COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

External School Communications

The Office of Communications shall, and upon request, provide assistance to schools and departments in all facets of their community relations functions. Assistance shall include communications related to the educational values, the direction, and the expectations of the School Division. Additionally, the Office of Communications will provide advice and counsel on any areas of communications in support of school principals, including, but not limited to, events, positive stories, social media, websites, and crisis management.

The following provide specific regulation and process for social media and traditional media use and interaction.

Social Media

1. Prior approval of the principal or program manager is required to create a school, office, or department social media account.
2. All PWCS social media accounts must be created with a PWCS email address only. No personal email addresses may be used.
3. A student’s home address, phone number, student ID number, and/or email address shall not be posted on any social media account.
4. Photos and videos of students shall not be used in social media if the students’ parent or guardian has signed and submitted the applicable opt-out form to the school office.
5. Any information that may jeopardize the privacy, safety, or wellbeing of students and staff, or information that is obscene or libelous, causes disruption of school activities, or plagiarizes the work of others must not be posted on PWCS social media accounts.
6. Links to external websites (sites not on the PWCS server) from PWCS social media accounts must be vetted to ensure content aligns with the School Division’s mission and values.
7. Staff members posting on PWCS social media accounts are responsible for ensuring content is accurate, professional, and reflects the School Division’s mission and values.
8. Staff members charged with handling school, department, and office social media accounts are prohibited from using those accounts to disseminate personal interests, opinions, ideas, photos, videos, or other content. Additionally, no private business or financial transactions may be executed on PWCS social media accounts.
9. PWCS social media accounts must follow the Terms of Service set forth by the social media channels being used.
10. Employees who are authorized to create a social media account for a school, department, or office shall notify the Office of Communications at communications@pwcs.edu once the account has been activated.
11. Principals and program managers are responsible for obtaining login credentials to their individual school, department, or office social media accounts. This will help to avoid disruption of access during staff turnover.

12. Principals and program managers must promptly change social media passwords when a staffer who was previously responsible for a school, department, or office social media account is no longer charged with that responsibility or is no longer employed by your worksite or PWCS.

13. Individuals charged with managing school, department, or office social media accounts are responsible for keeping accounts updated and monitoring comments, questions, and other notifications that may require timely action.

14. The Office of Communications will provide social media training on a one-to-one, group, or departmental basis upon request, when possible.

School Messenger

1. User account access for PWCS school, department, or office employees to send messages or view reports in the School Messenger notification system require prior approval of the principal or program manager. Accounts are associated with a PWCS email address. No personal email addresses are to be used.

2. New user training is required prior to the issuance of an account. The enabling of certain account modules or features may require additional training prior to access (e.g., multilingual messaging or attendance).

3. Each user must also agree to the current vendor’s acceptable use policy before he or she can use the system.

4. Employee user accounts may be revoked if not used appropriately.

5. Schools may use the School Messenger notification system for matters within the local control and authority of the principal.

6. Non-emergency messages, phone calls, or text messages shall not be sent before 9 a.m. or later than 9 p.m. If an urgent message must be sent outside this time range, contact the Office of Communications.

7. Always identify your school or PWCS office in your phone and text messages. Begin phone messages with: “This is an important message from (School/Office Name)” or “Hello, this is (Principal’s Name), principal of (School Name), with an important message.”

8. Text messages should also include reference to PWCS or your specific school, as parents will not recognize the text number. Include the shortened pertinent key information in the text message. Use a link shortener (such as Bit.ly or Ow.ly) to create a link to additional information as needed.
News Media
1. Any employee who speaks with the news media is expected to be professional, polite, and to provide accurate information that, to the best of his or her ability, aligns with the School Division’s mission and values.
2. All employees are obligated to respect and protect students' privacy by not disseminating, sharing, or otherwise disclosing any confidential information to news media in violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). This includes, but is not limited to, discipline information and special education status.
3. All employees are expected to respect the privacy of other PWCS employees by not disseminating, sharing, or otherwise communicating their colleagues’ private information to the media. This includes, but is not limited to, information contained in employee personnel records.
4. When engaging with news media, employees should realize that they are representing PWCS and are responsible for what they say.
5. Schools, departments, and offices may not conduct press conferences without prior approval by PWCS.
6. With the exception of routine sports-related reporting, PWCS employees should not speak to the media without consulting with the Office of Communications.

The Associate Superintendent for Communications and Technology Services (or designee) is responsible for implementing and monitoring this regulation.

This regulation and related policy shall be reviewed at least every five years and revised as needed.