2017-18 Strategic Communications Plan
Introduction

The Hillsboro School District Communications department is committed to encouraging and enhancing open, honest and respectful communication with all stakeholder groups. We strive to provide accurate, relevant and timely information through a variety of channels to build trust, strengthen relationships, and positively impact student achievement.

This plan is intended to provide both a framework within which Communications staff coordinates and prioritizes their activities, and also a reference for stakeholders as to the department’s areas of focus.

Team

The Communications department is comprised of five paid staff members and two volunteers:

Beth Graser, Chief Communications Officer
graserbe@hsd.k12.or.us
503-844-1772
**Key responsibilities:** District spokesperson, media inquiries, public records requests, press releases, articles, parent/community/staff message creation and dissemination, key initiative distillation, legislative affairs/advocacy, Public Information Officer (PIO) duties, incident response, Strategic Plan administration, school-based grants, Superintendent appearances.

Jane Siguenza, Multimedia Specialist
siguenzi@hsd.k12.or.us
503-844-1761
**Key responsibilities:** Graphic design, brand management, marketing, collateral material creation (brochures, flyers, posters, etc.), videos, event coverage, articles, key message dissemination.

Justin Arey, Web Specialist/Designer
areyj@hsd.k12.or.us
503-844-1756
**Key responsibilities:** District website design/content, school website design and support, social media posting, survey creation/usability studies, videos, event coverage at schools.

Marleen Zytniowski, Communications Specialist
zytniowm@hsd.k12.or.us
503-844-1771
**Key responsibilities:** Student transfer processing, department support, event posting, back-to-school mailers, United Way campaign, student performance scheduling, flyer requests, student art displays, event coverage.

Martha Méndez-Bolaños, Communications Interpreter/Translator
menderbm@hsd.k12.or.us
503-844-1500 x6117
**Key responsibilities:** Document translation, interpretation at events and as-needed, emergency communications, student transfer processing back-up.
Coleen Garrett and Katie Willis, Volunteer Coordinators
garrettc@hsd.k12.or.us  russellk@hsd.k12.or.us
503-844-1770

Key responsibilities: District-level volunteer and donation management, business and community outreach/partnerships, Assistance League clothing program & Elks Holiday Basket program coordination.

Goals and Objectives

We aim to support the District’s Strategic Plan and overall Strategic Objective of ensuring that all students graduate with career and college-readiness skills by focusing our efforts in the following areas:

1. Engage in strategic communications, marketing and branding;
2. Build relationships/community; and
3. Increase awareness, encourage involvement, and foster ownership of our schools and district.

Target Audiences

Also known as “patrons,” “stakeholder groups” or simply “stakeholders,” target audiences are the various people we want to be sure and consider as we’re developing communications. Individuals may fit into one or more classifications, and their affiliations may change over time.

- Students
- Staff
- Parents
- Community
- Speakers of languages other than English
- Businesses
- Higher education
- Faith
- Alumni
- Elected officials
- Civic organizations
- Realtors
- City/County government
- Non-profit organizations
- Media

Key Messages

Although there are a wide range of things we want people to know about our schools and district, there are a handful of key messages that we feel encompass our core strengths and upon which we will focus.

1. We believe all students deserve to be known by name, strength, and need; and to be connected to Community, Culture, and Career.
2. We prepare students for the future.
3. We foster strong community support.
4. We are responsible stewards of taxpayers’ investment.
Strategies and Tactics

Strategies represent the things we intend to do to reach our stated goals and objectives. Tactics are the actions we take to implement each strategy.

Tactics:
- Work with outside consultant to develop complete communications campaign to include website, social media, print (banners, flyers, mailers, in-ground signage), endorsements, etc.
  - Develop key expenditure areas and talking points and use them consistently.
  - Ensure that our patrons have visibility to the bond and that they can access any and all pertinent information about the development process, projects, implications for their school, etc. online.
  - Create a website with comprehensive reference information about the bond.
  - Create a bond video with vignettes that can be used/posted separately, as needed.
  - Do in-person presentations, including presentations to each staff group.

Strategy II: Implement year four of the “Proud to be HSD” campaign to highlight our various stakeholders and generate pride in the system.
Tactics:
- Hold the fourth annual Proud to be HSD Festival in conjunction with the Hillsboro Farmers Market to showcase the breadth and depth of curricular offerings and student talents and achievements in our district.
- Continue messaging to explain that everyone in this community is an important part of Hillsboro School District, even if they don’t currently have kids in school. Use personal stories and testimonials in print, video and audio to reinforce the message.
- Work with community partners to cross-message.
  - Place free ads in City of Hillsboro’s Hillsboro Happenings and City Views newsletters.
  - Seek other partners and venues for cross-messaging.
- Create additional promotional materials (temporary tattoos, magnets, infant items, etc.) to give visibility to the campaign.

Strategy IIa: Build-out and utilize Proud to be HSD trailer as a mobile space for sharing District/student work and activities.
- Take to various community events to ensure visibility and understanding of what the trailer is all about/for.
- Solicit additional donors/partners.
- Continue retrofitting to maximize usefulness: plumbed-in electrical outlets, additional power, cabinetry, etc.

