via email or by phone at 507-333-6152. Please provide as much advance notice as possible.

The local media, our websites, our social media sites, our newsletters, and the Falcon App, are all platforms we can use to promote our schools, our students and our staff. All media requests should go through the communications office. If you are contacted by the media, please refer them to the communications office.

All press releases are sent out with approved letterheads and approved fonts. The community relations coordinator is also responsible for coordinating the superintendent's column and the district's monthly staff education column in the Faribault Daily News.

## **Submission tips**

Provide lots of information. Don't be afraid of going into too much detail. Details often make the story.

Photos are great. Close-up photos are better. Don't be afraid to get close.

Send photos in the highest resolution possible. Whenever possible, provide a photo caption with names of students and staff listed.

## **Submitting video**

For assistance with a video project, contact the communications office and provide at least three days notice. If you're shooting your own video, keep the camera steady, get close to the subject you're shooting, shoot horizontally, and be aware of how you're framing your shot.

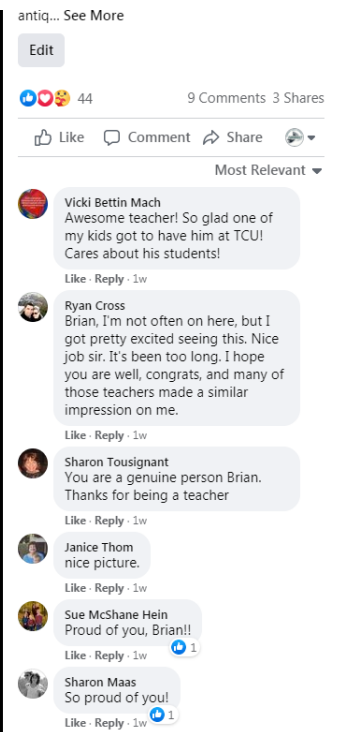
Pay attention to your audio. Is background noise drowning out your subject? Is there enough light? Are you shooting in front of a wall? Instead, look for an interesting and/or relevant background.

Submit your video in a Google Doc rather than by email. Please note that the community relations coordinator will use discretion for any items submitted that do not represent Faribault Public Schools appropriately.

# STAFF SPOTLIGHTS & ALUMNI UPDATES

One of the ways we can share our story with the community is by featuring the stories of our outstanding staff, coaches, advisors, and alumni. That's why every week we feature staff members in our Staff Spotlight and coaches and advisors in our Meet a Coach/Meet an Advisor campaign. These profiles appear on our social media pages, on our websites, in our newsletters, and in the Faribault Daily News. Our monthly Alumni Update profile appears on social media, on our websites and in our newsletters.

It is important that all members of the administration take the time to choose someone to highlight when called upon. Highlighting staff helps with retention, morale and is a free way to help someone know they are appreciated.





# SOCIAL MEDIA

Maintaining a school social media page is a great way to connect with students, parents, staff, and stakeholders. All Faribault Public Schools have a Facebook page that is managed by the community relations coordinator and 1-2 designated building administrators. FPS staff can submit social media content to either their building administrator(s) or to the communications office. Staff interested in becoming a social media administrator can contact the communications office.

The district Twitter (@District656), Instagram (faribault\_falcons) and YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/user/isd656>) pages are administered by the community relations coordinator. All school board meetings are aired live by the technology department and are archived on the district YouTube page.

The district activities Twitter page (@frbo\_falcons) is administered by the activities director. Guidelines for coaches and advisors are available in the Faribault Coaches and Advisors Handbook. It can be found on the activities website at [faribaultfalcons.com](http://faribaultfalcons.com).

A school-sponsored social media account is, regardless of platform, a site that is operated by a school district employee in a professional capacity and is designed to further the educational mission of the school district by communicating with members of the school district community and the general public. School-sponsored accounts must be approved by the communications office and remain consistent with the professional standards of the district at all times. The operators of school-sponsored social media accounts are responsible for ensuring that content is accurate and stays current. Postings should be fact checked and spell checked.

School-sponsored social media account operators may post photographs, videos and live streams of students engaged in the educational process or at school-related events unless the student has filled out the media exclusion form.



[facebook.com/faribaultpublic](https://www.facebook.com/faribaultpublic)



[@faribault\\_falcons](https://www.instagram.com/faribault_falcons)



[@District656](https://twitter.com/District656)

# SOCIAL MEDIA

All school-sponsored social media accounts shall operate as a limited public forum, where the public may comment publicly on posts. All accounts are moderated and all comments are subject to the review of moderators. FPS reserves the right to remove posts that use include any of the following:

- Obscene language
- Points unrelated to the purpose or subject of the original post
- Complaints, concerns or confidential information about individual students or employees
- Illegal or copyrighted material
- Uncivil behavior
- Threats of violence or any words that present a threat to a person's health or safety
- Abusive language
- Fraud and defamation
- Words that constitute a criminal act or solicit others to commit a criminal act
- Advertising or promotional materials

## **Social Media Dos and Don'ts for site administrators**

**Do:** Share photos and videos of students and staff! Parents love to see what their kids are up to. They also love to show their support of teachers and other staff.

