

Albemarle County School Board Communications Committee Charter

I. Purpose

The Communications Committee (“Committee”) is established by the Albemarle County School Board (“School Board”) to strengthen the clarity, transparency, and effectiveness of School Board communications.

The Committee’s work aligns with the Office of Communications’ vision of serving as the trusted bridge between Albemarle County Public Schools and the Albemarle community and its mission to foster an informed, engaged, and connected community through transparent, accessible, and consistent communication.

In support of this alignment, the Committee shall:

- Identify issues that warrant proactive or responsive School Board communication.
- Offer recommendations to the School Board regarding messaging, framing, and communication strategies.
- Engage with division staff to ensure alignment between School Board communications and division-wide communications strategies.

The Committee serves in an advisory capacity and does not exercise decision-making authority on behalf of the full School Board.

II. Authority

The Committee is advisory to the full School Board. All official positions, statements, and communications on behalf of the School Board must be approved by the full Board in accordance with established policies and procedures.

The Committee may:

- Review and discuss communication strategies related to significant Board actions, policy decisions, budget priorities, and emerging issues.
- Request information and briefings from the Chief Communications Officer or other staff, as appropriate.
- Develop recommendations for consideration by the full School Board.

The Committee may not speak on behalf of the School Board unless expressly authorized by the Board.

III. Membership

- The Committee shall consist of **two (2) School Board members**, appointed by the Chair of the School Board.
 - Members shall serve for a term of one year and may be reappointed.
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IV. Staff Support

The Chief Communications Officer (CCO) shall serve as staff liaison to the Committee.

The CCO shall:

- Provide professional expertise on communications strategy, messaging, media relations, and stakeholder engagement.
 - Ensure School Board communications are transparent, accessible, timely, and aligned with division communications efforts.
 - Support the Committee in clearly articulating the purpose, rationale, and expected impact of School Board decisions.
 - Facilitate coordination between governance-level communications and operational communications across the division
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V. Responsibilities

The Committee's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

A. Identifying Communication Priorities

- Monitor emerging issues, major initiatives, and Board actions that may require proactive communication.
- Anticipate areas of public interest, confusion, or concern that warrant clear explanation.
- Recommend communication approaches that promote understanding and confidence in School Board decisions.

B. Messaging Recommendations

- Offer recommendations to the School Board regarding key messages and themes.
- Provide input on tone, clarity, and alignment with adopted Board goals and division priorities.
- Encourage communications that explain the “why” behind Board decisions and actions.

C. Alignment Across the Division

- Engage with the Chief Communications Officer to ensure consistency between School Board messaging and division-wide communications.
 - Support coherence between governance communications and administrative communications.
 - Reinforce clarity regarding the respective roles of the School Board and the Superintendent.
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VI. Meetings

- The Committee shall meet as needed to fulfill its responsibilities.
 - Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and applicable School Board policies.
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VII. Reporting

The Committee shall report its discussions and recommendations to the full School Board. Any recommended action shall be presented for Board consideration and approval.

VIII. Annual Review

The Committee shall review this Charter annually and recommend any proposed revisions to the full School Board for approval.