



## School District of Washington Communication Plan

### **Executive Summary:**

The School District of Washington (SDOW) Communication Plan is a comprehensive strategy designed to enhance communication within the district and foster effective engagement with stakeholders. This executive summary provides an overview of the plan's objectives and key components.

The primary goal of the communication plan is to establish transparent, timely, and consistent communication channels that facilitate the dissemination of important information to all stakeholders, including parents, students, teachers, staff, administrators, and the broader community. By fostering open lines of communication, the district aims to build trust, promote collaboration, and ensure that stakeholders are well-informed about district initiatives, policies, events, and achievements.

To achieve these objectives, the plan outlines a range of communication channels and tools that leverage both traditional and digital platforms. These include email updates, newsletters, a user-friendly district website, social media engagement, mobile apps, face-to-face meetings, and strategic partnerships with local media outlets. By employing a diverse range of channels, the district seeks to reach stakeholders through their preferred means of communication and maximize the impact of its messaging.

Aligned to the district's 2023-2027 Blue Jay PRIDE Strategic Plan, this communication plan emphasizes the importance of internal communication, highlighting the need for effective information sharing among staff, teachers, and administrators. Regular communication channels and tools are established to ensure district personnel are well-informed about district policies, procedures, and updates. This internal communication framework promotes collaboration, alignment, and a sense of community within the district.

Recognizing the significance of external communication, the plan prioritizes engagement with parents, students, and the broader community. Strategies are outlined to share school news, events, and achievements through various platforms. The plan also includes provisions for crisis communication, outlining protocols for timely and accurate communication during emergencies, natural disasters, or other unforeseen events. Additionally, measures are put in place to address rumors, misinformation, and manage public concerns effectively.

To assess the plan's effectiveness and make continuous improvements, evaluation mechanisms are integrated, including feedback collection from stakeholders. The district will regularly review

and adjust the plan based on evaluation results and stakeholder input, ensuring that it remains relevant and responsive to the evolving needs of the District.

Overall, the School District of Washington Communication Plan is a comprehensive roadmap that aims to enhance communication, build trust, and foster meaningful engagement within the District. By implementing this plan, the District is committed to creating a supportive and informed environment that facilitates the success and well-being of its students, staff, and community.

### **Introduction:**

The School District of Washington Communication Plan serves as a strategic framework to promote effective communication within the District and establish strong connections with stakeholders. In an era of information overload and rapidly evolving communication technologies, it is imperative for educational institutions to implement comprehensive communication strategies that ensure timely, transparent, and meaningful interactions with parents, students, teachers, staff, administrators, and the broader community. This introduction sets the stage for the SDOW Communication Plan, highlighting its objectives, key components, and the crucial role it plays in building trust, fostering collaboration, and keeping stakeholders well-informed about important District matters. By embracing this plan, the district reaffirms its commitment to creating an environment where communication is valued, engagement is nurtured, and success is achieved through the collective efforts of all stakeholders involved.

### **Target Audience:**

The target audience for the School District of Washington Communication Plan includes various stakeholders within the District and the wider community. Here are the primary target audience groups:

- Parents: Parents play a vital role in their children's education. The communication plan aims to engage parents by providing them with relevant and timely information about school programs, policies, events, academic progress, and opportunities for involvement.
- Students: Students are an essential part of the education system. The communication plan seeks to ensure that students receive important updates and information related to their academic journey, extracurricular activities, and student support services.
- Teachers and Staff: Effective communication among teachers, staff, and administrators is crucial for a well-functioning district. The plan aims to facilitate internal communication by providing educators and staff members with the necessary information, policies, professional development opportunities, and updates related to district operations.
- Administrators, the Board of Education, and School Leaders: Administrators, the Board of Education, and school leaders are responsible for implementing district policies and

initiatives. The communication plan aims to keep them informed about district-wide strategies, updates, and decisions, enabling them to effectively communicate and align their efforts within the district.