**Don't:** use Google images, clip art or other non-brand specific photos. Most of these photos are copyrighted. Take pictures of the kids in our schools.

**Do:** Share often! Frequent fresh content makes users know they can expect to find something new when they visit your page.

**Don't:** Worry that the things happening in your building aren't newsworthy. People like to see what's going on. It doesn't need to be special to be relevant.

**Do:** Promote fundraisers and special events.

**Don't:** ONLY post fundraisers and special events. Those things are important, but they need to be balanced by the fun things going on in our schools. Consider what content will keep the page fresh, personal and inviting.

**Do:** Ask for help! For big events at the school, it helps to have multiple people there getting photos and sharing online.

**Don't:** forget to use your resources. You have an entire staff full of people who know what's happening around the school and might have ideas for content. Ask them to send you a photo or video.

**Do:** Always think before you post. "Does this represent Faribault Public Schools and my school well?"

**Don't:** Forget to have fun. Social media is successful because it's a fun experience. Don't be afraid to show your school's personality.

# SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE POLICY

The definition of social media is any form of online publication, discussion, presence, or information sharing that includes but is not limited to social networks, blogs, message boards, wikis, videos, podcasts, photos, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Schoology, Instagram, and other online forums or applications. FPS recognizes the value and benefits of online social media applications in instruction and professional development. We encourage teachers, students, and other staff to use social media responsibly as a way to connect, create, and share educational content to enhance the school experience.

The district does not monitor social media accounts, however, the district may take appropriate action if alerted or suspects behavior or communication that unfavorably affects the workplace or violates professional code of conduct. Common code of conduct applies to all students and employees. Any postings or methods of communication must comply with all state and federal laws and any applicable district policies.

## **Responsibilities**

- A. All postings by individuals must make clear any views expressed are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the District. District staff may not post comments representative of the District without authorization by the Superintendent.
- B. Respect all copyright and fair use guidelines.
- C. Students using social networking tools and curriculum content management software for a teacher's assignment are required to keep personal information out of their postings. Students should not share confidential information about themselves or others.

The most important thing to keep in mind when you post on social media is that you are always representing Faribault Public Schools, so be sure to represent yourself and FPS well: Think before you post and remember that what you say can be seen and shared by anyone.

## **Before you Respond**

Seeing negative or false comments about our schools on social media can be frustrating, but responding with another comment isn't always the answer. If you see a post about a district or school-level issue that is of major concern, contact your building supervisor or the communications office first.

If the post is negative, respond with something positive you've experienced. If the post is inaccurate, respond with factual information. If the post was made by someone you know, consider contacting them in person rather than going back and forth online. If the post comes from a source that's unreliable, has a bad reputation, or doesn't have a large audience, consider whether it is worth a reply. If you're unsure how/if you should respond, contact the communications office.

## **If you do respond, always...**

Be transparent by stating your connection to the school. Cite your sources with links or other references. Lead with facts. Take time to think through your response. Don't rush. Respond in a tone that reflects the professionalism, empathy, and mission of your school. Give thought to the most effective type of response. Don't debate an issue or get into negative conversation online.

# BE AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR

*"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." -Maya Angelou*

Every single employee in Faribault Public Schools plays an important role in our communications efforts. Every interaction you have with a student or a parent impacts how our schools are perceived and affects our reputation. Here are some practices to follow to help make you a more effective communicator.

In everyday or difficult situations, **lead with compassion**. Speak, write and act in ways that value, recognize and respect the person with whom you are communicating, whether that's a student, coworker, parent or community member. See the world through their eyes, listen for understanding and then speak.

**Over-communicate**. Everyone is busy and people may miss your first message. Communicate with parents early and often so that if there is an issue with their child, you have positive interactions with them first. Let them know the best ways to contact you if needed and that you're available to help.

**Operate with a "no surprises" mentality**. If there is a potential problem or concern, make sure the appropriate people know (i.e., your supervisor, parents and/or your coworker) so they aren't surprised with unexpected or problematic news.

**Be careful what you put in writing** (email, social media, letters, etc.). If you wouldn't want to see it go viral or on the 5 o'clock news, don't put it in writing. Information, photos and videos are easy to upload to the internet and never really go away.

