A Passion for Excellence

NEENAH
Joint School District

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

December 2012

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In an effort to improve its communication with stakeholders, the Neenah Joint School District formed a communications committee with the goal of creating and implementing a communications plan. The group, consisting of community members, board members, staff members, and school- and district-level administrators, outlined possible communications challenges, identified stakeholders, and worked together to create three communications-related surveys as part of a communications audit.

The second stage of the planning process was to create this plan, which builds on the district's communications strengths, while compensating for weaknesses based on the findings of the audit.

The following needs have been identified:

- The need to be strategic rather than reactive and improve information flow
- The need to communicate as a unified district
- The need to engage local media
- The need to avoid stakeholder confusion
- The need to engage the 80% of community members who do not have a connection to the district
- The need to consolidate communications efforts and focus on quality
- The need to connect the board and the community
- The need to add communications-related capacity

The plan includes a host of communications efforts meant to address these needs.

It is the committee's strong recommendation that the district hire an additional staff member to serve as a communications manger whose sole responsibility it is to assist in executing this plan.

PART I): PLANNING PROCESS, PRINCIPLES, AND STAKEHOLDERS

A) PLANNING PROCESS

In an effort to improve its communication with stakeholders, the Neenah Joint School District formed a communications committee with the goal of creating and implementing a communications plan. To achieve this, the district enlisted the assistance of the Donovan Group LLC, a communications firm.

This process began by reassembling the district's communications committee, a longstanding group comprised of community members, board members, staff members, and school- and district-level administrators. Over the course of several meetings, the group outlined possible communications challenges, identified stakeholders, and worked together to create three communications-related surveys for a communications audit.

In May 2012, the district launched the surveys, and Joe Donovan from the Donovan Group conducted the second part of the communications audit, a review of the communications practices and tools. Results of the surveys were presented to the committee in June 2012.

The second stage of the planning process was to create a plan that builds on the district's communications strengths, while addressing weaknesses based on the findings of the audit.

This plan is the collective work of committee members, and it is committee members' voices that comprise the collective "we" in this report. It is also important to note that this plan, even when finalized, will exist as a living plan, in that it will be improved in time and revised according to best practices and needs of the district.

Finally, it is important to note that this is a draft plan. It has not, at the time of this writing, been adopted by the Board of Education.

B) GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following principles form the foundation of the committee's work and this communications plan, and reflect the best communications practices:

1) Engagement
The Neenah Joint School District seeks to engage all community members and stakeholders in an active and ongoing two-way conversation about their schools and school district. This is a conversation that should be had with parents and with community members who do not have children attending these schools. Moreover, the district must seek to go beyond communicating to community members, and

instead communicate *with* them, bearing in mind that the best method of communication is dialogue.

With this goal in mind, the purpose of this plan is to engage the community in the challenges and opportunities facing the school. The details of how we will achieve this are described in greater depth later in this plan.

2) Truthfulness

The Neenah Joint School District is committed to being honest and transparent in its communications with the public. The single most important factor in the success of any communications effort is trust. In its communications efforts, the school district must do more than simply tell the truth; it must also be wary of overselling achievements or presenting information in any manner that appears less than completely forthright.

Moreover, the school district will provide reliable information, for which it will be wholly accountable to community members, and will fully engage the public in the challenges and opportunities it faces.

3) Transparency

Through its communications efforts, the Neenah Joint School District will raise the level of dialogue about its schools by educating stakeholders on district processes, relevant state and federal laws, budget information, school finances, and any other critical issues. This often involves communicating about exceedingly difficult-to-explain state and federal policies and laws. It is these types of issues that, in many cases, the district must be the most eager to communicate.

The school district must continue to invite any and all questions, responding as quickly, clearly, and comprehensively as possible.

C) STAKEHOLDERS

As the Neenah Joint School District works to create and implement a communications plan, it is imperative that it begin with careful consideration of the audiences with whom the district will be communicating as well as of the tools that will be used.