- Community Members: The broader community, including local residents, businesses, community organizations, and elected officials, is an important stakeholder group. The plan seeks to engage and inform the community about district achievements, events, initiatives, and opportunities for collaboration, fostering a strong partnership between the district and the community.
- Local Media Outlets: Establishing relationships with local media outlets, such as newspapers, radio stations, and online news platforms, is crucial for broader visibility and effective dissemination of district news and announcements. The plan includes strategies for engaging with the media to ensure accurate and timely reporting.

By tailoring communication strategies to meet the specific needs and preferences of each target audience group, the SDOW Communication Plan aims to create a cohesive and engaged community that actively participates in the educational journey of its students.

### **Key Messages:**

These key messages convey the mission, core values, priorities, and aspirations of the School District of Washington, providing a consistent and cohesive communication framework that aligns stakeholders and supports focus areas, goals, and strategies in the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan.

- Commitment to Excellence: The SDOW is dedicated to providing high-quality education and fostering an environment where every student can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.
- Open and Transparent Communication: The district values open and transparent communication, ensuring that stakeholders receive timely and accurate information about district policies, programs, initiatives, events, and updates.
- Collaboration and Partnership: The district recognizes the importance of collaboration and partnership between educators, parents, students, staff, administrators, and the wider community to create a supportive and enriching educational experience.
- Student-Centered Approach: The district is committed to placing students at the center of decision-making and tailoring educational programs and support services to meet their diverse needs, interests, and future aspirations.
- Parent and Community Engagement: The district actively encourages and seeks the involvement of parents and community members in shaping the educational experience, fostering strong partnerships that enhance student success.

- Safety and Well-being: The district prioritizes the safety and well-being of students and staff, implementing measures to create secure learning environments and providing resources and support for the social-emotional development of students.
- Positive Climate and Culture: The district is dedicated to promoting a positive climate and culture, ensuring that all students have a strong sense of belonging and access to educational opportunities, resources, and support, regardless of their background or circumstances.
- Continuous Improvement: The district embraces a culture of continuous improvement, seeking feedback, monitoring progress, and making data-informed decisions to enhance educational outcomes and the overall district experience.
- Celebrating Achievements: The district values and celebrates the achievements of students, teachers, staff, and the broader school community, recognizing and highlighting success stories that inspire and motivate.
- Community Impact: The district recognizes its role as an integral part of the wider community and aims to contribute positively to the social, cultural, and economic well-being of the community through educational excellence and collaborative partnerships.

### **External Communication Channels and Tools:**

External communication is crucial for the School District of Washington to engage with parents, students, and the broader community, building strong relationships and fostering a positive image of the district. Effective external communication ensures that stakeholders are well-informed about district news, events, initiatives, and opportunities for involvement. Here are some key aspects of external communication in the district:

- District Website: The district website serves as a central hub for important announcements, district news, calendars, resources, and contact information.
- Email Updates / School Messenger: Email communication reaches parents, staff, and community members with timely updates, newsletters, and important announcements.
- Newsletters: District and building newsletters provide highlights of district events, student achievements, upcoming activities, and important information for parents, staff, and community members.
- Social Media: Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram share news, updates, photos, and engage with stakeholders in real-time.

