

**For a Listing of Upcoming Board Meetings See Page vi of this Table of Contents**  
**Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District**  
**Board of Education Meeting**  
**MINUTES**

**July 30, 2013**

A special meeting of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board of Education was held on Tuesday, July 30, 2013, in the District Administrative Offices: 1651 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Santa Monica, CA. The Board of Education called the meeting to order at 12:23 p.m.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

A. Roll Call

Board of Education Members

Laurie Lieberman – President

Jose Escarce

Maria Leon-Vazquez – Vice President

Ralph Mechur

Ben Allen – *excused absence*

Nimish Patel – *excused absence*

Oscar de la Torre

B. Pledge of Allegiance

**II. BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT RETREAT**

During this meeting, consultants from Fagen, Friedman & Fulfrost will conduct a workshop with the Board of Education, Superintendent and Assistant Superintendents regarding communication situations and protocols and how to effectively communicate as a governance team.

\*\*\*\*\*                      \*\*\*\*\*                      \*\*\*\*\*                      \*\*\*\*\*                      \*\*\*\*\*                      \*\*\*\*\*

*The presentation can be found under Attachments at the end of these minutes.*

*Terilyn Finders and Jay Fernow from Fagen, Friedman & Fulfrost presented information on how their firm can help the district communicate with staff, parents, students, the community, and the media during issues, incidents, and crises.*

*The board decided that in the case of a crisis, the superintendent or his/her designee will be the district's spokesperson. They discussed how to handle media questions regarding a confidential and/or alleged incident. Ms. Finders stressed that while individual board members might at times have differing opinions from the board as a whole, it is important that board members' comments reflect and support the decision making process. She explained how district and school site leadership can examine the upcoming calendar of events/topics and forecast how different stakeholders will receive/interpret that information so as to create an effective communication plan. She suggested keeping Messenger (who will be receiving the information?)-Message (what is the information?)-Method (how will the information be shared?) in mind when forming a plan. Ms. Finders suggested several strategies to help forecast upcoming issues and develop communication plans. Mr. de la Torre suggested the superintendent work with board leadership to create a matrix showing upcoming events and information that should be communicated with whom and when. Ms. Finders stressed that in times of a crisis, parents need to understand that while they will most likely – because of technology – hear information from their students before the district has a chance to disseminate facts, the district does have a plan to communicate with staff and parents. She answered board members' questions about how to effectively use Q&A in a community meeting setting as well as appropriate times to hold a press conference. Ms. Lyon explained that the next step was to have the directors and principals receive training from Fagen, Friedman & Fulfrost this Friday.*

**II. PUBLIC COMMENTS**


Public Comments is the time when members of the audience may address the Board of Education on items not scheduled on the meeting's agenda. All speakers are limited to three (3) minutes. When there is a large number of speakers, the Board may reduce the allotted time to two (2) minutes per speaker. The Brown Act (Government Code) states that Board members may not engage in discussion of issues raised during "VIII. Public Comments" except to ask clarifying questions, make a brief announcement, make a brief report on his or her own activities, or to refer the matter to staff. This Public Comment section is limited to twenty (20) minutes. If the number of persons wishing to address the Board of Education exceeds the time limit, additional time will be provided in **Section XVI. CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS.**

- *None*

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Ms. Leon-Vazquez, seconded by Mr. Mechur, and voted 5/0 (Mr. Allen and Mr. Patel were absent) to adjourn the special meeting at 3:40 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on **Wednesday, August 14, 2013**, at 5:30 p.m. in the District Administrative Offices: 1651 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Santa Monica, CA.

Approved: 8/14/13

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent

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## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attached is the following document:

- Presentation: “Communication and Media Relations”



## Communication and Media Relations



Jay B. Fernow  
Partner  
Terilyn Finders  
Director of Communications

[www.fagenfriedman.com](http://www.fagenfriedman.com)





# Issue

2 or more points of view

Conflict

Mildly disruptive to campus

# Incident

Connected to school

Might cause alarm, provoke concern/questions

# Crisis

Potential to cause death or injury

Severely compromise confidence

# Today

- Goals and Roles
- Communication Practices
- Meetings, Media, Public Engagement: Best Practices
- Administration