This communications plan aims to reach every member of the district's staff, every single student attending the schools and their parents, and every community member living in the Neenah Joint District. However, in order to effectively implement the plan, it is necessary to divide our audience into smaller stakeholder groups.

The committee has outlined stakeholder groups as follows:

- Staff: The single most important group of district communicators is the district staff. Staff members must be knowledgeable about the opportunities and challenges facing the district.

- Existing students: We wish to inform students currently enrolled at the school about the district, while also learning from and about their experiences.

- Parents of students enrolled in the district: Communicating with parents whose children are currently enrolled at the Neenah Joint School District is crucial, especially as state- and federal-level policy changes are enacted and school- and district-level policies evolve.

- Parents of graduates: Parents who once had a strong connection to the school district while their children were students typically tend to be less engaged once their children graduate. While these stakeholders' relationships with the school change after their children move on, it is essential that, as community members, they continue to be engaged in the district's work.

- Alumni: Alumni have a special connection with their school district. This relationship must be strengthened and fostered over time. The school district must recognize, stay in touch with, and receive feedback from this group.

- Community members who do not have children: Community members who do not have children also have a vested interest in the school district, if not for any other reason but because the school district contributes to the community in meaningful ways, and because all homeowners, whether they have children or not, pay taxes that go toward the schools.

- Community members with children who are younger than school age: It is important to the committee that it identifies as unique the group of community members who have children but whose children are not of school age. As with other community members who do not have children in the schools, this group is a critical stakeholder group that should be engaged by the district.

- Senior citizens: One of the groups that school districts tend to be the least connected with are seniors, despite their desire to know and understand what is happening in the schools. The district, like all others, must continue to create stronger bonds between the senior community and the school.

- Families considering moving into the region: Just as families who currently live in the district should be engaged, so too should those who do not

currently live in the district, but are considering the district for their children through a move.

- <u>Parents whose children current attend private and parochial schools</u>: Parents who live in the district but who chose to send their children to private and parochial schools are a critically important audience for the district.

PART II) COMMUNICATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the communications audit, the following are needs identified by the committee and the corresponding efforts that should be employed to address the needs.

1) The need to be strategic rather than reactive and improve information flow
The committee believes that effective school district communications require responsibility for communications efforts to be shared by people across the organization. In this way, much of the responsibility of the communications manager is to facilitate communications, to ensure that it is effective and strategic and that a shared model of communication is employed.

The committee has made clear that, with this shared model, different people within the school district have the responsibility for communicating to different audiences.

District subject matter experts must be equipped to advocate for the areas for which they have day-to-day responsibility. While they are responsible for identifying what must be communicated, a communications managing will act as a sounding board to help clarify the message and alert staff to those issues that many need extra care. The communications manager will also assist in following up on larger and more complicated communications efforts.

A secondary step is ensuring that district employees and board members are equipped to speak coherently about key district matters

For example, an elementary school principal has the responsibility of communicating to parents of children who attend the school, among others. At the district level, the superintendent may have the responsibility of speaking with a reporter, for a news story that will be read by parents and non-parents alike.

In both examples, the information being conveyed is the same, as are the messages that are conveyed. What is different is the level of communication that will be conveyed. Parents will have different communication needs than community members who do not have children in the schools. However, it is important that both individuals in this example have access to the kind of information that will allow them to communicate effectively to the group with which they are responsible.

Central to this is the effective flow of information through the organization. The committee understands that there is a tendency to view the flow of information as moving only in one direction, from the district-level to the school-level, but for communications to be effective, information must move in the opposite direction as well.

For example, information about a new initiative should move between board and district-level staff. This information should then be passed from district-level staff to principals for communication with school-level staff. Finally, feedback should be passed back to the district-level.

In an effort to outline what is required for effective communication, and also address areas where a breakdown may occur, the committee created a model, included below, that outlines the responsibilities and requirements for different groups of district communicators. In order for the proper flow of information, responsibilities and requirements should be addressed.

Efforts should be implemented to ensure that information moves quickly and efficiently through the organization. Where there are breakdowns in communication, efforts should be made to rectify the situation so that it does not continue to be a problem.

