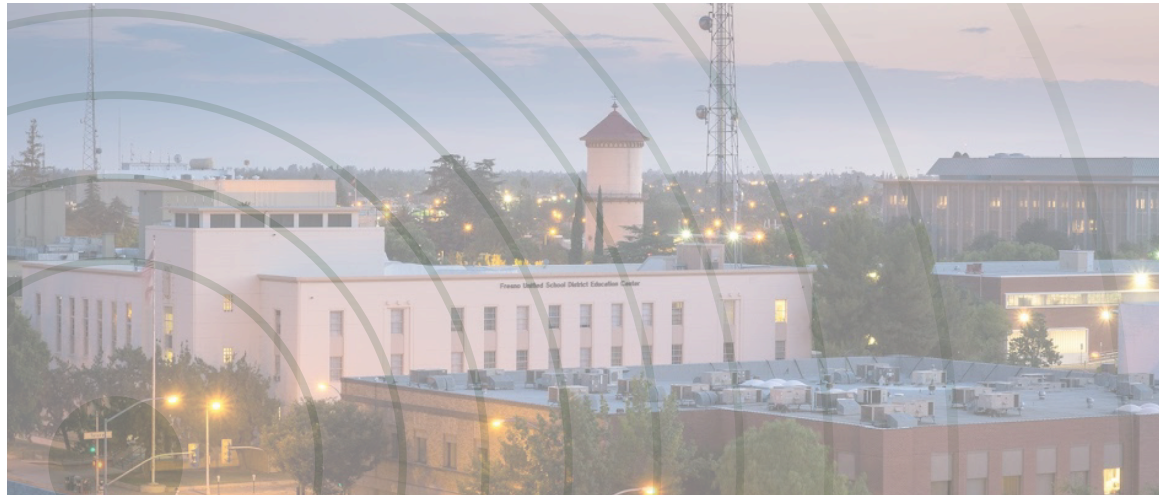


COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOLS

FRESNO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



MISSION AND GOALS

The mission of the Fresno Unified School District Communications Office is to distribute information and news effectively within the district and to families, students and the community. The department uses a variety of print and digital platforms to accomplish this, depending on the targeted audience. The department's primary goal is to help the district operate smoothly through effective communication, and to inform families and the community of how Fresno Unified is thriving and providing high quality teaching, programs and services to the students and their families.

COMMUNICATIONS STAFF

The district's communications staff handles a wide range of responsibilities, including crisis communications, internal and external communications, media requests and interviews, press and dedication events, speeches, communication plans for various initiatives, and video and photo production for schools and departments. Communications also leads several major events: State of Education luncheon, Excellence in Education dinner and awards, and the retirement dinner. The Communications Office staff is located in Room 211 of the Education Center, 2309 Tulare St.

Chief Information Officer Nikki Henry (Nikki.Henry@fresnounified.org)

Executive Officer Amy Idsvoog (amy.idsvoog@fresnounified.org)

Public Information Officer Vanessa Ramirez (vanessa.ramirez1@fresnounified.org)

Community Relations Officer Anne Ellis (anne.ellis@fresnounified.org)

Administrative Secretary Joanne Hernandez (joanne.hernandez@fresnounified.org)

MEDIA SERVICES

Media Production Specialists:

Jeff Cook (jeff.cook@fresnounified.org),

Bryce Marshall (bryce.marshall@fresnounified.org) and

Keith Rybaczyk (keith.rybaczyk@fresnounified.org)

Technician Tony Bernard (Anthony.bernard@fresnounified.org)

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Office is at the forefront of informing employees of critical information as well as positive news about the district.

Communication Tools:

- ❑ Automated phone calls (SchoolMessenger) and emergency texts (Rapid Alert)
- ❑ Employee Zone (every Monday via email to all employees)
- ❑ District Update (every Friday via email to supervisors)
- ❑ Board meeting recaps
- ❑ All staff emails

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Office coordinates all essential and emergency communications to students and their families. It also disseminates positive news and important information to families and the broader community, including partners who share the district's goal of preparing students for college and careers.

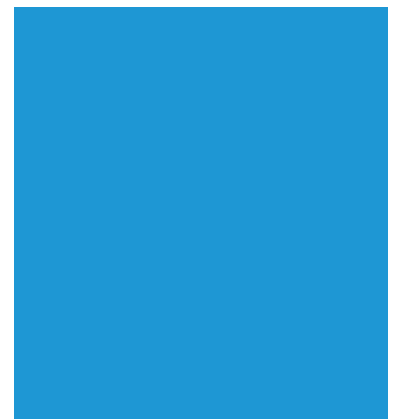
Communication Tools:

- ❑ Automated phone calls (SchoolMessenger) and emergency texts (Rapid Alert) for students/families
- ❑ Building Futures (monthly newspaper mailed to all residences and businesses with the district)
- ❑ Community Zone (twice a month to a community email list)
- ❑ District website (www.Fresnounified.org)
- ❑ Social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram)

VIDEOS

The Communications Office produces an average of 20 videos a month to share success stories about staff and students and to support various initiatives, such as Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), traffic safety around schools and career technical education.

