C.4.1.1 (Procedure) Communications on Behalf of District Support Operations
Responsible Department: Communications and Engagement
Based on Board Policy: C.4.1 - Communications on Behalf of the College District and Colleges
Approved: 12-11-18
Last Amended:

This procedure applies to communications made on behalf of District Support Operations (DSO). The Associate Vice Chancellor for Communications and Engagement and District Communications Department (Office) which reports to the AVC, are responsible for developing, directing and implementing the overall community and media relations functions for District Support Operations (DSO). The AVC for Communications and Engagement will assist in the planning of DSO key programs and projects to ensure that community and media relations concerns are fully considered. The District Communications Office may be reached at 210-485-0035.

The District Communications Department will act as a consultant to DSO departments to design communications strategies for services and programs, develop guidelines for publications, and coordinate a consistent graphic identity for the Alamo Colleges District.

The Public Relations (PR) Directors and the PR offices at each college are responsible for developing, directing and implementing community and media relations for their respective college in consultation with the College President. They will assist in the planning of key college programs and projects to ensure media relations concerns are fully considered.

News media relations and communications of information on behalf of any of the five Alamo Colleges should be handled and coordinated through the individual college's Office of the President and Public Relations Office with the support of the District Department of Communications. A separate procedure will apply for public relations at the colleges.

BRAND MANAGEMENT
ACD departments and their staffs, in cooperation with the District Communications Office, have a joint responsibility to initiate and develop community relations material, whether printed, displayed or communicated through audio/visual media. Approved Alamo Colleges District logos and Brand Standards should be used.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
The District Communications Office manages intergovernmental relations on behalf of the Alamo Colleges District, including the following:

- Strategic communications and initiatives coordinated with regional, state and federal officials.
- The legislative agenda for the Alamo Colleges District in collaboration with the Board of Trustees and the Chancellor's Office.

The District Communications Office will work jointly with the PR Office of each college to ensure cohesive governmental relations communications and that each college's needs are represented.

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CONTACT WITH THE NEWS MEDIA & STUDENT MEDIA

When questions to the College District arise from the external news media or the student news media, a reasonable effort should be made to answer or address them in a timely manner - generally within the business day **and according to the following levels of responsibility**:

- **Members of the Board Trustees** will provide information on policy issues.
- **The Chancellor** will provide information on operational issues of the institution.
- **Vice Chancellors and Associate Vice Chancellors** will provide information on the planning, direction, effect, and status of policies and programs or events within their areas of responsibilities.
- **Project or Initiative Leads** will provide information concerning the individual projects and services within their areas of responsibility, as designated by a Vice Chancellor.

DSO employees must direct all news media requests regarding District decisions, policies, programs, initiatives, projects or events to the District Communications Office. This does not prohibit the expression of opinions to the news media by employees, in their capacities as individuals or private citizens. Employees may initiate or respond to media requests regarding their research, teaching, scholarship or professional expertise or matters of public concern.

PRESS RELEASES

All news releases issued on behalf of the Alamo Colleges District DSO shall be channeled through the District Communications Office. This allows all releases to follow a consistent format and makes it possible for a central file for all releases. This also keeps the District Communications Office better informed of newsworthy activities in all departments.

CATASTROPHIC EVENTS

All DSO administrators will keep the District Communications Office informed of events and activities that may threaten public health and safety.

The District Communications Office and the respective college PR Offices will collaborate as necessary on all catastrophic events. The AVC for Communications and Engagement or another spokesperson will be identified to respond to all media inquiries about the event. Having a single spokesperson on behalf of the College District will prevent conflicting, incomplete and inaccurate information from being released.

Every effort will be made to respond quickly to the news media and provide correct and realistic facts about the catastrophic event. In the event of a natural or technological disaster or emergency, the Emergency Management Plan and procedures shall take precedence over this procedure as to catastrophic events.

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RELATED DOCUMENTS
Alamo Colleges District Brand Standards
Alamo Colleges District Emergency Management Plan