

FERNDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 502
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

No. 4000 P-1

PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM

I. GOALS

The general goal of the public information program is to increase and improve knowledge and understanding of school programs in a planned, systematic manner. Specific goals are:

- A. To produce and distribute publications within the school system.
- B. To cultivate open, friendly, effective relations with the press, radio and television.
- C. To utilize employees and students to enhance school/ community relations.
- D. To use the talents and abilities of members of the community in behalf of students and the school program.
- E. To encourage the use of school facilities by the community.
- F. To promote an effective working relationship with government at the local, county, state and federal levels.
- G. To develop and maintain a productive relationship with other school organizations and associations interested in education.

II. DISTRICT-LEVEL ACTIVITIES

- A. "Ferndale Schools" Newsletter
 - 1. Purpose -- To inform the community of programs, activities, and events in the school district and of educational matters and related topics at the state and national levels.
 - 2. Distribution -- Copies are distributed to post office box holders in the school district, to all district staff and to parents of new students. About 12,000 copies of each issue are prepared.
 - 3. Publication Schedule -- An issue is published two times during the school year and once during the summer.
 - 4. Responsibility -- The administrator for Public Information has overall responsibility for this publication.

FERNDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 502
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

No. 4000 P-1

- a. Principals and program administrators are expected and encouraged to contribute articles and to identify public information items which can be prepared by the administrator for Public Information. Drafts should include all basic facts -- who, what, when, where, why, how, and any special twists.
 - b. Articles are to be submitted by the tenth of the month.
- B. "Board Notes"
1. Purpose -- To inform staff of school board meeting actions/activities.
 2. Distribution -- Copies are distributed to all school district employees.
 3. Publication Schedule -- An issue is printed once a month or more during the school year.
 4. Responsibility -- The superintendent has overall responsibility for this publication.
- C. Brochures
1. "Welcome to Your Ferndale School Board Meeting"
 - a. Purpose -- To inform citizens at school board meetings, people new to the community and others of school board meeting dates, board members, board responsibilities and how they can bring a topic to the attention of the school board.
 - b. Distribution -- Brochures are available at school board meetings and are given to the parents of students new to the school district.
 - c. Publication Schedule -- They are revised and updated about every two years or when the makeup of the board changes.
 - d. Responsibility -- The administrator for public information has overall responsibility for this publication.

FERNDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 502
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

No. 4000 P-1

2. "Welcome to Ferndale Schools"
 - a. Purpose -- To give people new to the community and others interested in Ferndale schools information about school district programs.
 - b. Distribution -- They are distributed to parents of students new to the community, to the Chamber of Commerce office and to others interested in learning about schools.
 - c. Publication Schedule -- They are revised and updated about every two years.
 - d. Responsibility -- The administrator for public information has overall responsibility for this publication.

D. Monthly Calendar of Events

1. Purpose -- To inform administrators and staff of scheduled school events.
2. Distribution -- Three copies are sent to each elementary school, middle school, maintenance, bus garage, and cafeteria; six to the high school; and a copy to board members and to other offices in the school district.
3. Publication Schedule -- The next month's issue is published near the end of the month during the school year.
4. Responsibility -- This publication is the responsibility of the superintendent's office.

The information for the calendar is obtained from the District Handbook/Calendar and from each principal a few days before publication.

E. Information Packet for Parents of Students New to Ferndale School District

1. Purpose -- To inform parents of students new to the school district about the schools and their programs.
2. Distribution -- Sets of packets will be sent to each school in the district prior to the beginning of the school year. If a school uses all the packets, more can be obtained from the Public Information Office.

FERNDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 502
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

No. 4000 P-1

3. Publication Schedule -- Packets will be prepared during the summer and distributed before the beginning of the school year.
4. Responsibility -- It is the responsibility of the administrator for public information to see that these packets are prepared and distributed.

Each packet will contain the following:

- a. Superintendent's Letter of Welcome
- b. School Bus Schedule
- c. Brochures:
 - i. WELCOME TO YOUR FERNDALE SCHOOLS
 - ii. WELCOME TO YOUR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
- d. School District Handbook/ Calendar
- e. Ferndale Schools -- Sample back issues
- f. Annual Report for District (prior year)

The principal in each school will add building information and schedules to the packet before distribution to the parents.

F. Packets for Parents of Incoming Kindergarten Students

1. Purpose -- To inform parents of kindergartners about the schools and their programs.
2. Distribution -- A packet is to be given to the parents of each kindergartner at registration time, generally in May.
3. Publication Schedule -- Packets will be prepared in time to be distributed in the spring when kindergartners are registered for all.
4. Responsibility -- It is the responsibility of the administrator for public information to see that these packets are prepared and distributed.

FERNDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 502
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

No. 4000 P-1

G. Special Publications

Some publications are prepared for special events or programs. This includes such things as printed programs commemorating the opening of a new building or the extensive remodeling of school. Other examples would be publications prepared for special interest groups such as Title I/LAP, Aiming High, etc.

H. Community and Staff Involvement Record

The purpose of this record is to show time spent on school matters by citizens committees, task groups, and volunteers or at school meetings such as PTO, open house and curriculum sessions.

During the school year principals will keep a record of such involvement on the forms provided. They will send these completed forms to the administrator for public information at the end of the school year.

The data from all the schools will be compiled in June. A summary will be sent to the superintendent.

Appropriate news releases on the extent of citizen involvement in the schools will be prepared by the administrator for public information.

III. BUILDING LEVEL ACTIVITIES

A. Building Newsletters

1. Purpose -- To inform parents of building matters in each school.
2. Distribution -- In the elementary and middle schools they are given to each student to be carried home. In the high school they are mailed to the home of the parent.
3. Publication Schedule -- This varies from building to building but generally it is every few weeks or monthly. Two issues published each month at the first and fifteenth days.
4. Responsibility -- The building principal normally prepares these and is responsible for their content.

B. Classroom Newsletters

1. Purpose -- To inform parents of what is happening in the classroom.
2. Distribution -- All parents.

FERNDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 502
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

No. 4000 P-1

3. Publication Schedule - Three times per school year.
4. Responsibility -- The classroom teacher will prepare the newsletter and give the principal a copy for his/her files.

C. Written Newspaper Columns at the Building Level

1. Purpose -- To inform the public of school programs and activities at the building level.
2. Distribution -- Usually to the local county newspapers. On occasion when topics of a broader nature or of wide, grand interest are covered, articles may be distributed to other publications.
3. Responsibility -- The building principal is responsible for the content of these materials. They may be prepared by others, such as the A.S.B. publicity manager in the case of the high school.

IV. PUBLIC INFORMATION RELEASES TO THE MEDIA

A. Newspapers

1. Purpose -- To prepare press releases for newspapers to inform the public of school programs and activities.
2. Distribution -- The news releases will be sent to the Record Journal, the Bellingham Herald and/or SPI Education News. The exact distribution will be determined by the nature of the article.
3. Publication Schedule -- Deadlines vary. To be considered for the Record Journal, a weekly paper, articles must be submitted before noon on Tuesday, but earlier is better. The Bellingham Herald is a daily paper. Education news is published every two weeks by the Office of State Superintendent of Public Instruction.
4. Responsibility -- The administrator for public information is responsible for news releases on major issues or controversial topics. Routine articles may be submitted directly to the Record Journal and the Bellingham Herald with copies to the administrator for public information.

FERNDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 502
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

No. 4000 P-1

B. Radio Stations

News releases will be prepared for radio stations to publicize school programs, events and activities. The administrator for public information will attempt to prepare such release about twice a month and will work with the news directors of the radio station to ensure that they are broadcast.

C. Television

1. Purpose -- To inform the public about school activities and events.
2. Distribution -- Television stations.
3. Publication Schedule -- No set schedule. Done as event or activity occurs.
4. Responsibility -- All of these releases will be prepared and released to the media with the knowledge of and under the supervision of the administrator for public information.

V. ANNUAL REPORT

A. An annual report covering the diversified activities of the school system and the administration's recommendations for their improvement shall be prepared by the superintendent and presented to the board as soon as possible after the close of each school year. Upon board approval, the report shall be made available to the public and used as one means for informing parents and citizens, the state education agency, and other districts in the area of the programs and conditions of the district's schools. The report shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Criteria used for staff evaluations;
2. A summary of the student learning objectives;
3. Results of district-wide achievement testing; and
4. Budget information, including student enrollment, classroom staff, support staff, administrative staff, and special levy expenditures.

The district is required to ensure awareness of and compliance with certain statutory requirements as specified in Board Policy No. 2114.

FERNDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 502
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

No. 4000 P-1

VI. OTHER

Back-to-school nights, elementary school carnivals, variety shows, drama productions and other special events will be publicized in a variety of ways including bulletins hand-carried or mailed home, radio spots, reader boards, etc.

Legal References:

RCW 28A.150.230

Basic Education Act of 1977--District school directors as accountable for proper operation of district--Scope--Responsibilities--Publication of guide

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Revised 11-29-2000