



Turlock Unified School District

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN



2018-2019

The Turlock Unified School District will effectively communicate and encourage connections with all internal and external stakeholders with the specific goal of fostering improved dialogue among site and District administration, staff, students, parents, the Board of Trustees, and the Turlock community.



Introduction

This communication plan is intended to guide all of Turlock Unified School District's collective communication efforts. Effective and efficient communication is essential to the success of a school district. The purpose of the plan is to serve as a guide for connecting all stakeholders to timely information that will encourage two-way communication. TUSD strives to be an innovative school district, and this plan aligns with both the Strategic Plan and Local Accountability Control Plan to establish this identity and share great things that our students are doing in their schools and community. We hope you will join us in sharing "our story."

Mission

The mission of the Turlock Unified School District, a premier progressive educational system, is to ensure all students graduate as self-motivated, responsible citizens equipped to compete successfully in an ever-changing global society by delivering effective instruction that engages all students to reach their individual potential and highest achievements within a safe and caring student-centered environment in partnership with our families and diverse community.

Objectives

- 1** All students will demonstrate proficiency in all core academic subjects.
- 2** Each student will set and achieve challenging personal goals tailored to his/her aspirations for post-secondary education and careers.
- 3** All students will develop and consistently demonstrate character traits necessary to be self-motivated and responsible citizens in our community.
- 4** By 2014, all students leaving high school will earn a diploma or successfully complete their Individualized Educational Plan (I.E.P.).



Beliefs

We believe that:

- Every person is unique and has equal worth.
- Every person can be a successful learner.
- People are responsible for their actions.
- The family experience has a profound impact on the development of the individual.
- Honesty and integrity build trust in all relationships.
- Motivation, hard work, and persistence are necessary to achieve full potential.
- High expectations yield greater levels of performance.
- A quality education enriches lives by creating and expanding opportunities.
- The positive actions of role models inspire people to excel.
- Service to others is vital in building a thriving community.



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Target Audiences



Internal

- ➔ Students
- ➔ Staff
- ➔ Board of Trustees

External

- ➔ Parents
- ➔ Parent Organizations
- ➔ Community
- ➔ Education Partners
- ➔ Elected Officials



Communication Goals



1 Timely

Communicate through the appropriate channels in a pro-active manner.

2 Personalized

Foster meaningful connections among school, students, parents, staff, and the community.

3 Reciprocal

Provide many opportunities for two-way communication with parents and our Turlock community to actively engage with our schools.

4 Identifiable

Build and maintain our identity as an innovative school district.



Objectives and Tactics



District Flow of Information

Develop site and department organizational charts to clarify roles and responsibilities in order to promote access.



Ongoing Training/Support for Administrators in Effective Communication with Staff/Public

- Provide information at Principal's meetings on communication strategies.
- Subscribe to school communication publications (National School Public Relations Association and California School Public Relations Association) and relay pertinent ideas and information to administrators.
- Supply administrators with easy-to-use communications tools as needed when issues arise.
- Provide communications training sessions to site-level staff.
- Create tools for schools to utilize when reporting an upcoming event to the Superintendent's Office.



Regular Information on District-wide Issues

- Distribute information from meetings on need-to-know basis.
- Distribute all external publications and news releases to all employees via email and post on website.
- Issue short, bulleted FYI sheets to staff and parents on issues of immediate concern.
- Formalize a policy for district communication with teachers and site staff.



System to Encourage Flow of Information from Parents/Community to District

- Encourage parents and community members to sign up for district-wide and school-wide electronic newsletters (when applicable).
- Conduct electronic surveys (email) at district and site levels to provide feedback on flow of information (i.e., LCAP Survey)
- Offer formal and informal meeting opportunities to receive input.
- Establish informational email account to receive feedback from community.
- Stay current with technology applications to better facilitate communication between parents and schools.



