CREATING A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Communication

"IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU ARE GOING, ANY ROAD CAN TAKE YOU THERE."

Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland
WHY DEVELOP A COMMUNICATION PLAN?

- Allows for thoughtful, strategic planning
- Keeps you focused
- Time spent on planning saves time later because you know exactly what you need to do
- Provides structure for deciding what you want to do and who you want to target

SCHOOLS WITH HIGH CONFIDENCE RATINGS…

Have clear goals and communicate them clearly within school and community

Phi Delta Kappa
IT'S YOUR ROAD MAP

“WHEN YOU COME TO A FORK IN THE ROAD, TAKE IT.”

Yogi Berra, Baseball Player/Manager/Coach

WHEN TO CREATE A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN?

› To plan each year’s communications
› To introduce a new superintendent
› To implement a new program
› To implement a major change in policy
› To respond to a crisis
KEY STEPS

▸ Identify the purpose of your communications
▸ Identify your audience
▸ Consider your tools and resources
▸ Develop your message
▸ Evaluate

PUBLIC RELATIONS

"And you need to know this why?"

PUBLIC RELATIONS IS BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WHICH CHANGE ATTITUDES.

Pat Jackson
Jackson and Wagner
Inform.
Educate.
Engage.
Listen and learn.

**WHY TAKE TIME TO LISTEN?**
- Helps identify the real concern
- Alleviates anger when people feel they have been heard
- Builds relationships
THE 90-7-3 RULE (NSPRA)

- 90% of reputation is based on quality service
- 7% on listening
- 3% on telling

SIMPLE RULE TO GET GOOD PR...

Always do a good job.
Always tell the truth.
As quickly as possible.
As simply as possible.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

▸ What parents want to know:
  ▸ My child is safe at school
  ▸ My child’s teacher is qualified
  ▸ What my child is learning
  ▸ Frequent progress reports
  ▸ “Right now” if there are any problems

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

▸ What staff want to know
  ▸ What’s going on?
  ▸ How does it affect me?
▸ What community wants to know
  ▸ What’s going on
  ▸ How does it affect my children?
  ▸ How does it affect my wallet?
ONE SIZE DOESN'T FIT ALL

- Shotgun approach to communications, using multiple tools to deliver messages
- Some tools are more appropriate than others for specific messages
- Use both formal and informal ways to communicate
TOOLS & RESOURCES

▸ Printed communications
  ▸ Newsletter
  ▸ Magazine
  ▸ Letter
  ▸ Brochure
  ▸ Website
  ▸ Mobile app

TOOLS & RESOURCES

▸ Face-to-face meetings
  ▸ Parent meetings
  ▸ Key Communicators
  ▸ Superintendent Advisory Council
  ▸ Civic club presentations

TOOLS & RESOURCES

▸ Electronic communications
  ▸ Newsletter (Constant Contact, Mail Chimp)
  ▸ Blog (Google, Weebly, WordPress)
  ▸ Flyers (Peachjar)
TOOLS & RESOURCES

▸ Text messages
▸ FlashAlert
▸ Blog
▸ Weebly
▸ Google
▸ Word Press

TOOLS & RESOURCES

▸ Social Media
  ▸ Facebook
  ▸ Twitter
  ▸ Instagram
▸ Auto dialer

HOW DID WE EVER COMMUNICATE BEFORE THIS TECHNOLOGY? BEATS ME!
SCHOOL EMPLOYEES ARE YOUR BEST PR TOOL

- School employees rank first as sources of impressions about schools
- Media is the least influential information source about schools
- Good teacher attitudes are the most important in causing people to gain confidence in schools; poor attitudes are the most important in causing people to lose confidence

CREDIBILITY OF PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION NEWS SOURCES

- Your child’s teacher.................86%
- Teachers.............................80%
- Your child’s principal.............72%
- Principals............................67%
- School leaders.......................61%
- School administrators..............59%

American Association of School Administrators Poll 2003
MOST RELIABLE SOURCES OF INFORMATION GALLUP 2002

- Teachers.........42%
- Children.........18%
- School..........14%
- Other parents....7%
- Media.............2%
- District..........1%

What gets measured gets done.

DIFFERENT MEASUREMENTS WORK IN DIFFERENT SITUATIONS

- Objective analysis
- Interviews and focus groups
- Surveys
- Benchmarking
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>WHAT WILL WE DO?</th>
<th>HOW WILL WE KNOW?</th>
<th>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?</th>
<th>WHEN WILL IT OCCUR?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEDIA</td>
<td>Provide news tips to local media</td>
<td>Articles based on tips will appear in newspapers</td>
<td>Communications specialist</td>
<td>At least weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hold press briefings the afternoon of Board meetings to help media understand important issues on agenda</td>
<td></td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>Before every Board meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Issue press releases when needed</td>
<td>Articles based on releases will appear in newspapers</td>
<td>Communications specialist</td>
<td>As needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>STAFF</td>
<td>Weekly electronic staff newsletter</td>
<td>Newsletter will be emailed to all staff every Friday</td>
<td>Communications specialist</td>
<td>September - June</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff Key Communicator Discussions</td>
<td>Meetings will be scheduled every other month</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>September - May</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Produce summaries of board actions</td>
<td>Summaries will be done, emailed to all staff and posted on district website</td>
<td>Communications specialist</td>
<td>After every board meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Email from superintendent with information about important issues</td>
<td>Emails will be delivered</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>When needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARENTS &amp; COMMUNITY</td>
<td>Produce electronic newsletter with information about district</td>
<td>Newsletters will be emailed to those on email list</td>
<td>Communications specialist</td>
<td>Year-round</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Produce summaries of board actions</td>
<td>Summaries will be done and posted on district website</td>
<td>Communications specialist</td>
<td>After every board meeting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Maintain and update district and school web pages regularly</td>
<td>Web pages will be updated</td>
<td>Communications specialist and school webmasters</td>
<td>Throughout year</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide articles of district-wide interest for publication in school newsletters</td>
<td>Articles will appear in school newsletters</td>
<td>Communications specialist</td>
<td>Throughout year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QUESTIONS?

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