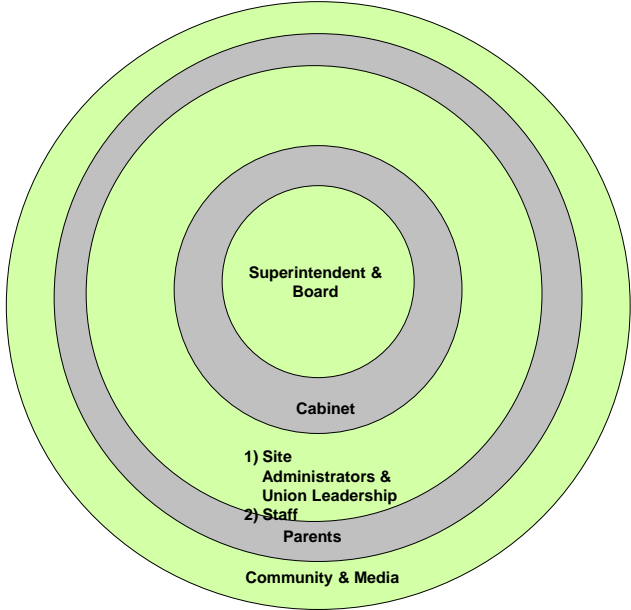


# Goal

- Build Confidence in District Leadership
  - Honest
  - Timely
  - Accessible



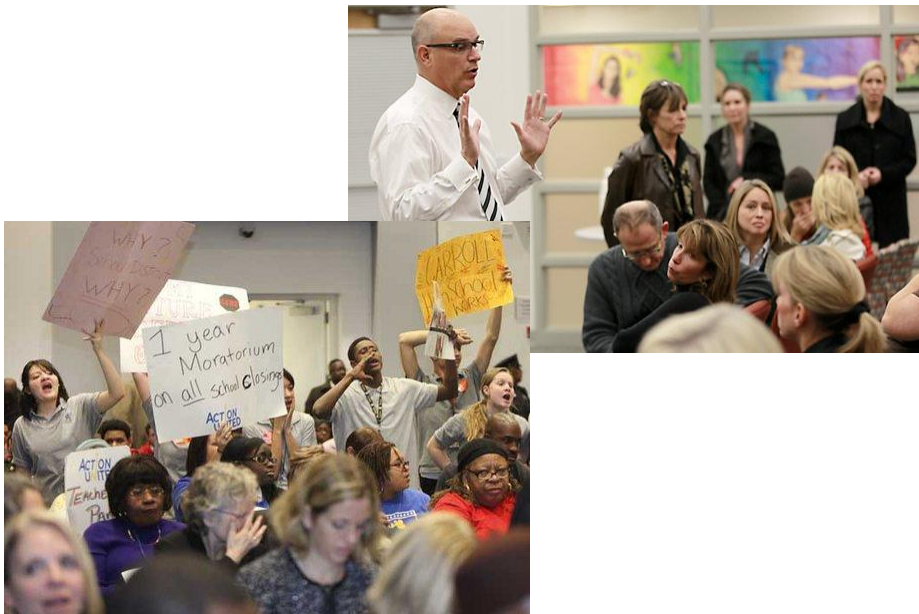
# Role





# Review: Policies and Practices

- District follows its own policies and procedures (employee complaints, complaints by public, etc.)
- Brown Act issues
- Board members' email
- Student privacy
- Employee privacy



## Issues, Incident, Crisis

- What they need to hear
- What you need to say
- Speak to a parent
- Please, no comment is not a response



## When to Hold a Press Conference

- Volume of inquiries
- Prepared statements
- Tape press conference
- Trusted resource on-site (in the back)
- One-on-one interviews
- Trusted translator
- Capture media names
- Inform your board



# Legal Pointers

- Student's right to privacy
- Student records v. directory information and impact if former student, deceased
- Employee right to privacy, confidential personnel matters, including discipline
- Brown Act concerns
- Even if we can discuss/release, choosing not to



# Crisis Communications Guiding Questions

- How do we communicate with parents in an emergency?
  - Do they know this?
  - How do we tell them?
- Do we provide a consistent message throughout the district?
- Have we integrated communication into our drills?
- Have we integrated mobile phone use in post-drill classroom discussions?
- Do you provide messages to students to use in a lock down?
- What's your role?



## Key Areas of Focus

- Plan
- Clarify roles/drill
- Review policies/procedures/protocols
- Assess district tool kit
- Follow-up activities



## Crisis Situation

### Site

- Command Center
- Emergency Contact Person
- Reunion Site
- Notify District
- Media Area at Site
- FERPA
- Defer to Lead Agencies
- Regular Updates to District

### District

- Dedicated phone line
- Writer
- Translation Services
- Prioritize Contact
- Prepare Situation Statement
- Determine Method for Contact
- Issue Information
- Keep Track of All Media Calls
- Monitor Media/News Alert
- Correct Media
- Next School Day



## Clarify Roles/Drill

- Everyone must know their role
- Simulate a crisis
- Walk through communication details
- Assign responsibilities
- Consider absences



## Board Policies and Administrative Regs.

- Consider student/employee use of mobile devices
- Policies regarding speaking to the media
- SEMS
- Review Policies/Practices



# Communication Protocols

## Internal

- Review policies. Spokesperson. Media contacts
- Discuss employees' roles in communication
- Do they know their role?
- Add communication to drills
- Add cyber citizenship messages to post-drill classroom lessons

## External

- How will you communicate with parents in an emergency situation?
- How are they informed of these protocols?
  - Back to School Night
  - Registration
  - Website
  - Newsletters
  - PFA/PTA reminders



# Become The News Service

- Establish tools that will help you provide the facts
- Concentric circles – get the information to district leaders/provide suggested statement
- Dark page on website
- Emergency communications button on homepage
- FAQs
- Regular updates
- News on reunion locations
- Utilize video to offer district updates



# Media

- Statement – Do not repeat words you do not want to hear/read
- Break your own bad news
- Q and A
- Do not wait for an emergency to get to know the media
- In an emergency, the media is a great communication tool



# Correct Media Inaccuracies

- Contact the news room directly
- Phone call
- Email alert
- Issue a Q and A via all available communication tools



# Follow-Up Communication

- The next day
- Concentric circles – message points
- Staff messages
- Office manager
- How to handle media
- Message to parents – preparing students to return



# Meetings, Public Engagements





# Administration



## Resources

### Timely and Timeless Topics

Webinars, handouts, tip sheets and practical videos on a wide range of education issues are available at [www.fagenfriedman.com/resources](http://www.fagenfriedman.com/resources). Access these materials for use in your staff and department meetings.

Contact F3 for additional copies of these materials.

*Information in this presentation, including but not limited to PowerPoint handouts and the presenters' comments, is summary only and not legal advice. We advise you to consult with legal counsel to determine how this information may apply to your specific facts and circumstances.*

