

ATTACHMENT NO XIV-D Updated Communications Section of the Strategic Plan and Presentation of a Communication Plan for the district.

Potential motion: N/A

Recommended action: Receive the updated plan

As the Strategic Plan is now in its fifth year, it seemed like a reasonable time to review the plan and offer the Board an update based upon the input of the administrative team and selected staff members.

The first document is the Strategies Review of the Communication Section of the 2009 Strategic Plan and a status update on each section along with the administrative recommendations for next steps.

The second document is a District Communication Plan that was sent out to multiple entities for comment in the last month or so. It provides a summary of the communication structure that the district has put into place aligned to the strategic plan and offers a set of evaluation criteria going forward for evaluating the district's communication program in future years.

Strategy #4: Communication

<i>Specific Action Steps/ Progress 1/2009</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Person(s) Responsible</i>	<i>Updated Status Report 3/2013</i>	<i>Suggested Next Steps</i>
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Plan #1 Interpersonal Communication

<p>Web pages are complete and up by teachers who decided to participate at this time. This will continue to be offered as more teachers decide to participate, including new teachers to our district.</p>	<p>February 2009</p>	<p>Claudia Lindstrom Teachers</p>	<p>At the UE and MS, all have pages and consistently update those pages. At the other buildings, most teachers don't have individual web pages. We have offered several website development sessions at in-service days for teachers.</p>	<p>This is to be completed for the 2013-2014 Academic Year; A Google Sites Template was created containing all necessary information.</p>
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<p>None developed.</p>			<p>NBHS has implemented a stronger 8th /9th grade transition program for all students; new NBHS students have a special set of activities early in the year to integrate them into the district. The change in the NBUE/MS organizational structure was done to provide additional consistency with staff for UE/MS students. 5th grade teachers also meet with 4th grade teachers during the late spring SIP day to discuss student transition issues. Graduating 4th graders are encouraged to attend the Summer Library Program at NBUE. They are given a tour of the NBUE library and a special bookmark to help ease the transition of a new school.</p>	
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<p>None developed.</p>			<p>Currently students may self-select to come to after school tutoring or home work clubs. Some students are encouraged or required to attend. Some Title I and ESL funding is provided to support specific study groups and tutoring in grades 3-8.</p>	
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<p>None developed.</p>			<p>Overall, we have a much firmer handle on a systemic staff development program than previously. We have had a number of sessions over</p>	
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the past several years with a student services focus including issues of bullying, gang awareness, suicide prevention, differentiation and working with students with disabilities, including specific training related to autistic students. Administratively, we are not seeing a need for additional staff training regarding transitions and it hasn't come up in the last three years of staff requests either. In May, our staff meets to conduct a vertical articulation. This takes place with teachers in grades 4/5, 5/6, 6/7, and 7/8.

Plan #2 District Partnering

Define "District Partners," and determine ways in which to recruit them.

We have a pilot before school care option at Poplar Grove this year. Dr. Olds reached out to several entities and was unable to get a current after school provider to be interested in before school care. Dr. Baule has discussed before school care with an outside company, but we haven't received a proposal at this time. We do work collaboratively with District 100 to provide some additional student skills for special needs students on a weekly basis at BNHS. For the past two summers, library hours have been held in three schools. Extensive publicity has gone out on the hours open for students and families.

Currently looking into a partnership with Champions to provide before/after care.

None developed.

Currently, each building maintains its own calendar for space utilization. Creating a district wide calendar would not only be a time intensive task, but might be viewed as a security risk as well. Particularly since many of the evening groups are small and include significant student participation. Allowing community access to the computer labs outside of supervised access doesn't seem like a wise move.

District events are all posted online; major events are also posted to Facebook and Twitter.

Suggest that information about business contributions be sent to the Superintendent for approval for listing on website.

Currently, grants, donations and volunteerism are recognized in several venues. In January 2011, we worked with Joelle Parks to do a news story on NB volunteerism on WTVO. This was driven by the

sport season volunteer press releases that have been created irregularly by the district office. The district also uses Blogger, Facebook, and Twitter to say thanks to community groups and businesses that support the district. Direct links to business websites as a "thank you" may actually be a violation of our terms of service under e-Rate.

