

OE-9 COMMUNICATING WITH THE PUBLIC  
SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE STATUS  
APRIL 2021


**SUPERINTENDENT CERTIFICATION**

With respect to OE-9 *Communicating with the Public* taken as a whole, the superintendent certifies that the proceeding information is accurate and complete, and the district is:

- In Compliance  
 In Compliance, with Exception (as noted in the evidence)  
 Not in Compliance

**Summary Statement by Administration**

Monitoring of operational expectations policies is part of the ongoing process of district performance evaluation and superintendent evaluation. This report includes a Data Analysis on page 2 presenting an administrative summary of the data and a Capacity Building section on the last page outlining new practice or protocol to be utilized for the next reporting timeframe. The Capacity Building section also documents suggested changes to Operational Expectations or Results policies and/or indicators and interpretations. This report addresses seven indicators of the superintendent's responsibility regarding general operations. All seven indicators were determined to be in compliance. Reporting dates for this report are July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021.

Signed:  \_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent

Date: 4/26/2021

**SCHOOL BOARD ACTION**

With respect to OE-9 *Communicating with the Public*, the Board:

- Accepts the report as fully compliant  
 Accepts the report as compliant with noted exceptions  
 Finds the district to be noncompliant

**Summary statement/motion of the Board**

Motion by Mr. Lee to accept the OE-9 *Communicating with the Public* Monitoring Report as In Compliance, seconded by Ms. Preskey. Motion carried.

Signed:  \_\_\_\_\_  
Board President

Date: 4/26/2021

**Data Analysis by Administration**

The following data documents the nature and frequency of communications between Bismarck Public Schools and the public at large. For the purposes of this document, the term public refers to both internal and exogenous (media, other community entities, etc.) audiences.

When analyzing this data, it becomes apparent that some predictable deviations from normal communication practices occurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, some communication channels were utilized much more than would be typically expected, such as parent texts and emails, while other standard practices, such as the sending of media tip sheets, occurred somewhat less frequently due to a pandemic-induced lull in certain district activities. These variances are indicative of dynamic adaptation on the part of the district in response to the unforeseen challenges imposed by the pandemic.

Some specific items in this report that merit attention:

- In the public survey associated with 9.1 Indicator 4, over 83% of respondents voiced approval of the district's direction, a figure substantially higher than the 70% target.
- Though fewer Public Service Announcements and Tip Sheets were sent out than is typical, media relations were well maintained based on other metrics such as average district response time to press inquiries.
- Analysis of web traffic showed a substantial increase in novel visitors from the preceding year during most months.
- Links to all relevant documentation can be found embedded within this report.

On the basis of evidence presented in this report, Bismarck Public Schools finds itself to be in compliance with the criteria for communicating in the public set forth by OE-9.

**OE-9 Communicating with the Public**

The Superintendent shall assure that the public is adequately informed about the condition and direction of the district.

**Superintendent Interpretation:**

- **Adequately** shall mean sufficiently but not exhaustively.
- **Informed** shall mean provide information in writing and verbally through a variety of communications channels.
- **Public** shall mean Bismarck residents, including parents, staff and other stakeholders.
- **Condition** shall mean the district’s finances, academic results, climate or honors.
- **Direction** shall mean the strategic goals and initiatives of the district.

**The Superintendent Shall:**

<p><b>9.1</b> Assure the timely flow of information, appropriate input, and strategic two-way communication between the district and the public that builds understanding and support for district efforts.</p>	<p><b>In Compliance</b></p>
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**Superintendent Interpretation:** BPS works to provide timely information to the public and provide opportunities for input to build understanding for district initiatives.

- **Timely** shall mean routine mechanisms are in place to inform the public and news media; mechanisms are also in place for communicating urgent, immediate issues such as emergencies.
- **Flow of information** shall mean the distribution and/or availability of information.
- **Appropriate input** shall mean useful ideas, thoughts, questions and concerns brought to the district through the established chain of command or another identified method.
- **Strategic** shall mean in relation to the vision, plans and challenges facing the district.
- **Two-way communication** shall mean disseminating and listening.
- **Understanding** shall mean fact-based knowledge about the district.
- **Support** shall mean general support for the district and agreement with the vision and strategic plan.