The committee has acknowledged that there are situations when it would not be appropriate for individuals in one part of the organization to share information with others in another part. For example, the board's review of the superintendent is often conducted in a closed session. We further note that these types of situations are an exception rather than the norm.

The following model is meant to demonstrate the various communications responsibilities and requirements of various communicators.

I) Board members
A) Communications responsibilities include:
- Communicating with constituents
- Providing input for district-level communications
- Providing feedback on district-level communications

B) Require:
- Information from district-level staff (e.g. fact sheets, talking points, answers to questions)

II) District-level staff
A) Communications responsibilities include:
- Communicating with parents (shared with principals), non-parents, and other staff members (shared with principals)

-Providing information to the media and handling media requests
-Receiving input and information requests to improve communications from principals and board members

B) Require:
-Information from principals (e.g. fact sheets, talking points, answers to questions)
-Feedback from board members
-Feedback from principals

III) Principals
A) Communications responsibilities include:
-Communicating with parents (shared with district-level staff), non-parents, and other staff members (shared with district-level staff)
-Receiving input on improving communications from district-level staff

B) Require:
-Information from district-level staff (e.g. fact sheets, talking points, answers to questions)
-Feedback from board members
-Feedback from principals

IV) School-level staff
A) Communications responsibilities include:
-Communicating with parents (shared with principals), non-parents, and other staff members (shared with principals)
-Receiving input and information requests to improve communications from parents and other community members

B) Require:
-Information from principals (e.g. fact sheets, talking points, answers to questions)

2) The need to communicate as a unified district
While the need identified above outlines a procedural need about how the district should communicate, the communications audit suggested that there is a disconnect—in some cases, between the schools and the district—in the perception of stakeholders.

From a communications perspective, this situation creates an opportunity to communicate a common vision across the entire community. This may include additional district-level communications, media outreach, additional district-related information on the website, and other district-related efforts that can be reinforced

at the school level. In this way, school-level administrators can communicate common district-level messages and reinforce them with individual, school-specific messages.

To address this need, the committee suggests the following:

a) Engage stakeholders in the district's vision

One of the findings from the communications audit was that there was no identifiable vision or series of messages that were used by stakeholders to describe the district. Instead, when asked to describe the district, parents and other community as well as staff greatly differed in their responses.

As part of its planning process, principals Diane Galow, Mike Tauscher, and Phil Johnson asked their principal colleagues to list three or four messages they want everyone in the community to know and understand about the school district. The list of ideas was summed up in the following key messages:

1) The Neenah Joint School District has an outstanding, high quality staff that is dedicated to students.

2) The Neenah Joint School District provides students with terrific opportunities to learn and grow.

3) The Neenah Joint School District is committed to making the most of every dollar invested in it by taxpayers.

The committee suggests that these critical messages serve the basic messages that are communicated again and again through the various communications avenues outlined in this plan.

b) Create "Fact sheets" about issues that are of particular concern

It is clear that one of the most important things the district can do with its communications plan is to develop a process and the vehicles for providing sound information to community members in a way that is both easy for them to obtain and easy for the district to manage.

With this objective in mind, the committee suggests creating a series of documents that are posted on the website to provide subject-specific information in an easily readable format. These documents should have a consistent format: they should begin with a title, followed by a one-paragraph introduction about the issue, then a "Background" section providing more information, and concluding with a "Next Steps" section providing information about what comes next.

A maximum of six frequently asked questions (FAQs) and their responses may be provided in a "Questions and Answers" section if appropriate. Obviously, the FAQs should be written based on anticipating questions that administrators or board members would be likely to receive from staff and parents. Even if a question is particularly difficult or controversial, it may still be included in the FAQs document, and the question should be answered as fully as possible. If a question cannot be answered, the reasons for this should be provided along with a date by which more information will likely be provided.

A process should be initiated for creating and updating the fact sheets. Part of this effort should include allowing community members, staff, and board members to request fact sheets on various issues via email. Each sheet should include a link where stakeholders can provide feedback on the pieces, allowing the district to fine-tune the pieces over time.