- Mobile Apps: The district mobile app allows parents, students, and staff to access important information, school calendars, lunch menus, and other relevant district news.
- Parent-Teacher Conferences: Parent-teacher conferences facilitate face-to-face communication between parents and teachers to discuss student progress, goals, and areas of improvement.
- Community Meetings: Community meetings such as the Strategic Planning Team, SDOW Partners, and Parent Advisory create an opportunity where district administrators, staff, and community members come together to discuss district initiatives, policies, and gather feedback.
- Opening and Closing Ceremony Events: Regular all-staff meetings provide updates, share information, provide a time for celebration, and share the vision of the district among teachers, staff, and administrators.
- Press Releases: The district prepares and distributes press releases to local media outlets to share important district news, events, and achievements with the broader community.
- Lumen Parent Portal: Lumen provides online access for parents to view their child's academic progress, attendance records, and communicate with teachers.
- Annual Online Surveys: Online surveys are conducted annually to gather feedback and input from parents, students, and staff on various topics, such as curriculum, district initiatives, and communication effectiveness.
- Monthly Superintendent Videos: Videos from the superintendent are available on the district website each month to provide important information for the upcoming month.
- Monthly Kephart Communications Podcast: The Kephart Communications podcast is hosted by SDOW Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Kephart. With help from our team in the Washington High School CAPS program, Dr. Kephart and her guests share information ranging from district happenings, current events, and student experiences to keep listeners informed about the district.

### **Internal Communication Channels and Tools:**

Internal communication plays a vital role in fostering collaboration, alignment, and a sense of community within the School District of Washington. It ensures that staff, teachers, and administrators are well-informed about district policies, procedures, and updates, enabling them to work together towards the shared goal of providing quality education to students.

To facilitate effective internal communication, the district employs a variety of channels and tools:

- Email and Intranet: Email is used as a primary mode of communication for important announcements, updates, and sharing resources among district personnel. Additionally, an intranet platform serves as a centralized hub for accessing documents, forms, and information relevant to district operations.
- Staff Meetings: Regular staff meetings are conducted to provide updates, discuss important topics, and foster collaboration among teachers, staff, and administrators. These meetings provide an opportunity to share best practices, address concerns, and ensure everyone is on the same page.
- Departmental and Team Meetings: Departmental and team meetings are held to facilitate communication and coordination within specific areas or groups. These meetings allow for focused discussions, brainstorming, and problem-solving.
- Communication Tools: Collaboration tools such as instant messaging platforms and shared document repositories on Google are utilized to enhance communication and streamline workflows among teams.
- Professional Development Opportunities: The district offers professional development opportunities, workshops, and training sessions to keep staff updated on educational practices, technology integration, and district-wide initiatives. These events also provide a platform for networking and exchanging ideas.
- Newsletters and Internal Publications: Internal newsletters and publications are circulated to keep staff informed about district news, upcoming events, staff achievements, and relevant professional development opportunities.
- Open Door Policy: Administrators and leaders within the district maintain an open-door policy, encouraging staff members to approach them with questions, concerns, and ideas. This fosters a culture of transparency, trust, and open communication.

By prioritizing internal communication, the School District of Washington ensures that staff members feel connected, supported, and well-informed about district-wide initiatives, policies, and updates. Effective internal communication promotes collaboration, enhances productivity, and ultimately contributes to the district's overall success and its students' educational experience.

### **Crisis Communication:**

In times of crises or emergencies, the School District of Washington employs a comprehensive crisis communication plan to ensure timely and effective communication with stakeholders. The district understands the importance of providing accurate information, addressing concerns, and maintaining transparency during challenging situations. The crisis communication plan outlines protocols and strategies for communication channels, such as emails, text messages, social

media updates, and website announcements, to quickly disseminate critical information to parents, staff, students, and the community. It also designates key individuals responsible for coordinating and delivering messages to ensure consistency and accuracy. By prioritizing clear and timely communication, the SDOW aims to alleviate anxiety, provide reassurance, and maintain trust with the community during times of crisis.

### **Evaluation and Feedback:**

The School District of Washington values ongoing evaluation and feedback as essential tools for continuous improvement. Through regular assessments, surveys, and feedback mechanisms, the district gathers input from parents, students, staff, and community members to gauge satisfaction levels, identify areas for improvement, and make data-informed decisions. This feedback is used to refine policies, programs, and communication strategies, ensuring that the district meets the evolving needs of its stakeholders. By actively seeking and implementing feedback, the SDOW fosters a collaborative environment that empowers stakeholders to contribute to the enhancement of educational experiences and outcomes.