

Multi-Year Communications Action Plan

The Balanced Scorecard provides interim measures that assess whether the district's action plan is moving towards the primary communications goal.

1. Staff: Because the research shows that staff and key parents are the most trusted communicators, the emphasis is to increase staff (teachers, secretaries, bus drivers, custodians, paraprofessionals) understanding of their role and importance as district communicators.

Activity	Message	Medium	Responsibility	Resources
Interpersonal Communication				
Explain findings about where parents get information	You are the trusted source	Face to face meeting and simple, one-page handout	Director of Planning and Outreach	No cost
Meet staff regularly to explain operating decisions and progress	"We need your input and support, you represent the face of the district"	Appoint as Liaisons to various parent groups, appoint to public library board, etc.	Superintendent and Director of Planning and Outreach	No cost
Strengthen staff knowledge base about district	District has made progress some are not aware of : SAT scores have risen, HS graduation rate among highest in state, middle school restructuring has resulted in equity among all three schools	E-alerts to staff, Web updates, Board update , Superintendent's Monthly Report	Public Information Coordinator	No cost
Develop employee feedback program to monitor satisfaction and indentify/respond to questions, comments	"We care what you think," also part of interim Balanced Scorecard measures	Email concerns info@pway.org and annual district satisfaction survey	Director of Planning and Outreach	No cost
Obtain external recognition for staff achievements	These are the Best Practices in Piscataway (these are staff who epitomize district goals e.g. those who increased test scores among minority students, earned a bus driver safety award, helped special ed students meet NCLB	Nominate for state and national awards, profile teachers in press, television, Web site	Public Information Coordinator	No cost

Activity	Message	Medium	Responsibility	Resources
Provide staff with talking points when news is unpleasant	"Parents will ask you about this...here is what happened." Example: one sub-group failed to make annual progress, causing entire school to be labeled "In Need of Improvement" by NCLB.	Email explanation to staff	Director of Planning and Outreach	No cost
Mass Communication				
Post district goals throughout buildings	Academic achievement is priority	Signage	Public Information Coordinator	No expense
Unify messages and publications	We all represent Piscataway where Education is Front and Center	Letterhead, newsletters, Web sites	Director of Planning and Outreach	No cost

2. Parents: The research shows that an active minority will absorb information from many sources, edit, and communicate what they believe others need to know. This is the primary audience although accessibility to information outlets is provided to all. In some situations, there is a specific parent audience targeted. The emphasis will be to creatively package targeted messages that are consistent and frequent.

Activity	Audience	Message	Medium	Responsibility	Resources
Interpersonal					
Redesign Superintendent's Forum from open-ended questions to specific presentations	Parents	Use January Forum to provide "State of the District" report; others to highlight improvements in district test scores, revisions to math and science curriculum, the importance of preschool, etc.	Direct dialogue	Superintendent	No cost
Increase effectiveness of Key Communicators	Leaders of parent, Scout, sports, worship, business and youth organizations	Timely updates of news and progress	Annual meeting and ongoing electronic updates of all district achievements	Director of Planning and Outreach and Public information Coordinator	"Scrub" list, no cost

Activity	Audience	Message	Medium	Responsibility	Resources
Meet individually and semiannually with parent organizations for district updates	PTAs, Athletic Boosters, Choir and Band Parents	Progress tailored to group's interests	Face-to-face dialogue	Superintendent and Director of Planning and Outreach	No cost
Establish other education advocacy organizations	Preschool Parents, Single Parents, Grandparents Support Group, Alumni Employees	District cares about family needs and relationships to child's success; alumni are proud to work here	Quarterly meetings	PreK Coordinator, Citizen Grandparent Chair, Alumni Employee Chair	\$500
Offer ESL classes of parents	Parents who do not speak English	Piscataway recognizes the importance of family involvement in child's success	Weekly class for beginning and advanced learners	ESL District Chair	No added cost
Schedule public meeting to communicate district goals and progress	Business/ civic leaders, realtors, leaders of faith community	Piscataway is making academic strides	Face –to- face	Superintendent and Director of Planning and Outreach	\$500
Schedule events that showcase academics	Parents	Students demonstrate rigor of their courses, e.g. science projects, poetry readings, choral and instrumental, etc.	Parent Literacy Conference, Academic Bowls, NJ Science League, Piscataway Pride	Office of Curriculum and Instruction, Principals, and Director of Planning and Outreach	\$5000
Identify high-achieving students, especially minorities and profile their stories	Parents/ Community	Minority students exceed in academic areas; foreign-born students overcome challenges through special programs; students are gifted in many areas	Meet....(<u>student</u>) in the annual report, district newsletters, on the Web	Public Information Coordinator	No added cost; current district PR expenses are \$30,000
Obtain endorsements for district initiatives from business people	Parents and Community-at-large	Piscataway Schools are creating leaders and employees for tomorrow	Annual Report and other publications	Director of Planning and Outreach	No cost

Activity	Audience	Message	Medium	Responsibility	Resources
Three schools annually will apply for school recognition programs such as Blue Ribbon and NJ Schools to Watch	Parents and Community-at-large	Piscataway Schools are recognized in external educational circles for excellence	Award	Superintendent, Principals, and Director of Planning and Outreach	No cost
Emphasize academic success through Hall of Fame, Westinghouse competition, etc.	Parents / Community	Outstanding students attend our schools	Key Communicators, electronic and print media outlets	Superintendent and Principals	No cost
Publicize efforts of HS Restructuring Committee	Parents and Community-at-large	District is working at high school reform, a key proposal of federal and state governments	Key Communicators, Press, Web site, and district publications	Public Information Coordinator	No cost
Mass Media					
Develop targeted programming for airing on WVPH, district radio station	Parents and Community-at-large	Piscataway Schools are developing leaders of tomorrow	Interviews with business leaders, students, and district officials	Director of Planning and Outreach	No cost
Refocus district newsletter to emphasize district progress	Parents and Community-at-large	Student achievement is on the rise at all grade levels; utilize "Themes" such as summer learning opportunities, extracurricular programs that reinforce what happens in classrooms, etc.	Quarterly distribution to 17,500 households shorter articles, more pictures of students and staff	Director of Planning and Outreach and Public Information Coordinator	No new cost
Redesign cable television program to emphasize learning at home	Parents	Homework tips, effective discipline techniques, how to read with children	Half-hour monthly program, aired repeatedly over existing cable outlet	Director of Planning and Outreach and Public Information Coordinator	No cost

Activity	Audience	Message	Medium	Responsibility	Resources
Provide communications training to schools	Principals and Presidents of parent organizations (they share responsibility for building newsletter)	School updates in readable, inviting format	Monthly building newsletters	Director of Planning and Community Outreach and Public Information Coordinator	No cost
Maintain and refocus Web site	Parents	Timely updates on progress, student profiles, parent info	Web site	Public Information Coordinator	No cost
Add "Ask the Expert" feature to newsletters and Web site	Parents and Community-at-large	Ombudsman can bridge the gap, obtain immediate answers, and resolve issues quickly	Access through phone line, email address, and Web	Coordinated by Director of Planning and Outreach	No cost
Reinforce district message in community	Parents and Community-at-large	Piscataway cares about education	Canvas banners at strategic locations through town	Coordinated by Director of Planning and Outreach	\$10,000 20 banners@ \$500 apiece