The committee further proposes setting a goal of creating two new fact sheets per month, while also updating previously created fact sheets on an ongoing basis.

c) Create a district-level staff e-newsletter
The district's staff is hungry for information, which has prompted our suggestion to create a simple e-newsletter for email circulation. This newsletter should include quick-hitting factual information about various issues as well as a link to all the fact sheets available online.

The focus of this communications should be to present "need to know" information that can be read very quickly.

Every newsletter should include a link to where staff can provide feedback about the newsletter so that it can be improved over time.

d) Create a district-level community e-newsletter
Just as staff members are interested in receiving information on a regular basis from the district, so are community members. We suggest creating an e-newsletter that provides quick-hitting information formatted in a manner that allows community members to quickly scan the information. This newsletter can resemble the staff newsletter in other respects, such as its inclusion of a letter from the superintendent/district staff and the provision of feedback.

This newsletter can be created and distributed in various ways, including through the services of various e-newsletter vendors. Ideally, we would love to see the district distribute two newsletters every month.

e) Conduct additional community outreach

Committee members feel it beneficial for district and board members to seek additional opportunities to communicate challenges and opportunities for the district in following its vision through other community outreach efforts.

Most often, this includes outreach to local service clubs, a "State of the District" meeting, outreach to PTA/PTOs, and other similar efforts.

f) Create a key communicator network

A key communicator network is a group of people who meet with the district leadership to learn about key issues and find answers to their questions. The committee suggests the creation of such a group with the goal of creating a group of influential community members who can communicate on the district's behalf.

3) The need to engage local media

The district is covered by a regional daily newspaper that also reports on several other large districts, and that is read by many community members, as revealed in the audit surveys. With this in mind, local media outlets should be engaged as an important communications tool for reaching out to stakeholders. Establishing effective media relations requires significant effort, but this effort proves worthwhile in the long run.

In all likelihood, changes in state- and federal-level educational policy will cause further confusion among parents and other stakeholders. It is important that the Neenah Joint School District tells its story and, building on what was noted above, its vision.

The committee recommends the development of processes to increase local media engagement as one of the components of the communications plan. Suggested items to include in the communications plan are as follows:

a) District-level news releases and media outreach efforts

The district should seek to regularly distribute news releases about good news in the district—on topics that reinforce the vision of the district. However, the district should not hesitate to use news releases to clarify issues and even to highlight potential new fact sheets.

While the number will vary throughout the year, most districts of our size typically distribute two district-focused releases a month.

4) The need to avoid stakeholder confusion

In these challenging economic times, it is important to anticipate confusion and take all measures necessary to soften the blow of bad news. This is not to suggest that the district should "spin" bad news or be anything other than completely forthright, but rather that it should focus on maintaining continuous and comprehensive

The committee believes that the district should create and distribute two documents to every community member. The first document is a budget document that should show how revenue is derived, as well as how it is spent. The second document should outline the performance of each school. Both documents should be aligned with the district's vision, and be written in an easily understandable manner.

These documents can be distributed by email, or via postcards sent to every community member with instructions on how to download them.

c) Fact sheets
As noted above, the district should create and distribute a series of fact sheets.

6) Consolidate communications efforts and focus on quality
The Neenah Joint School District has a long list of very robust and progressive communications tools at its disposal. However, instead of expanding the number of existing tools, our communications efforts aim to eliminate any unused or expensive tools, or those that do not advance our communications goals.

With this in mind, it is the goal of the communications committee to communicate better. This may be possible by employing fewer communications tools. The following are some proposed efforts:

a) Seek to consolidate some communications tools and eliminate others
On an annual basis, the district should review all of its communications tools and efforts and seek to consolidate these and eliminate low-value items. It is important to note that more is not always better when it comes to communications tools.

b) Continue improving the website
The district's website will continue to become more important in the future and will, at least for the foreseeable future, be the cornerstone of the district's communications efforts. In this way, efforts should be made to continue to improve the website over time, by adding more pages, making frequent updates, and, when appropriate, adding new technologies to the site. However, especially in light of the fact the district website has recently been renovated, this communications plan suggests small incremental improvements over time, as opposed to large, wholesale changes.

