

Sanford School Department Communications Plan

Overview

This overall plan focuses on communication within the school, district, with parents and the community, and with local media.

School Communications

The purpose of the Sanford School Department Communications Plan is to present a clear and concise framework for communicating with our school community. The plan addresses two types of school district audiences: internal and external. Staff support and involvement in this plan is crucial. Sanford School District staff carries the message of the district to their families and friends who in turn form opinions about the schools.

Communication Objectives and Priorities

Sanford's objective is to improve internal and external communications system with the goal of creating open, two-way communication between staff, students, parents, and Sanford communities.

1. Clarify district flow of information
2. Provide ongoing training for administrators in effective communication with staff and the public
3. Provide regular information on district-wide issues
4. Create a system to encourage overall flow of information
5. Publish and distribute informational pieces
6. Communicate with civic and community groups
7. Be visible in the community and attend organization meetings
8. Highlight the success of staff

Target Audiences

Internal

- Students
- Staff
 1. District Level
 2. School Site Level

External

- Parents/Guardians
- Parent Organizations
- Prospective Students
- Prospective Families

- Prospective Employees
- Key Communicators
- Business Community
- Civic Groups
- Community Groups
- Electronic Media
- Print Media

Strategies

- Keep Communications Simple
 1. Use clear, concise and non-education style for all general publications.
 2. Vary the types and levels of communication to target diverse audiences.
- Communicate Early and Often
 1. Prepare information sheets when appropriate to send out to principals, office managers, and other staff as needed.
 2. Follow-up with memos or communications to staff if necessary.
- Communicate Face-to-Face
 1. The more difficult the situation, the more important it is to communicate face-to-face.
 2. Encourage staff to relay messages through personal interactions when appropriate.
- Keep it Brief and to the Point
- Train Staff
- Develop Relationships with our Community
- Study the Media
- Prepare our Messages

Communication Methods

1. In Person
 - Parent/Teacher Conference
 - School Committee Meetings
 - Advisory Councils
2. Written
 - Classroom Newsletters
 - Sanford Spotlight District Newsletter
3. Electronic/Website
 - All board meeting minutes posted in a timely manner of the school website
 - Department and school information posted on district and school websites
 - ThrillShare/Apptegy
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - Instagram
 - Infinite Campus
 - Community Calendar
 - Text Reminders
 - Email

- a. Students and parents as needed
- b. Staff updates (weekly/daily as needed)
- c. Between administration/staff

Assessment and Accountability

- Benchmarking
 - a. Determine what other communication strategies are used in other districts
- Surveys
 - a. Electronic surveys to determine opinion and collect measurable data

Communication Goals

- Community relations
 - a. To establish strong, positive connections between individual schools and their communities.
- Crisis Communication and Management
 - a. The main goal of crisis communication and management is to provide timely information in the event of a crisis or emergency affecting schools, staff, students and parents when necessary using tools such as social media, emails, parent letters, and call-outs in the event of an emergency.

Implementation Plan

Parent and Community Outreach

- Strategy 1: Cultivate and strengthen relationships within the Sanford School District community to engage them in the district's vision.
 - a. Ongoing information printed in the *Sanford Spotlight* newsletter and on the school website.
 - b. Provide community feedback on meetings on the budget, strategic planning, etc.
 - c. Share more information on specific school newsletters
- Strategy 2: Determine public attitudes toward the district and increase awareness and support for Sanford School District
 - a. Broadcast and record Board meetings including all public comments
 - b. Monitor public and internal opinion with surveys and social media metrics
 - c. Work with community partners to better market the school department, and create a sense of ambassadorship.
 - d. Hold more community events as a way to create a sense of belonging and satisfaction

Communications Matrix

Type of Information	Website	Email	Text Message	Social Media	Phone Call
General Info	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Emergency	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Early Dismissal	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Delayed Opening	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
School Closures	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Note: This is a guide. Some circumstances might require us to deviate from this.

Assignment/Editorial Board Week Of: xxx

School	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Sanford High School					
Sanford Regional Technical Center					
Sanford Middle School					
Carl J. Lamb					
Margaret Chase Smith					

Sanford Pride Elementary					
Sanford Community Adult Education					
Misc/Other					

Future Plans

- Offer training sessions for administrators/principles with Thrillshare
- Dive more into our resources (The Spartan Times, WSSR TV, SPAC, City Hall)
- Let's get creative!