<p><b>Indicator 1:</b> The number of visits to the district website’s home page will maintain or increase on an annual basis.</p>	<p><b>In Compliance</b></p>
<p><b>Evidence:</b> <a href="#">OE-9 Communicating with the Public activity indicators.</a></p>	

<p><b>Indicator 2:</b> The Community Relations Office will respond to standard media requests for information or interviews the same day but no later than 24 hours during the regular work week, with the exception of formal Open Records Requests which are subject to state law and handled by the Business and Operations Manager’s office. Evidence will be a list of all requests that were not completed within the stated timeline.</p>	<p><b>In Compliance</b></p>
<p><b>Evidence:</b> <a href="#">OE-9 Communicating with the Public activity indicators.</a></p>	

<p><b>Indicator 3:</b> The Community Relations Office will annually write, produce and email:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minimum of 35 Media Tip Sheets emailed to local news media with story ideas.</li> </ul>	<p><b>In Compliance</b></p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minimum of 35 Public Service Announcements to media regarding BPS events.</li> <li>• A minimum of 20 Intercom employee newsletters.</li> <li>• A minimum of 10 Chamber/BMDA newsletter articles.</li> <li>• A minimum of 20 Friday Fliers to advertise youth events to K-8 grade parents.</li> <li>• A minimum of 8 district newsletter pages for school newsletters to all parents.</li> <li>• A minimum of 3 social media posts per school day.</li> <li>• A minimum of 12 emails to PTOs &amp; Key Communicators during the school year.</li> <li>• Important district information or emergency information to parents via email, text and/or phone, as necessary.</li> <li>• Stories about student and staff awards/honors to news media, as applicable.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Evidence:</b> <a href="#">OE-9 Communicating with the Public activity indicators.</a></p>	

<p><b>Indicator 4:</b> A survey to measure public support of the District with the goal of at least 70% of respondents expressing support for the direction of the District will be conducted annually.</p>	<p><b>In Compliance</b></p>
<p><b>Evidence:</b> <a href="#">OE-9 Communicating with the Public activity indicators.</a></p>	

<p><b>Indicator 5:</b> Each year, the district will hold at least one parent presentation or a School Board forum to gain public input on a topic of interest. Examples could include facility planning, boundary changes, bond elections, bullying, sexting, etc.</p>	<p><b>In Compliance</b></p>
<p><b>Evidence:</b> <a href="#">OE-9 Communicating with the Public activity indicators.</a> Scheduled March 2020 parent presentations regarding facilities were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, rescheduled presentation dates have not been determined.</p>	

**The Superintendent Shall:**

<p><b>9.2</b> Prepare and publish, on behalf of the Board, an annual progress report to the public that includes the following items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Data indicating student progress toward accomplishing the Board’s Results policies.</li> <li>b. Information about school district strategies, programs and operations intended to accomplish the Board’s Results policies.</li> <li>c. Information about the district’s financial condition, including revenues, expenditures and costs of major programs.</li> </ol>	<p><b>In Compliance</b></p>
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**Superintendent Interpretation:** Each year, BPS prepares and publishes an annual progress report to the public on the academic and financial status of the district.

- **Publish** shall mean to make available to the public.
- **Student progress data** shall mean the data outlined in the Board’s **Results** policies on Academic Achievement, Personal Development, and Citizenship.
- **District strategies, programs and operations** to accomplish the Board’s **Results** policies shall mean the operational plans created annually to address the strategic plan.

- District financial condition information** such as revenues, expenditures and major program costs shall mean data such as state, local and federal revenues, as well as major expense categories such as salaries/fringe benefits, purchased services, supplies and materials, capital improvements, and utilities.

<b>Indicator 1:</b> The district’s annual report is presented to the School Board each fall. Print copies are available at each school and the district office. The full report is also available online and is inserted in the <i>Bismarck Tribune</i> for local subscribers.	<b>In Compliance</b>
<b>Evidence:</b> <a href="#">2019-2020 BPS Annual Report</a>	

<b>Indicator 2:</b> The annual budget is submitted to the School Board and posted on the district webpage. A synopsis of the budget is also contained in the annual report, which is posted on the district webpage and inserted in the <i>Bismarck Tribune</i> .	<b>In Compliance</b>
<b>Evidence:</b> <a href="#">FY 21 Annual Budget</a> , <a href="#">2019-2020 BPS Annual Report</a>	

### **Capacity Building**

This section provides new inputs by administration placed into practice or protocol since this data was collected.

The Community Relations Department of Bismarck Public Schools is currently formulating a new Communications Plan to be finalized and implemented in July of 2021. This plan will utilize the data associated with this report to make informed decisions about the future trajectory of district communication with the public.

As part of this plan, in alignment with the district's core value of Innovation, Bismarck Public Schools will seek to utilize new communication modalities and media channels, and augment existing ones, in order to expand opportunities for community engagement in accordance with the goals outlined in this document.

Stakeholder input derived from the community survey referenced in indicator 4 of Item 9.1 will be taken into account as BPS strives to actualize its core value of Inclusion by ensuring all community members have a voice that is heard and respected.

Finally, the next iteration of the annual report detailed in item 9.2 is currently being created with a new format, which strives to build upon and enhance the existing framework by utilizing a more engaging structure for data presentation.