None developed.

NBHS maintains a regular listing of community service projects that are pre-approved and those are readily available to students.

This is part of the job of the NBHS Community Service Coordinator stipend that was created in 2011.

Plan #3 Interactive Communication

Principals will ensure that conferences take place in classroom meetings and not the arena style.

February 19 & 20, 2009

Principals of the buildings in which these are taking place

Classroom conferences take place in grades K-4; team conferences are scheduled for students 5-6 and team conferences are scheduled for selected students 7-8; Arena style conferences remain for most students 7-8 and all students 9-12. At the high school this year we put together mandatory conference notices for all students recommended by a teacher for academic/behavioral/social concerns, or for any student receiving at least one "F" in a course. These notices go out with instructions on how to schedule a conference through our main office. The administrative team is currently looking at the way parent communication and conferences are managed.

Administrative based, i.e., principals advise teachers and any calls of this nature received at the district office are referred to the principal.

This will become more apparent with the new evaluation plan which more clearly requires parental outreach.

Links will be sent to Tech Support by the building principals as they become available.

February and Ongoing

Claudia Lindstrom Principals

Links are added as received; All PTOs and the NB Booster clubs have links along with the Education Foundation and other local entities who request that

			their non-profit or government organization is linked.	
Principals will send to District Secretary any and all activities taking place in their respective buildings, school related or not as soon as they become known.	Monthly	District Secretary Principals	District sponsored activities are listed on the building's Google Calendars available on the website as of 8/2011. Each building maintains calendars for their building. The time to collect and centralize the data would be significant and of minimal value; since building principals are responsible for rental arrangements.	
Principals will meet with staff to discuss the importance of this. Parent surveys are to include a rating in these areas to address any parental concerns.	February 11, 2009 & May 13, 2009.	Principals		
Plan #4 Internal and External Communication				
Principals will forward to the Superintendent any information they may wish to be considered for submission, including pictures. The Superintendent, along with an assistant, will compose all information in the newsletter. Parts of the letter may be translated to Spanish if appropriate. Tech support will then put it online.	Twice a year +August 2009 +April 2010	Superintendent Principals District Secretary Bilingual Assistants Tech Support CinDee MrVicka	Due to the cost of this, the administrative team doesn't recommend completing this item. Instead, the district provides regular press releases, Facebook updates, and a Twitter feed for parents. Building newsletters are also now available online along with blogs at several schools.	Continue with electronic press releases, Facebook, Blog, Twitter, etc.
The two co-chairs of this action plan will develop a brochure to be approved by the superintendent.	June 26, 2009	Superintendent Communication Co-Chairs	Created in 2009; Updated 12/2012;	Not sure of the necessity of this item. All of this information is available on the district website.
Not a wise use of funds or resources.				This item should be eliminated.

Administrators will continue to send information to the tech staff to be incorporated in the web site.	Ongoing	Administrators Tech Support	Website was redesigned in June 2011; A district blog was added 7/1/2011; NBHS Principal Blog added 6/12/2012; A NBHS Counseling Blog was started 9/2010; Manchester Blog started, 8/2011; NBMS Blog begun 8/2012; @NBCUSD200 Twitter Feed Established; NBCUSD & NB Education Foundation Facebook pages established as well.	
Have publications available at student registration.			Currently, parents can ask at registration to be given hard copies of newsletters if they don't have access to the Internet, etc.	At this point, communications are primarily electronic and we allow parents to "opt for" a hard copy.
This is complete for Grades 7-12. At the elementary levels, parents still need to be issued username/password information & instructions on how to get into the system. This will be done by Tech Support.	August 20, 2009	Claudia Lindstrom	Power School's Parent Access Portal was reopened for parents 9/2010 and is currently active for parents in grades 5-12.	Completed.
Plan #5 Language Communication Challenges				
None developed.			There is currently an English class for Spanish speakers going on at Capron on Thurs. evenings through the U of Illinois Extension. Rock Valley College used to offer English classes at NB in the past, but had stopped due to lack of attendees. They could be a possible partner again in the future though.	
Examine community need and demand for after-hour use of these school facilities and determine staff willingness to participate.			Three of our school libraries have been open weekly for the past two summers. Students and their families are able to check out books, use the computers, participate in the Summer Reading Program, and make crafts. Grants and donations have funded the Summer Library Program for the	