7) The need to connect the board and the community
Community members and staff are clear in their desire for more information about the efforts of the board. By building on efforts to communicate a vision for the district, the district and board have the opportunity to better communicate their efforts, both past and present. Part of this effort could involve providing more

communication with staff, parents, and other community members to counteract any confusion on their part.

An important component of this is to continue focusing on how information in the news and important decisions that are made by district-level staff and board members will be interpreted by school-level staff and community members, and to actively work to disseminate information quickly to these stakeholders.

We suggest that as one of the components of the communications plan, we work to develop or refine processes for preventing confusion through substantial communication with stakeholders. Suggested items to include in the communications plan:

> a) Creation of a flowchart for communicating difficult issues
> A flowchart should be used that allows district and school leaders, staff, and board members to roll out information about particularly challenging issues. This is explained in greater detail later in this plan.
>
> b) Improve media relations
> As we have noted above, media involvement is critically important, and will go a long way in ensuring that accurate information is provided about the district, especially about particularly difficult issues.
>
> c) Create "Fact sheets" about issues that are of particular concern
> As noted earlier, the district should create fact sheets that provide additional information about difficult to understand issues.

5) The need to engage the 80% of community members who do not have a connection to the district
As noted in the audit report, the relatively low number of community respondents who participate in the community survey was surprising, especially when considering the efforts made by committee members to obtain a favorable response rate. The committee continues to remind itself that the stakeholder groups that it identified include community members who do not currently have children enrolled in the district. In fact, this group is critically important to the school district, suggesting that the district must strive to engage this group further. The committee suggests the following efforts:

> a) Quarterly newsletters in hard copy
> In addition to e-newsletters, the committee suggests the creation and distribution of a hard-copy newsletter on a quarterly basis disseminated through mail to everyone in the community, most notably to those without children attending the district's schools.
>
> b) Budget and performance documents

information about the budget, the budget creation process, and the effect of state- and federal-level policies on the budget.

The committee suggests that as one of the components of our communications plan, it works to create a board-specific communications effort. Suggested items to include in the communications plan are:

a) Make the school board a part of the fact sheet creation process

As a part of the fact sheet process, the board should receive information in advance and have an opportunity to clarify or ask questions about the information that is provided. This process will serve the dual goal of connecting the school board with the district on important issues and improving the fact sheets themselves.

b) Undertake ongoing efforts to improve the timing of agendas and minutes

The board should continue to seek new ways to post their agendas, their minutes, and any corresponding board information, especially information about the district's budget and the levy.

c) Create and distribute a meeting wrap-up

A board wrap-up should be written and posted on the website, and also sent to staff/the community as part of the staff and community newsletters. The wrap-up should present factual information rather than a subjective point of view. Once again, the key is to provide quick-hitting information, and to shed light on information that community members and staff might not have otherwise been aware of.

d) Make board meetings more transparent

Community and staff members who attend board meetings in every district are often dismayed and frustrated by the use of acronyms and the way in which the state's school funding system works. With this point in mind, the district should have a series of handouts available at all meetings, and also posted online, which include a list of acronyms and their definitions, information about how school district budgets are created, and information about the state budget, including information about key topics such as revenue limits.

e) Other community engagement efforts

The board, along with the district leadership, could also consider holding an annual State of the District event.

8) The need to add capacity

It was readily apparent to committee members that the issue of capacity and ownership must be made clear. Moreover, the committee feels it necessary to set expectations about ownership of communications activities, and to have a careful and realistic review of the capacity to carry out the plan.

It is the strong recommendation of the committee that the district hire an additional staff member to serve as a communications manager whose sole responsibility is to assist in executing this plan. In addition to assisting with the creation of various communications-related efforts, a communications manager can help ensure efficient flow of information from the schools to the district, from the district to the schools, and between the district and board members.