Communications' Correspondences Publication and Distribution

- District/School informational brochures
- TUSD Weekly Update and site newsletters
- Press releases, as needed
- Post information on TUSD and site websites

Objectives and Tactics (cont.)



Civic, Community, and Religious Groups' Communication

- Attend community meetings as needed to provide information.
- Provide district communication materials to key leaders.
- Sustain current and develop new partnerships with groups.



Community Visibility

- Attend community organization meetings.
- Encourage participation in local service clubs.
- Promote TUSD on social media and encourage staff to share positive stories about TUSD.
- Share TUSD accolades and events with local news media.
- Seek business partnerships through contacts in local groups.
- Expand CTE business partnerships and increase number of student internships in community.



TUSD Personnel Acknowledgment

- Highlight staff with features in District communications, outside media, and through recognitions.
- Create short videos focusing on a student, staff member, program, school department, etc.



Strategies



Simple Communications

- Use clear, concise and non-educational style for all general publications.
- Vary the types and level of communication to target diverse audiences.
- Translate communication pieces as mandated for various language groups.



Information Sheets/Infographics

- Create information sheets/infographics on four or five topics such as district and state budgets, school safety, accountability, etc.; update them bi-annually, as needed
- Use template for uniformity so that new topics can be addressed rapidly.



Timely Communications

- Prepare information sheets when appropriate to send out to principals, office managers, and other staff, as needed.
- Follow-up with memos or communications to all staff, if necessary.
- Make telephone calls, if in doubt.



Face-to-Face Communications

- Utilize personal contacts to communicate important and difficult information.
- Encourage staff to relay messages through personal interaction when appropriate.



Customer Service Focus

- Ensure customer leaves with an answer to their concern or question.
- Never be dismissive.
- Actively listen to understand the message beyond the words.



Training/Support

- Train staff to understand that what they say to friends, neighbors, and people in the community has an impact on how TUSD schools are perceived.
- Engage frontline staff in the conversation, and make sure they have access to information immediately. They are the best link to the parents and community.



Relationships in Our Community

- Develop relationships with merchants by keeping them informed of minimum days, late starts, etc.
- Ask for input on areas of concern.
- Develop key communicator groups and deliver message to them as needed. They will take the message to the community more effectively than district personnel.
- Maintain a high level of visibility for the District through participation of key staff in various professional and community activities.



Media Insights

- Pay attention to the type of stories aired or published. Note who is generally used as a source of information.
- Develop relationships with editors and education reporters.



Message Preparation

- Study issues facing education and be prepared to respond with information sheets.
- Develop responses that represent our school or district message.
- Avoid technical jargon by keeping it simple and using quotable "sound bites," when appropriate.
- Prepare stories in formats that match those used by the local media.
- Don't use education lingo when preparing messages.

Channels

We will identify the communication tools that are most widely accepted and preferred by the community through quarterly assessments and adjust accordingly. Our current communication methods are:

1 Interpersonal

- Board Meetings
- Committees (i.e., LCAP, EL Task Force, etc)
- Councils (Superintendent's Parent Advisory, Bond Oversight, School Site, ELAC/DELAC, CTE Advisory)
- Staff and Student Recognition Program
- Classified and Certificated Forums
- Back to School Night/Open Houses
- District and School Site Events
- Booster Clubs and PTA

2 Print

- Newsletters
- Brochures--as needed to highlight TUSD programs or provide general District information
- Outside media sources

3 Electronic

- Bi-annual Superintendent's Message
- TUSD Weekly Update
- Websites
- Social Media
- Email
- Family Link
- TUSD App
- Publications
- Board and Cabinet minutes
- Press Releases

4 School Messenger

- Emergency, attendance, and other alerts sent via text, email, and social media.

5 Video

- Opening Day
- Administrative Workshop
- Various Info/Promo Videos



School Site Communication Recommendations



- Two tweets per week on site Twitter account
- Two re-tweets (from admin/teacher) on site Twitter account.



- Two posts per week on site Facebook.



- Two posts per week on site Instagram.