			past two years. When fiscally possible, the district will take over the funding to ensure that the program can continue and possibly expand.	
Contact community colleges.			We currently are working with NIU to offer Spanish courses at NBHS for staff. We have a strong relationship with RVC and have more dual-enrolled students than ever before. We have reached out to other area schools to help expand our Ag program and are meeting with minor success.	
initially explore and evaluate current process.			With grant funding, the NBHS library will be adding e-books and e-readers to their collection this school year. The district will continue to support library services to ensure that a quality selection of informational and recreational materials are available.	
“In Progress”			This committee was formed at some point prior to 3/2010 and has been meeting at least quarterly. They have sponsored an annual Cinco de mayo celebration for several years and this year held a family fun night as well. One of the committee’s goals is to fund a scholarship for a Hispanic NBHS graduate. Mr. Klett is doing an excellent job managing this group.	
Additional extra-curricular activities have been added this year, such as wrestling & soccer at the H.S. Principals will highly encourage students to participate in extra-curricular activities. Students will be surveyed for their interests to see what may be offered in the future that will help increase their involvement.	August 2008 Ongoing Present at Leadership Team mtg. & complete by May 2009	Principals	Current extracurricular participation is strong in grades 7 through 12. Hispanic participation is up significantly in fall sports, up for winter sports, and has stayed steady for spring sports. We do a bi-annual interest survey of NBHS students to determine extracurricular needs.	
Principals will work with the Mike Greenlee to make sure appropriate correspondence is sent	Ongoing,	Principals Secretarie	Currently, regular communication is directed through notes home in K-8, Facebook, Twitter, the	

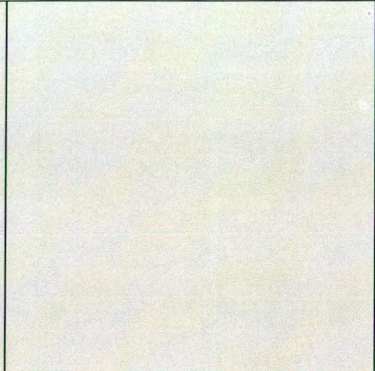
home in the language preferred. When ten families or less do not have English as their native language, because of costs, interpretations/translations of such languages will not be done.

Form 6:160-E1 was modified by the Board Policy Committee, requesting families' language preferences for written communications.

February 2, 2009

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Teachers
Bilingual
Assistants
Board
Policy
Committee

district blog, School Messenger and press releases on the website, K-12; important parent informational letters are sent in English and Spanish and School Messenger translates depending upon the home language of the student as noted in Power School.



North Boone

Community Unit School District 200

Communications Plan



April 2013

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NBHS Pit Crew



NBHS Cheerleaders

Goals

The Communications Plan is designed to more fully engage the entire community in the educational agenda. This process includes identifying opportunities to deliver the North Boone CUSD 200 message through an approach that is proactive, positive, consistent, multi-faceted and coherent.

Primary Goals:

- **Increase awareness** about the positive impact of North Boone CUSD 200 education
- **Improve public perception** of the individual schools and North Boone CUSD 200 as a whole
- **Generate consistent information flow** for employees
- **Generate engagement and support** for the education of North Boone CUSD 200 students

It is important to highlight in the schools, the district office and to the community that efforts to improve communication are not separate from the educational agenda, but rather, critical to its success. When families and the community are more informed and engaged, they are better prepared to support schools in improving student outcomes.