Finally, in addition to the items included in this plan, the hiring of an experienced communications professional will anticipate communications challenges and opportunities. (See the Appendix for a draft communications manager position description.)

APPENDIX I: COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Part of this ongoing conversation, especially among district staff in these increasingly difficult and complex educational times, concerns how to communicate. Before delving into the specifics of our communications efforts, it is necessary to discuss the tools we will use. Please note that the list below is by no means exhaustive. It simply identifies the most commonly used communication and feedback tools at our disposal, regardless of their current appropriateness for Neenah Joint School District.

The following communication tools are used to reach out to and inform members of our community:

Community email newsletters
Permission-based email newsletters are a great medium for keeping stakeholders informed, and email is one of the ways in which community members wish to receive information. There are numerous vendors that allow for the quick creation of web-based forms that can be integrated into the district's website for newsletter distribution. Most of the vendors provide this service on an inexpensive monthly basis.

Advertisements, articles, guest columns, and "op-eds" in local newspapers
Community members served by the Neenah Joint School District benefit from having a local daily newspaper that assigns reporters to cover the school district, as well as various weekly publications. While readership may be lower than in the past, submitting articles, columns, and opinion pieces are simple and effective ways of communicating important district news.

Media relations
Many of the issues the school district will be facing over the next year will be reported by local media outlets. To assist these reporters in their efforts, the district should provide information that can be easily included in news stories, while district leaders should be available to provide background information and on-the-record

quotes. Background information provided to one reporter can usually be provided to another at a later date. Moreover, background information on a topic, such as the annual meeting, can and should be reused every year for the same purpose.

The district's website

The district's website is the hub of the district's communications efforts. Moreover, because stakeholders find the website trustworthy, continued efforts should be made by the district to continue expanding the website with new information.

Social media networks

Social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook are great ways to provide new and important information in a very timely fashion, and their importance will likely grow in time.

The challenge with social media is that staff time must be committed to it. Outdated posts reflect very badly on the district, and an abandoned Facebook or Twitter page—especially if it is linked to or integrated with the district's website—is worse than having no social media presence at all.

Direct mail

Letters, district reports, and postcards are terrific for sharing information with community members, particularly those who do not have a natural connection to the district. In fact, some stakeholders, especially parents whose children are no longer attending district schools, have noted that they like to be "interrupted" by information from the district.

Service club outreach efforts

One of the best ways to communicate with members of a variety of service groups is to connect with them at their regularly occurring social events. Meetings of local chapters of the Rotary Club, the Kiwanis Club, and other organizations are terrific venues for sharing information about the district, and for engaging club members in its challenges and opportunities.

Issue-specific "Frequently Asked Questions" and "one-pager" documents

FAQs and one-pagers about issues of specific interest can be made available to stakeholders, both on the website and in print form. Creating FAQs is a great method for presenting complex information in a way that stakeholders can embrace.

District marketing materials (brochures, banners, introductory DVDs, etc.)

New community members, parents of possible open enrollees, realtors, and business leaders often want quick-hitting information about the district. Marketing materials, including web-based videos and DVDs, brochures, and banners, are a great way to share information quickly and reinforce the district's messages. While this kind of marketing material is not presented specifically, it is an important option to consider in the future.

Key communicator groups

Key communicator groups are comprised of influential leaders in the community for the purpose of providing it with information and answering questions so community members can more effectively communicate on behalf of the district. Key communicator groups often meet quarterly, with updates provided by email as required.

The following tools can be used to gain feedback from a wider variety of community members:

Surveys

Online surveys are a particularly effective way for the district to quickly gain feedback on various issues from external stakeholders.

Focus groups

As with surveys, focus groups allow for a greater understanding of the trends and specific issues uncovered by surveys.

APPENDIX II: COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING GRID

The following communications matrix shows the communications tools described in this plan should be used throughout the year.