- Newsletter mailed or backpacked home once per month or quarterly.



- 1-2 short news articles per month on website homepage News or Feature Stories sections.

Site Communication Norms

School Social Media

Use this checklist to ensure that your school's story STANDS OUT on social media!

- ✓ Our logo is consistent on all platforms.
- ✓ Our photos celebrate students and our school.
- ✓ We use our customized hashtag on our posts.
- ✓ We include a graphic or photo with almost all of our posts.
- ✓ Our posts are well-distributed among activities and grade levels.
- ✓ We retweet other posts that share our hashtag.
- ✓ We share student videos, projects, or assignments once per month.
- ✓ We post reminders to highlight upcoming events.
- ✓ We highlight the use of technology in and out of the classroom.
- ✓ We share and celebrate our school brand.



2017-2018 Accomplishments



1

Expanded Social Media Presence

- District (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube)
- School sites (At least one official school social media account)



2

Re-Designed Site and District Websites

- SchoolLoop Website Conversion
- SiteImprove ADA Accessibility Audit



3

Shared Our Story in Weekly Newsletter

- Emailed to All TUSD Staff
- Share on Social Media and Website



4

Launched New Apps

- TurlockUSD App
- SchoolMessenger App

2018–2019 Goals



1

Sustain Social Media Presence and Increase Use of Video

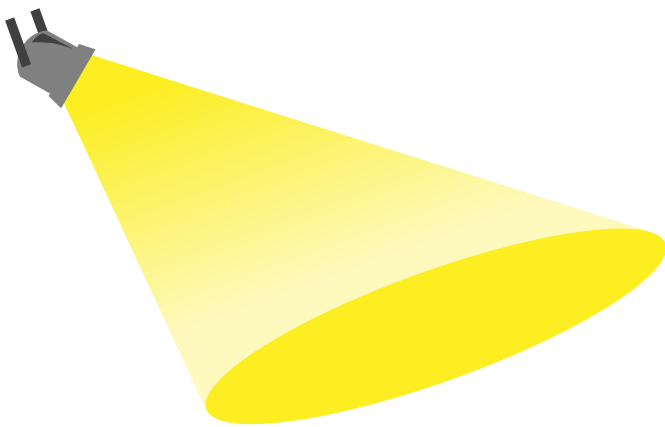
- District (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube)
- School Sites (At least one official school social media account)



2

Improve Website Content and Increase ADA Accessibility

- SchoolLoop Website Trainings
- SiteImprove Trainings



3

Spotlight TUSD Academic Initiatives

- TUSD Weekly Update/Social Media/Website
- Diversified Network of TUSD Weekly Update Contributors with Instructional Emphasis
- Improved Academic Resources for All Stakeholders on TUSD Website

Assessment & Accountability



Because different measures work best to assess effectiveness and engagement, a tracking system will be developed to measure both in TUSD's communication efforts.

Surveys Used to ascertain stakeholders' opinions and to collect quantitative information.

Analytics Reviewed for the TUSD Weekly Update, District website, app, and social media accounts to measure reach and engagement.

Feedback Gathered in forums to gauge the level of effectiveness of the Communication Plan.

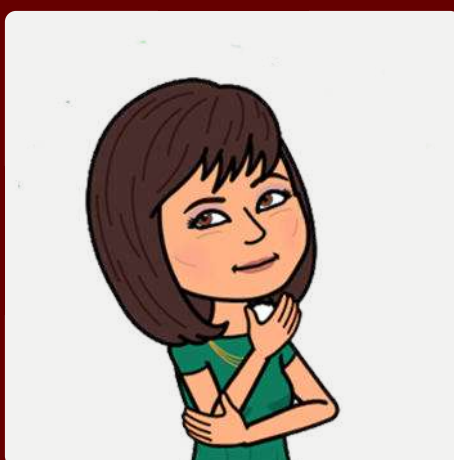
The Communications Plan will be reviewed and updated annually.

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