NBUE Student Lilly Perez & Dr. Sharon Olds

Audience Definition

Communication is a reciprocal process and thrives on continual feedback through a two-way process. The categorization of communication/responses is helpful in that it allows the Communications Office to more appropriately tailor a message.

The audience can be broken down into three primary categories:

Internal	External – Local Scope	External – Wider Scope
Board members District employees Students Volunteers	Existing parents Potential students and parents Prospective employees Local news media Community members (businesses, elected officials, civic leaders, realtors, economic developers, taxpayers, faith-based organizations)	Regional and state-wide news media Prospective employees Potential students and parents Alumni Retirees and former employees State lawmakers and other decision makers Grant awarding organizations

Broad communication efforts may be appropriate for reaching all of these targeted audiences, but it is more effective to convey tailored messaging through strategy and predetermined communication vehicles.

It is also important to view some of these groups as both audiences and communicators themselves. Those who know the district best – the staff, students and families who are in schools every day – are often regarded as the most credible and informed spokespersons. To communicate more strategically, North Boone Schools will work with current families and staff to help describe progress in the District.

Strategies

The North Boone approach to communications work will focus on two key strategies:

Improve delivery of news and positive messages to families, staff and the community

- ✓ Provide proactive public relations with consistent messaging about achievements and improvements in the schools within North Boone.
- ✓ Improve media relations through the increase of news about North Boone.
- ✓ Improve North Boone's access to grants and other resources by improving its profile beyond the local area.
- ✓ Counter myths and misconceptions about the schools and the district with timely, accurate information, personal testimonials and evidence of progress.
- ✓ Coordinate Spanish-language translation services for district-wide communication to parents.

Build capacity among School and District Office to improve communication

- ✓ Develop district-wide communications procedures and processes to ensure timely and accurate communication to stakeholders.
- ✓ Provide training to district leaders in marketing, public and media relations, customer service and other communication skills.



NBMS Golden Apple Teacher, Mike Winebrenner

Strategy: *Improve delivery of news and positive messages to families, staff and the community*

Ongoing communication about the positive stories taking place in North Boone will help foster confidence that greater success is attainable.

In order to generate greater investment and engagement in public education, North Boone must do more to counter myths and misconceptions about the district. The most compelling way to bolster confidence in North Boone is to educate the public about the strategic goals and other efforts already in place to improve the system. We must shine a bright light on the many success stories about our students, families and educators.

The sharing of good news must begin with those already involved in North Boone. Press releases will be posted to the North Boone website under the NEWS heading and will be forwarded to key members of the community and local press.

The district will begin to shine a positive light on the staff at North Boone through the *Staff Spotlight* news releases to be completed bi-monthly.

With importance equal to that of spreading good news, North Boone must be straight forward and honest about the challenges it faces.

Those who take time to visit schools and speak with students and staff often emerge with a much greater understanding and appreciation of the many good things taking place in schools. To that end, North Boone will launch a "*Principal for a Day*" initiative in 2014. The program will provide an opportunity for selected key community members to spend a day in one of our schools as a special guest of the principal. The event will be heavily marketed and will include a special morning introduction and afternoon debriefing period for the principals and their special guests.

The District must do a better job of communicating with non-English speaking parents. We are working to ensure that all important communications from the district are distributed and available in English and Spanish.

Strategy: *Build capacity among school and district staff to improve communication*

Ensure that the procedures for disseminating information are well understood by all staff and that they proactively forward newsworthy information to the district for dissemination via electronic or print methods.

Staff will continue to be offered training in developing and maintaining a website to communicate with parents and students. Similarly electronic learning management tools will be used for the same purpose at the secondary level.

Selected staff will be provided additional training through regional and staff associations to improve their communication abilities and skills as necessary to reach the goals of the first strategy.