**Embrace your role as an ambassador** for your school and Faribault Public Schools. What you say to friends, neighbors, parents and people in the community where you live and work has an impact on how the district is perceived. As an employee of the district, you are considered by people you know as an expert on what is happening in FPS, so it's critical you know all the facts and speak accurately. If you don't know, don't speculate. Get the facts and share what you can (if appropriate).

Make sure to **follow up on promises and be prompt in communications**. Return email and telephone messages within 24 hours. If you cannot provide immediate answers to a question, return the call to let that person know that you will have to get back with them.

**Keep confidential matters confidential**. Student and employee matters are confidential by law, so our job is to safeguard the privacy of our students and coworkers.

**Acknowledging others and saying please and thank you to EVERYONE** goes a long way toward fostering goodwill. Take every opportunity to congratulate others on their accomplishments and milestones. Help others feel appreciated every chance you get.

# EMAIL SIGNATURE

All Faribault Public Schools staff should have a professional email signature that displays their name, job title and contact information. There are many email signature templates out there, you can feel free to search for and use any of them. The template linked below is set up with a Faribault logo and color scheme for you.

1. Click on the link or go to [bit.ly/Faribaultsignature](https://bit.ly/Faribaultsignature)
2. The top left of the screen has a menu. Click on the button with an A and enter your details. This should include, at minimum, your name, title, department or grade level. You should list your building under Company Name and 'Faribault Public Schools' under Custom Field at the bottom. List the school website and school address, and you may fill out other fields as it makes sense. You may link to the district social media or your professional social media if you would like.
3. Once you have entered your details, click on the toolbox/handbag on the left to view the different template layouts you could use. You can still go back to adjust which details you include if you would like.
4. The image button on the far right allows you to include a profile picture if you'd like.
5. Once you are done editing, click on Create Signature.
6. Hubspot will ask for your email address, website (put FPS site), and phone number (list your building number). Hit Confirm and Submit.
7. Hit the button that says Copy Signature.
8. Go to Gmail and hit the gear button in the upper right corner, then hit "see all settings."
9. Scroll about 75% of the way down the page to find the Signature section. Hit Create New and give your signature a name ('standard' works). Click 'create.'
10. Click inside the box for text editing. Paste the signature (Control +v, Command + v on a mac, or right click and choose Paste).
11. Make sure the signature defaults are set so that New Emails and Reply/Forward both use that signature name.
12. Check the box that says "Insert signature before quoted text..."
13. Scroll down to the bottom of the page and hit Save Changes. You're done! Start a new email and admire your professional signature.

**Casey Rutherford**

Director of Educational Technology and Innovation



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*Faribault Public Schools. Empower, Energize, Engage.*

710 17th Street SW, PO Box 618, Faribault, MN 55021

# COORDINATOR DUTIES

## **School Board**

The community relations coordinator has three primary roles related to school board meetings 1. Coordinate recognition of students and staff. 2. Serve as a liaison for visiting media and assist them with obtaining information. 3. Upon request, provide assistance to cabinet members in preparing information for presentations to the board. The community relations coordinator also provides the board with yearly updates on the work of the communications department.

## **Superintendent messages**

The community relations coordinator works with the superintendent to craft and distribute messages for internal and external audiences. These messages are shared through email, Infinite Campus message, robocall and on the district website. The communications office coordinates with translators to provide all district written messages and robocalls in English, Somali and Spanish. All external messages are shared with the school board and staff before being sent out to parents, the community and the media.

## **Community partnerships**

The community relations coordinator works with local organizations and businesses to secure partnerships and sponsorships of various Faribault Public Schools programs and events. Recent partnerships include the district Adopt a Highway program through Rice County, the Maple Syrup Fun Run with River Bend Nature Center, Toys for Tots with Walmart, the FHS attendance award with the Faribault Chamber of Commerce, the Find Freddy Falcon promotion with Ace Hardware and McDonald's, and FHS student of the month sponsorships.

## **Website Updates**

The community relations coordinator collaborates with district staff and the technology department on content for the district website. The community relations coordinator's primary website duties are posting news items, updating content and copy-editing for clarity.

## **The Falcon App**

The community relations coordinator works with the activity director and the booster club to provide information on FMS and FHS activities to Falcon fans through the Falcon App. The app can be downloaded through Google Play or the Apple App Store. The community relations coordinator produces content, and shares content created by the activities office and submitted by fans, by converting them into news items and notifications within the app. The app is hosted by bfac.com.

# PROCESS FOR TRANSLATIONS

In accordance with the U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education, Faribault Public Schools communicates the following information to limited English proficient parents and guardians in a language they can understand:

- registration and enrollment in school and school programs
- grievance procedures and notices of nondiscrimination
- language assistance programs
- parent handbooks
- report cards
- gifted and talented programs
- student discipline policies and procedures
- magnet and charter schools
- special education and related services, and meetings to discuss special education
- parent-teacher conferences
- requests for parent permission for student participation

Translations are also provided for all announcements from the superintendent.

