

Sparta Township Public Schools Communication Action Plan

August 2023



Sparta Township
Public Schools

Purpose

By working toward the completion of the goals and objectives outlined in this plan, the Sparta Township Public School District will successfully create and maintain comprehensive communication strategies to engage and inform key stakeholders.



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Process



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- STPS Strategic Plan recommended improved communications
- Engage Communication Consultant
- Communications Inventory
 - Communication methods and software
- Surveys
 - Staff
 - Administrators
 - Board of Education
 - Parents/Community
- Recommended Goals, Objectives and Actions
 - 3 Goals, 18 Objectives, 91 Actions
- Administrative Team Details and Implements Action Plan

Positive Feedback

- The Sparta Township Public School District is known by many as having a strong reputation for academic success.
- The Sparta Township Public School District provides rigorous academics, a range of services, and activities for all learners.
- Focus group participants noted an improvement in the timeliness and trustworthiness of communication from district leadership.



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Opportunities for Improvement



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- An opportunity exists to establish more consistent communication with parents and staff, particularly during a crisis or incident.
- Sparta Township Public School District staff and parents indicated that more communications regarding district finances and related issues could be provided.
- Sparta Township Public School District staff indicated there's insufficient communication about student success and achievement.

STPS Communication Plan Goals



Goal 1: Establish an Internal Communications Program to Create a More Connected and Informed School Community

Objectives

- A. Create a connected school community (internally) utilizing effective communication practices
- B. Develop an employee relations program/committee to foster motivation and employee wellness
- C. Deliver timely communication responses using appropriate communication methods.
- D. Increase business office and HR communications
- E. Clarify roles and responsibilities of administrators.
- F. Provide opportunities for ongoing two-way communications.
- G. Evaluate and refine onboarding process for new hires.

Sample Actions

Provide succinct informational updates to staff so they can share information accurately with colleagues, parents and students.

Help employees to feel valued by instituting a district-wide employee relations program/committee that focuses on two-way communication.

Commit to providing timely responses to requests for information by implementing a standard response time protocol. (i.e., max. 2 business days).

Consider a BOE highlights email to all staff after each board meeting.

Review and post chain of command (Based on Org. Chart) for communications on website.

When possible, allow staff to participate in decision-making through anonymous survey tools (i.e., professional development).

Review and update topics for new teacher/staff orientation.

Goal 2: Engage in Strategic Communications with External Stakeholders to Strengthen Community Relations

Objectives

- A. Establish a public relations plan.
- B. Share positive district news and accomplishments directly with external stakeholders.
- C. Increase district social media presence.
- D. Maximize website experience for all users.
- E. Streamline communications with parents.
- F. Strengthen community connections by sharing information.
- G. Focus on providing a high level of customer service.
- H. Increase use of video when telling the district's story.

Sample Actions

Review and update, if needed, policies related to public information, publicity releases and media relations.

Send a monthly or quarterly district electronic newsletter to all stakeholders. Include topics such as academics, athletics, budget/finance and facilities.

Identify and utilize applicable social media platforms.

Strive for balanced content between internal and external stakeholder groups.

Continue to utilize text, email and phone simultaneously as primary communication channels.

Collaborate with Sparta Township local officials to send district newsletter to all residents.

Commit to relationship-building at every interaction.

Implement use of video messages to convey important information.

Goal #3 Review and Update Crisis Communication Plans

Objectives

- A. Review and update crisis communications plan.
- B. Identify primary and secondary point persons for emergency communications.
- C. Update internal and external contacts twice per year.

Sample Actions

Review and update policies and procedures related to crisis communication and preparedness.

Conduct tabletop crisis scenario planning exercises focused on communications with administrative team.

At the start of each year, test the emergency notification system to ensure all contacts are current. Test again in spring.

Questions?