- ❑ "Faces of Fresno Unified" is an ongoing video series highlighting the district's outstanding employees
- ❑ "Fresno Unified in 60 Seconds" shares important stories from around the district
- ❑ Contracts with local TV stations enable the district to expand and promote programs and engagement efforts to a large audience with district-created videos and public service announcements in English, Spanish and Hmong





CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Office works closely with schools, departments and the Safety Office when a crisis occurs. With more than 74,000 students and 10,000 employees, the Communications Office logs an average of 100 incidents every month. Incidents range from lockdowns, 5150's (involuntary psychiatric holds), medical emergencies, threats, theft/vandalism, personnel issues, employee/student deaths, operational outages, accidents and more.

District protocols require that employees report all incidents/emergencies to the public information officer immediately. Depending on the incident, the public information officer then deploys the appropriate staff -- Safety Office, instructional superintendents, leadership team and support teams (such as school psychologists, transportation, human resources and maintenance). Additional support from the Communications Office can include media relations, generating press statements and talking points for stakeholders. Working with the Safety Office, Communications also facilitates district wide crisis management training.

MEDIA REQUESTS AND MEDIA EVENTS

Public Information Officer Vanessa Ramirez is the first contact for media requests. TV, digital and print media contact the public information officer/Communications Office an average of three to five times a week requesting to interview district leaders on a variety of topics. The public information officer facilitates interviews, supports those who are going to be interviewed and assists with obtaining requested information. When events occur that generate media attention, such as a bus accident or police activity near a school, the public information officer often goes to the site to assist.

The Communications Office holds several media events every month such as press conferences, open houses and recognition events. Such events typically involve creating a schedule, speakers, talking points and visual aids, and arranging for a sound system, videography and photos.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Communications Office puts on a series of large events throughout the year and several small events or campaigns.

- ▣ The State of Education luncheon, held in October, is the largest single fundraiser for the Fresno Unified Scholarship Fund. Communications solicits thousands of dollars in community sponsors to offset costs and promotes attendance in the community and among staff. The keynote speaker is the superintendent. The most recent State of Education luncheon raised \$31,000 for scholarships with 400 attending.
- ▣ The Excellence in Education dinner and awards, held in February, honors exemplary employees in five categories. The Communications Office encourages nominations and assembles panels of community members, retired employees and communications staff to interview finalists. This event attracts 700 guests.
- ▣ The retirement dinner, held in June, is a free dinner for retirees and a guest. Other guests buy a ticket. With the help of sponsors, the Communications Office arranges free photos, entertainment, raffle prizes for every employee and a gift for each retiree. About 200 attend.
- ▣ The Communications Office also leads the March of Dimes effort and assists with the scholarship dinner in May and a variety of other events.

HOW TO USE COMMUNICATIONS:

- **Media has called requesting information:** Refer them to Public Information Officer Vanessa Ramirez.
- **I have a crisis at my school:** Refer to the Crisis Communications Response protocols. Your first call is to Public Information Officer Vanessa Ramirez unless there is imminent danger, then the first call is to 9-1-1 (then Vanessa Ramirez). Review the Crisis Protocol cheat sheet located on the Communication Department's Staff Portal for more information.
- **I want the media (TV, online, print) to cover my event or program:** If the event is at least two weeks away, submit a Success Starts Here online form. If the event is less than two weeks away, provide details to Vanessa.ramirez1@fresnounified.org. The public information officer will determine whether the event is appropriate for a news release, social media post, Building Futures article, video, web story, etc.
- **I want the district's photographer and/or videographer to capture my event or program:** Submit a Media Services online form. The Communications Office will make every effort to accommodate requests using the staff available.
- **I have a success story I want to share:** Submit the item to the Success Starts Here online form. The Communications Office will determine how to best publicize the information.
- **I want to submit an item to Employee Zone:** Use the online Employee Zone submission form. Employee Zone is to communicate important information to all staff or highlight a success story. The deadline is 5 p.m. on Tuesdays for a Monday publication.
- **I want to submit an item to District Update:** Use the online District Update submission form. District Update is for critical information that district leaders need to know and share. The deadline is noon on Thursdays for a Friday publication.

ALL ONLINE SUBMISSION FORMS CAN BE FOUND IN THE STAFF PORTAL ON THE COMMUNICATIONS WEBPAGE.