Strategy III: Deliver consistent, relevant and timely communications to our stakeholder groups using a variety of media and methods.
Tactics:
- Expand the number of people receiving and spreading positive and accurate information about the school district.
  - Continue utilizing billboard and bus bench advertising to increase the reach of our most important messages.
  - Hold a Career and College Summit in the fall and a Hillsboro Schools Summit in the spring.
    - Attendees will become a cadre of Key Communicators for the District.
- Create fact sheets for easy reference; create a mechanism for ongoing Q&A.
- Create welcome packets for realtors and Chamber, new parent packets for hospitals, etc.
- Refine and strengthen protocols for emergency communications.
  - Design messaging templates.
  - Redesign Safety webpage to include updated terminology and graphics.
- Launch new Blackboard website on July 1, 2017, that houses all sites in one location for consistency and ease of messaging and is mobile-friendly.
  - Train users on the new system.
  - Clean-up broken links, add missing information, respond to feedback.
- Utilize social media and the District App as alternatives to District and school sites for sharing information.
  - Encourage principals to send messages via the District App to increase reach and utilization of the app.
- Produce videos to help tell stories in an engaging way.
  - Create a series of one minute videos that tell consistent, compelling stories about students, staff, curricular/extracurricular opportunities that will capture people’s attention.
- Work with print and broadcast media (TV, radio) to help tell our stories.

**Strategy IIIa:** Host year two of the Student Communications Team (S-Comm) to bring student voice to the District’s communication efforts
- Recruit students from our high schools/high school programs to participate.
- Hold bi-monthly meetings after school for debriefs, assignments, and teambuilding.
- Divide the team into sub-groups that will focus on journalism, social media, videos, and public outreach.

**Strategy IV:** Facilitate/promote opportunities for stakeholders to engage in two-way communication with school and district staff.

**Tactics:**
- Organize and hold Superintendent Coffee Chats.
- Use surveys to solicit stakeholders’ feedback on District strengths, opportunities for improvement, and initiatives.
- Go to businesses, organizations, meeting places, existing forums to talk about the District and answer questions people may have.
- Promote school and District meetings, trainings, forums and other events to encourage stakeholder participation.

**Strategy V:** Promote volunteerism and partnerships.

**Tactics:**
- Actively solicit new partnerships with businesses and organizations.
- Encourage schools to submit volunteer opportunities and donation needs and to keep them current on the District website.
- Highlight specific volunteer opportunities/donation requests in Hot News.
- Recognize partners, volunteers and donors
  - Webpage
  - Hot News/A Look Inside Hillsboro Schools
  - Local media
  - Videos
Strategy VI: Increase engagement of parents and patrons who speak languages other than English.

Tactics:
- Collaborate with Office for Equity and the department of Family and Community Engagement to identify communication channels and events that will reach our patrons who speak languages other than English.
  - Explore radio advertising/public service announcements.
  - Invite our Parent Advisory Council (PAC) leaders to help share messages.
  - Hold Superintendent forums aimed at Latinos/Spanish speakers.
- Provide communications materials and support to facilitate outreach efforts.
- Include a welcome page on the website that is translated into several languages, including instructions on how to seek assistance with individual translation needs.

Channels and Timing/Frequency
How and when we will communicate with our various stakeholders is a very important element of this plan. Predictability and consistency of information flow helps build trust while reducing confusion and frustration.

Channels
- District website
- School websites
- Social media: Facebook, Twitter, Oregonlive blog
- Videos
- District app
- Surveys
- Media advisories/press releases
- E-newsletters
- Board Reports
- Fact sheets
- Hard-copy newsletters
- Automated phone messages
- Letters/flyers
- Posters
- Brochures
- In-person meetings
- Public service announcements (PSAs)

Timing/Frequency
Weekly
- Parent/community e-newsletter
- Staff e-newsletter

Monthly
- Principal quick sheets

Bi-Annually
- Hillsboro Schools Summit
- Superintendent Coffee Chats
- Superintendent Forums in Spanish
• Hard-copy newsletters (A Look Inside Hillsboro Schools, mailed to all homes in District)

Periodic
• Strategic Plan progress reports
• Meetings, seminars, presentations
• Videos
• Surveys

As needed
• Press releases
• Emergency communications
• Fact sheets
• Presentations

Ongoing
• Website updates
• Photo blog entries
• News articles on website
• Social media posts/tweets
Desired Behaviors and Attitudes
If we implement our plan well, we expect to see the following from our internal and external stakeholder groups:

Internal Audiences
- Take pride in and demonstrate ownership of the District.
- Stay informed on key issues.
- Help spread positive messages about students, staff, schools and the District.
- Exhibit District values of caring, integrity and collaboration.

External Audiences
- Feel involved and engaged in their schools/District.
- Exhibit community pride and trust in their schools/District.
- Support Hillsboro School District.

Evaluation and Measurement
Determining the effectiveness of our efforts is a key component of the “RACE” model—communications’ version of a continuous improvement process—which stands for Research, Analyze, Communicate, Evaluate.

Though it can be difficult to correlate direct cause and effect as well as objectively measure progress in the area of communications, we will attempt to do so via the following:

- Website and social media metrics
- Staff surveys/feedback
- Parent/community surveys/feedback
- Organizational partner (Chamber, City, County, Hillsboro Schools Foundation, etc.) surveys/feedback

Contact Us
If you have comments, suggestions or questions about this communications plan, please feel free to contact us via phone or e-mail. We value your input and strive to provide excellent communications and customer service.