District forms are run through the Equity and Multilingual Coordinator, who co-supervises the cultural liaisons with the building principals. Translation requests for materials not listed above are reviewed to determine the best format for communicating the information to parents. This may include text translations, in-person meetings, phone calls or robo calls. If written translation is the best method of communication, then they are assigned to an interpreter to translate.

Parent questions or information requests are handled by phone. Parents will then be offered additional written translation, if necessary.

If it is determined that a translation is not needed, then the following statement will be included on the document (centered and bolded):

Somali: Haddii aad u baahantahay caawimaad lacag-la'aan ah ee tarjumaadda qorallkan, lambarka wac (phone number).

Spanish: Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para interpretar este documento, llame al numero indicado (phone number).

The above states: If you need free help interpreting this document call (phone number). The number inserted is the Faribault Education Center at 507-333-6472 unless otherwise specified.



# REQUESTING AN INTERPRETER

All liaisons are district-wide liaisons. They have district-wide access to students and connect with any family across the district. If you need support from the liaisons to interpret with a family or a student who has **limited English**. To request interpreting services, contact the FEC secretary at 507-333-6472 or 507-333-6476

Prior to contacting the FEC for assistance, please consider the following situations and check to see if the following scenarios are true:

1) Does the family need an interpreter?

- Do they have an 'interpreter needed' flag on Infinite Campus?
- Do they desire an interpreter for matters that may be confidential?

2) Can you address the situation by using the language line?

- Language lines are good for relaying quick messages to families and/or students
- Language lines are useful for scheduling appointments
- Language lines are useful for addressing walk-ins where families just need a quick answer

3) Can you use the Google Translate feature on Google Docs or use the Google Translate app to quickly scan the document and acquire the translation? Google Translate might not be 100 percent accurate, but the document can be verified by our interpreters to speed up the process.

4) Parent teacher conferences and IEP meetings will still work the same. Please contact the FEC secretary to request district interpreter support for these matters.

A folder containing instructions on how to access interpreters along with information about the language line are available at your buildings. Please refer all questions to your building principals.

## **How you get connected with a live interpreter in case of an emergency?**

- Interpreters are stationed at the FEC and throughout the district.
- For emergency cases where you would need one of them on the phone, feel free to contact the FEC secretary, who will connect you to one of our interpreters. If an interpreter is not available, the FEC secretary will reach out to liaisons that are stationed at Jefferson, FMS and FHS.
- The FEC secretary will call them and they will call you back right away. Languages available through district interpreters are Khmer, Somali, and Spanish
- If an interpreter is needed for a language that is unavailable in the district, use the language line. In some instances, as determined by the Equity and Multilingual Coordinator, the district will contract out to All in One Interpreting.

# ADDITIONAL INFO

## Recognition Days

Faribault Public Schools celebrates staff members during designated recognition days and weeks. The communications department collaborates with human resources and the wellness committee on these celebrations. Submissions of recognition days not listed can be made to the communications office.

Thank a Superintendent Day, Sept. 23  
National Custodial Workers Recognition Day, Oct. 2  
National Coaches Day, Oct. 6  
National School Lunch Week, second full week of October  
School Bus Safety Week, third full week of October  
Unity Day, October  
Paraprofessional Recognition Week, last week of January  
National School Counseling Week, first full week of February  
School Board Recognition Week, third full week of February  
National School Librarians Week, April 5-9  
Administrative Professional Day, third Wednesday of April  
School Principals Appreciation Day, May 1  
National Teacher Appreciation Week, first full week of May  
National Physical Education Week, May 1-7  
School Nurse Week, May 6-12

## School Closings

In the event of a school closure, delayed start, early dismissal, or cancelled activities, all PreK-12 families receive a phone call, email and message from the superintendent in their Campus Parent Portal. This information is also available on our district-wide emergency line at 507-333-6057. In addition, school closings are posted on the district website at [faribault.k12.mn.us](http://faribault.k12.mn.us) and on the district Facebook page by the community relations coordinator at [@faribaultpublic](https://www.facebook.com/faribaultpublic). An official announcement is also made on radio stations KDHL/Power96, KOWZ and KYMN, and on TV stations WCCO (Channel 4), KSTP (Channel 5), KMSP (Channel 9), KARE (Channel 11) and KEYC (Mankato Channel 12).

## Media-excluded students

When enrolling or re-enrolling their children, FPS parents must fill out a form to deny permission for their child's name and image to be published by FPS or the news media for the purpose of news coverage and publicity (print and online). Staff should be aware of which students in your class(es) have these media exclusions and inform visiting media and the community relations coordinator when they visit the classroom.