	Staff	Students	District Parents	Parents of Graduates	Community members w/o children	Alumni	Senior Citizens
April	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts	Service clubs Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Mailed newsletter	E-newsletter Fact sheet Service clubs Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Mailed newsletter	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Mailed newsletter	E-newsletter Fact sheet Service clubs Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Mailed newsletter	Service clubs Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Mailed newsletter
May	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts	Service clubs Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release	E-newsletter Fact sheet Service clubs Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release	E-newsletter Fact sheet Service clubs Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release
June	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release
July	E-newsletter Fact sheet	E-newsletter Fact sheet	News release	E-newsletter Fact sheet News release	News release	E-newsletter Fact sheet News release	News release
August	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts Budget document Key Communicators	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts Budget document	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Budget document Key Communicators Mailed newsletter	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Budget document Key Communicators Mailed newsletter	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Budget document Key Communicators Mailed newsletter	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Budget document Key Communicators Mailed newsletter	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Budget document Key Communicators Mailed newsletter
September	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Open Houses	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Open Houses	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Open Houses	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Open Houses	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Open Houses
October	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Service clubs	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Service clubs	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Service clubs	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release
November	E-newsletter Fact sheet Social Media Posts	E-newsletter Fact sheet Social Media Posts	Social Media Posts News release	E-newsletter Fact sheet Social Media Posts News release	Social Media Posts News release	E-newsletter Fact sheet Social Media Posts News release	Social Media Posts News release
December	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Mailed newsletter	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Mailed newsletter	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Mailed newsletter	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Mailed newsletter	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Mailed newsletter
January	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release
February	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Performance Doc't	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Performance Doc't	Board Write Up News release Performance Doc't	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up News release Performance Doc't	Board Write Up News release Performance Doc't	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up News release Performance Doc't	Board Write Up News release Performance Doc't
March	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts Survey Focus Groups Plan Revision	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts Survey Plan Revision	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Survey Focus Groups Plan Revision	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Survey Focus Groups Plan Revision	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Survey Focus Groups Plan Revision	E-newsletter Fact sheet Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Survey Focus Groups Plan Revision	Board Write Up Social Media Posts News release Survey Focus Groups Plan Revision

APPENDIX III: DRAFT COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER POSITION DESCRIPTION

The following is a draft position description for our school district communications manager.

Position Title: Communications Manager
Work Year: 12 Months

General Statement of Responsibilities:
The Communications Manager will provide communication services to the district, the schools, and the Board of Education, and will be responsible for:

- Executing the communications plan created by the district's Communications Committee
- Ensuring the proper flow of information between the district, school board, and schools and, when necessary, manage these processes.
- Anticipating communications challenges and opportunities and consulting with staff and board members accordingly
- Facilitating quarterly meetings of the Communications Committee

Essential Duties:
- Provide professional public relations counsel and assistance to the administration, school board, school staff, parent groups, and student groups
- Serve as information liaison between the school district and the community
- Execute the communications plan and update and improve the plan on an ongoing basis
- Serve as liaison between the district and the news media and supervise the production and distribution of news releases
- Serve as district spokesperson as needed
- Cooperate with district administrators and other staff members, as appropriate, in publicizing and promoting performances, exhibitions, displays, dedications, or special programs sponsored by the schools and open to the public
- Oversee the writing and production of the staff and community newsletters including hardcopy and digital newsletters
- Prior to final publication, review and edit all district publications that will be disseminated to the general public
- Recommend innovative avenues of communication for external and internal audiences
- Solicit feedback through formal and informal means on activities, products, and purposes of the community relations program and the school district in general

- Develop and maintain accurate records of the district's public relations program
- Expedite responses to inquiries and complaints received by the department from citizens, news media, and school personnel.
- Research and write articles
- Provide crisis communications assistance

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in public relations, mass communications, or equivalent experience
- Professional experience in a full-time public relations position
- Working knowledge of internal and external public relations programs
- Mastery of communications skills
- Understanding of the importance of two-way communication
- Experience in planning, implementing, and evaluating communications
- Accreditation by the National School Public Relations Association or Public Relations Society of America preferred, but not required
- Evidence of adherence to the code of ethics of the public relations profession

The anticipated salary requirement for this position would be between $48,000 and $58,000.