

Lackawanna City School District Communication Plan

Truman Elementary School
2020-21 School Year



Building Principal – Ashley Wakelee

Communication Plan

Truman Elementary School is committed to having open, honest and ongoing communication with our audiences. We understand that maintaining a two-way conversation with audiences is essential for building relationships. These relationships are the foundation of the teamwork necessary for a strong school system.

This communication plan was designed to establish a comprehensive and integrated communications process for effective communication with all audiences. The plan will be directly aligned with the Building's goals and supportive of the Strategic Plan.

Effective communication is essential in maintaining and enriching the positive working relationships between the staff, parents, students, and community members of Truman Elementary School. This plan supports the School's mission, vision, and beliefs.

The plan is a working document that will be reviewed on an annual basis by the appropriate audiences. It will be used as a basis for the Building's accountability, as well as for providing a framework for future resource and budgetary considerations in regards to communication.

The Comprehensive Communications Plan is intended to do the following:

1. Implement a communications program that directly helps the Building achieve its strategic goals.
2. Foster stronger relationships with Building audiences.
3. Provide focus and direction for messages/methods in support of the Building's goals.
4. Create a platform for the Building to provide accurate information to the community.

Internal Audiences: (People who work in Truman or the District)

- Board of Education
- Administrators
- Teachers
- Nurses
- Support Staff Employees

External Audiences:

- Students
- Parents
- Taxpayers of the District
- Senior Citizens
- Business Leaders
- Media
- Parent Teacher Student Organizations
- Civic Leaders
- Legislators

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- Religious Leaders
- Neighborhood Groups
- New Residents of the District
- Neighboring School Districts
- Residents without children in the District Schools
- Health Department, Center for Disease Control, New York State Education Department

Desired Behaviors and Attitudes:

Internal Audiences:

- Take pride and ownership in the District.
- Stay informed of key issues, including COVID -19 related concerns.
- Work as a high-performing organization, whose employees respect and value audience feedback.
- Support the Building's mission, vision and beliefs.

External Audiences:

- Maintain involvement and engagement in Truman Elementary School.
- Exhibit community pride in Truman Elementary School.
- Trust in Truman Elementary School.
- Advise on the next steps for health related matters.

Overarching Communication Objectives:

This plan is used to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of Truman Elementary School's communication measures, improve outreach opportunities in the school community, and broaden the school's support base. The written communication plan of Truman Elementary School serves as a synopsis of the School's efforts in promoting healthy school/home/community relations and provides feedback to the audiences about the effectiveness of our programs and solicits feedback for improvement.

1. Utilize a variety of media to maximize awareness and support of the School's goals, objectives and programs.
2. Establish strong, positive connections between schools and the community.
3. Create key messages and talking points about Truman Elementary School to establish "one clear voice" throughout all communication channels.
4. Utilize effective operational practices to provide good customer service, increased efficiency and quality printed materials.

Evidence of Need

Based on the school improvement surveys, parents and community members have expressed the need for greater communication from the School. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the New York State Education Department and the State of New York require a communication plan for key stakeholders.

Planning

- Is reviewed annually, unless required more frequently by New York State.
- Correlates with the Building's goal of increasing community collaboration.
- Promotes community and parental involvement goals outlined in the school's SCEP plan.

Execution and Communication

- Lists and defines objectives and strategies for successful implementation.
- Communicated by members of the Building Leadership Team through informal and formal meetings.
- Available in print form in the school main office and is posted on the school web site at www.lackawannaschools.org.

Evaluation

The following resources can be used to evaluate and measure the effectiveness of this communication plan:

- Annual review by committee
- Surveys (staff, parents, students, community)
- Improvement suggestions are invited from the audiences
- Sign in logs are maintained at School functions
- Website hits
- Focus Groups
- Media Coverage (Monitoring Service)
- Other measures as appropriate

Communication Channels

The Building will effectively provide consistent and unified messages by identifying and managing all communication avenues. A multifaceted approach to overall communication helps ensure greater impact of messages. The following list details the internal and external communication channels that Truman Elementary School utilizes.

Communication Vehicles

- District Web Page
- School Web Pages
- Targeted E-Mail Lists
- School Messenger Robocall System
- Buffalo News
- Front Page
- Newsletters
- Principal Communications
- Brochures
- Targeted Mailing Lists
- Programs for School Events
- Building Faculty Meetings
- Parent/Teacher Meetings and Conferences
- Parent Teacher Association Meetings

Goals

Goal 1: Provide opportunities for school involvement by audiences: staff, students, parents, and community members.

Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeline
Building Leadership Team	Principal	Monthly
The Parent Teacher Association meets every month during the school year. It offers opportunities for involvement of all audiences. Distribute communications regarding PTA sponsored events and activities.	Administrative Team	Monthly On-Going
Promote parent involvement through building and district level teams and committees that will provide parents a voice.	Administrative Team	On-going

Goal 2: Nurture two-way communication with audiences.

Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeline
Building tours are available upon request. Currently unavailable due to Covid-19	Principal	On-going
School and district web sites keep audiences informed of school news and events and list web addresses of school personnel. Covid-19 Information can be found here: https://www.lackawannaschools.org/our_district/coronavirus_closure_information	Web Master	On-going
Staff members maintain email addresses and check email messages daily to maintain communication with audiences.	Principal	On-going
Visitors sign in upon arrival and wear identification during the visit.	Office Personnel	On-going
Monthly menus are available in the main office and on the school web site at the beginning of each month.	Web Master Office Personnel	Monthly
Communication is sent to the audiences via email, Parent Portal, District website, and School Messenger.	Principal	On-going
Teachers maintain parent contact logs through eSchool.	Teachers	On-going
Parent/teacher/student conferences are conducted at least once and then as-needed throughout the year. May be virtual due to Covid-19.	Principal Teachers	On-going
The District distributes information digitally and by print to promote communication and interaction.	Principal	On-going
Walkie-talkies are used by administrators and team members to aid in communication and to promote a safe working environment.	Principal Office Personnel	On-going
The district provides an interpreter to assist Spanish/Arabic speaking families with registration, school events, and conferences	Principal of Curriculum and Instruction	On-going
The school maintains current records on students and parent contact information that can be accessed by staff members.	District/School	On-going
An employee handbook is updated and distributed at the beginning of the year.	Principal	Annually
Faculty meetings are held monthly to facilitate open communication between the faculty and staff.	Principal	Monthly
School morning announcement program conducted by student members communicates important events and reinforces character traits. Currently suspended due to Covid-19	Homeroom Teachers	Daily
Weekly grade level and/or subject area meetings are held for collaborative planning incorporating best practices with the administrators.	Administrative Team Teachers	Weekly

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An automated phone system (School Messenger) updates parents and school personnel of important events, notices, etc.	Principal CIO	On-going
The school makes every attempt to communicate with parents and students in their native language.	Administrative Team	On-going
Faculty members attend school, district, state meetings and conferences to share effective teaching practices.	Administrators	On-going
Office personnel keep an up-to-date staff directory with pertinent personal information to facilitate communicate outside of school.	Office Personnel	On-going
Teachers send home interim student progress reports and report cards with comments for all students.	Administrators	On-going

Goal 3. Provide a family friendly atmosphere.

Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeline
Building office personnel greet visitors with a friendly attitude and offer prompt assistance.	Office Personnel Administrators	On-going
In-coming phone calls and emails are answered in a timely manner.	Principal Teachers	On-going
Administrators have an open door policy and meet with parents as soon as possible. May be virtual due to Covid-19	Principal	On-going
School literature is available in the main office.	Principal	On-going
Administrators work with the PTA members to promote a positive image of the school and address issues as they arise.	Principal	On-going
Recognition activities are planned and ongoing throughout the year to positively promote student, staff, volunteers and business partners' efforts.	Social Worker Administration	Monthly
The PTA, and staff members monitor and plan improvements to the appearance of the facility and grounds to maintain a warm, welcoming atmosphere.	Principal	On-going
The principal conducts a Meet and Greet at the beginning of the school year for all students.	Principal	Annually
Audiences will participate in school-wide activities such as: Family Nights, Open House, Concerts, etc. Some events may be suspended due to Covid-19	Administrators	On-going

Goal 4. Promote a positive and supportive environment for audiences.

Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeline
The school recognizes outstanding faculty and staff members monthly and annually.	Principal	Monthly
A teacher appreciation week is initiated by the PTA in appreciation of faculty and staff members' work and contributions.	PTA Officers	Annually
A school crisis plan is in effect and updated annually at the beginning of the school year by the school crisis team.	School Crisis Team Principal	Annually
The school facilities are available for use by community members and organizations for meetings, gatherings, and celebrations.	Principal Business Office	On-going
Community and school ball teams conduct team practices on the school grounds during the school year.	Principal Business Office	On-going
Quarterly and end of the year celebrations are held to highlight student achievement and accomplishments.	Social Worker Principals	Monthly