Mr. Jake Hubert congratulates Illinois State Scholar, Alexandra Wood

Actions/ Deliverables and Timelines

Daily	Weekly (when in session)	Monthly
Update Twitter and Facebook postings regarding district happenings Ensure the website is up and Facebook/Blog and Twitter accounts are functional	District blog is updated Principals send out a building update / e-mail or blog posting Weekly update to the Board	Recognize student and staff achievements at Board of Education Meetings Food service menus are posted to the website Hold building meetings

Bi-Monthly	Quarterly	Semester
Release a new Staff Spotlight & post in each building Principals distribute school newsletters and they are posted to the school/district website Conduct a principal for a day activity in a school Hold Labor-Management meeting	Post Honor Rolls for NBMS/NBHS Recognize and thank volunteers Recognize extra-curricular accomplishments	Announce graduates and class statistics Remind parents to update contact information

Annually	As Required
Complete review of the website to ensure information is accurate and correct (June/July) Revise the NBHS School Profile (June/July) Review district publications (June /July) Provide training for new teachers on web development and communications (Aug) Announce new teachers/staff via press release (Aug) Encourage each staff member to apply for a grant (Aug/Sept) Post school report card and press release communicating important information from same (Oct) Conduct a survey including questions regarding the district's communications practices (Dec- Feb.) Offer training on web development during staff in-service (Oct or Mar) Review/revise/update communications related policies and procedures (May/June) Announce retirees and hold a retirement reception (May)	Response to Freedom of Information Act requests Publically thank grant awarders, fundraising sponsors and other donors Announce student and staff awards and honors Announce grant awards Respond to requests for information Arrange appropriate interviews with news media Attend job fairs and otherwise recruit for the best potential employees Hold public meetings to discuss topics of import to the community Hold special informational staff meetings as appropriate Provide factual information regarding upcoming voter referenda Create surveys to elicit input to various district programs (PT Conferences/calendar, etc.) Provide training to selected staff on communications/public relations

Evaluation Criteria

The Communications Plan Goals will be evaluated annually using the following minimum criteria.

Goals:

Increase awareness about the positive impact of North Boone CUSD 200 education;
Improve public perception of the individual schools and North Boone CUSD 200 as a whole
and

Generate engagement and support for the education of North Boone CUSD 200 students:

1. Increase the traffic on the district website
2. Increase the Facebook traffic for North Boone Facebook page
3. Increase readership of the North Boone Blog and principal blogs (where used)
4. Increase the number of Twitter followers for NBCUSD200
5. Increase the number of respondents to public and staff surveys
6. Maintain or increase the number of press releases developed by the district each year
7. Distribute five Staff Spotlights during each school year
8. Develop an effective method for communicating with alumni
9. Ensure all FOIA requests are dealt with as required by law

Goal:

Generate consistent information flow for employees:

1. Ensure faculty meetings are being held
2. Ensure Labor-Management meetings are being held
3. Post news releases and Staff Spotlight in building workrooms, etc.
4. Increase the number of respondents to staff surveys
5. Review the responses from the annual budget/communications surveys and staff climate surveys for methods to improve communication

Appendix A: Principles of Communications

The North Boone Board of Education, the Superintendent and all staff have a responsibility to communicate accurately and effectively with families, students, colleagues, partners and the community. Ongoing communication with all community members is essential to developing and sustaining effective home/school/community partnerships for improving student achievement.

North Boone CUSD 200 affirms the following principles:

- ✓ Families and citizens have a right to know what is occurring in their public schools.
- ✓ All employees have an obligation to ensure that the public is kept systematically and adequately informed.
- ✓ North Boone staff and families benefit from improved sharing of information – positive and negative.
- ✓ Written and verbal communication from schools and employees should reflect the North Boone commitment to supporting all children and families, with a focus on student achievement through high-quality teaching and learning.
- ✓ Effective communication requires an ongoing two-way exchange between schools and constituents, including thoughtful mechanisms at the school district levels for seeking family, student and community perspectives on critical issues and decisions.
- ✓ Language used to communicate with families and the community must be free of educational jargon, acronyms and other terminology unfamiliar to non-educators.
- ✓ It is the responsibility of every school in North Boone to adhere to these procedures and to execute additional strategies for effective communication.