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Bulletin boards and displays throughout the building features student work, pictures, and achievements.	Administrative Team	On-going
Faculty and staff members attend school activities and events.	Principal	On-going
A Response to Intervention Team meets monthly to devise and monitor intervention plans for students needing academic assistance and social behavior support.	Principal School Psychologist	On-going
Faculty and staff members serve on school-based committees and participate in professional learning.	Principal	Monthly
The social worker conducts small group and individual counseling sessions with students.	Social Worker	On-going
Minimal interruptions of instruction occur from intercom announcements.	Principal	On-going
The Administration works with classroom teachers to improve teaching and learning for adults and students, provide resources, and arrange release time for peer observations.	Principal	On-going
The Building Leadership Teams represents all teams in the school and acts as a decision making body to improve school programs.	Principal	On-going
The Building Leadership Teams will evaluate and implement changes based on feedback from staff members.	Building Leadership Teams	On-going
Community resources are posted on the school website to assist audiences with specific needs.	Webmaster	On-going

Websites:

<https://www.lackawannaschools.org/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/>

<https://www2.erie.gov/health/>

COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING WORKSHEET

GOALS: (Broad statement of purpose – must be tied to building goal areas)

1. Student Performance
2. Global Awareness of Positive News
3. Highly Qualified Staff
4. Audience Involvement
5. Facilities, Support and Instructional Resources
6. Health and Safety

OBJECTIVES: (What purpose does this communication serve?)

STRATEGY: (Approach to achieving the objectives)

AUDIENCES: Who needs to know?

1. Internal
2. External

MESSAGES:

1. What do they need to know? Why?
2. Why is this change/action/event taking place?
3. What does this mean for me? What is the impact to me?
4. What do I need to do? Is there an action required of me?

Messages to be communicated to _____ (audience)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

TIME LINE:

1. When do they need to know? Include date, time and location of dissemination of message.
2. Time line for repeated communication on same message if applicable.
3. Time line for response if needed from targeted audience.

TACTICS/ACTIVITIES:

1. How will messages be communicated?
2. Internal?
3. External?

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS:

1. Where is the message going to be communicated?

EVALUATION:

1. How will we know the message has been received?
2. What method will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the message?

COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL

PROMPT COMMUNICATION

1. Comply with the required 48-hour response time with internal and external audiences. (This refers to 48 business hours and does not include weekends or school holidays.)
2. Provide monitoring of response time by having those not receiving responses within that time frame re-contact but on this attempt include the person's supervisor in the communication.
3. Place an automatic reply on communication if not in office to respond during the 48 hour time frame with an alternate contact name and information.

CORRECT COMMUNICATION

1. Provide protocol for answering phone
2. Provide outline for providing information to the Webmaster and newspaper to ensure speedy release of event information.

MEDIA COMMUNICATION

1. When the media calls:
 - A. Note reporters name and contact information in case the call is disconnected.
 - B. Listen to the questions and make careful notes of comments. If pressed to make a comment by media, kindly inform the contact "Let me transfer your call to the Lackawanna Superintendent's Office and he will get you the accurate information you need."
 - C. Transfer or direct the call to Current Superintendent.
 - D. Faculty/Staff/Employees: Notify your supervisor (Principal/Administrator) immediately with details of the call. The supervisor will contact the Superintendent's Office.
 - E. Principal: Notify the Superintendent's Office immediately with details of call.
2. What if media approaches you at school:
 - A. Do not make a statement pertaining to the inquiry.
 - B. Kindly direct the media to the Superintendent's Office.
 - C. Notify your supervisor (Principal/Administrator) immediately.
 - D. Reminder again, please do not make a statement pertaining to the inquiry.
3. What if contacted at the scene of a crisis on or off campus:
 - A. Direct the media to the Superintendent's Office.
 - B. Do not release names of the victims or details of the event.

The National School Public Relations Association Code of Ethics (<https://www.nspr.org/>) services as the hallmark of professionalism in school communication and Truman Elementary School has adopted this code as a basis of its Communication Plan. This basis includes:

1. In the interest of all audiences, all communication will be done with truth, accuracy, good taste, and fairness; sound public relations ideas and practices; follow good judgment in releasing information; not intentionally disseminate misinformation or confidential data; avoid actions that lessen personal, professional or organizational reputation, and conflicts with primary responsibilities or policies.
2. Be aware of personal influence, avoiding promises or granting of unprofessional advantages to others; refrain from accepting special considerations for influences on organizational decisions; avoid unauthorized use of organizational facilities, resources or professional services for personal gain or for promotion of the candidacy of aspirants to elected offices. Do not engage in or promote derogatory acts or utterances against other professionals or any Lackawanna City School District employees.
3. Effective communication is dependent upon integrity and regard for ideals of the profession; not misrepresenting professional qualifications; give credit for ideas and words borrowed from others; cooperate with professional colleagues to uphold and further the policies and procedures of the district.