

Full Communications Plan



Communication Plan

The purpose of the St. Louis Park Public School district's Communication Plan is to ensure that all stakeholders are kept informed of key updates, goals, events, and changes in a timely manner and in alignment with the district's mission, vision, and strategic plan.

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St. Louis Park Public Schools Organizational Structure

School Board

Chair Virginia Mancini
Vice Chair Celia Anderson
Treasurer Patrick Baldwin
Clerk Taylor Williams
Director Colin Cox
Director Susie Kaufman
Director Sarah Davis

Administration

Central Office

Dr. Carlondrea Hines, Superintendent
Dr. Quennel Cooper, Assistant Superintendent
Dr. Constance Robinson, Executive Director of Student Services
Josiah Nebo, Executive Director of Business Services
Jason Loewe, Executive Director of Human Resources
Patrice Howard, Executive Director of Community Education
Ashley Sukhu, Executive Director of Communications
Tom Marble, CETL, Executive Director of Information Services
Dr. Silvy Un Lafayette, Executive Director of Assessment, Research and Evaluation

Building Administration

LaNisha Paddock, St. Louis Park High School Principal
Melissa Kalinowski, St. Louis Park Middle School Principal
María Graver, Aquila Elementary Principal
Dr. Corey Maslowski, Park Spanish Immersion Principal
Aaron Monson, Peter Hobart Elementary Principal
Rebecca Bang, Susan Lindgren Elementary Principal

Introduction

Effective communication is essential for the success of any public school district. The district must be able to communicate its mission, vision, core values, and strategic plan to stakeholders effectively and efficiently.

A communication plan can be an essential tool for any public school when aligned with the district's mission, vision, core values and strategic plan. It helps school boards, administrators, and staff to ensure that all stakeholders are informed of important updates, goals, events, and changes. It also provides a clear strategy for how communications should be delivered, who should receive them, and when they should be sent. A communication plan helps to ensure that everyone is on the same page and is kept up to date. It will also help to promote transparency and build trust between the district and our various stakeholders, including parents, students, and the community.

This plan includes key strategies that are tailored to the district's needs. These strategies include both in-person and online channels of communication that are easily accessible and consistently utilized. The plan also provides clear and open communication channels for feedback and input.

This communication plan is intended to provide consistent communication that ensures all stakeholders, internal and external, have timely access to information. The plan will identify specific communication channels and strategies for using those channels. In order to ensure that all stakeholders have access to the same information the district will identify and limit the platforms used for communication. When stakeholders know the locations and methods in which the district communicates, it will decrease confusion and miscommunication, as well as reduce the amount of time and resources needed to select and maintain communications on different platforms.

Mission Statement

St. Louis Park Public Schools sees, inspires, and empowers each student to achieve academic excellence and live their brilliance in a racially equitable learning environment that centers student voice and experience to energize and enhance the spirit of our community

Vision Statement

St. Louis Park Public Schools – Where each student is seen, valued, and inspired to reach their full academic potential as they become their best selves as racially conscious, globally minded contributors to society.

Strategic Plan

A strategic plan is a living document that is used to communicate the district's goals and priorities. This plan ensures that all stakeholders are working toward common goals and focuses the district's energy and resources to complete those goals. As we look towards the future, we recognize that schools are asked to do more and in many cases with fewer resources. Planning for the future is more important than ever.

In 2025, the St. Louis Park Public Schools Superintendent and the School Board committed to a five-year strategic plan. This process was data-driven, inclusive of district stakeholders, and focused on the priorities that will help the district succeed in the future.

The [strategic plan](#) establishes three Strategic Goal Focus Areas:

1. We Are One St. Louis Park:
 - a. We foster a welcoming and inclusive environment where every person belongs, feels valued, supported, and connected.
 - b. We commit to:
 - i. Cultivating a thriving, inclusive, and empowered learning environment.
 - ii. Encouraging unified leadership and cross-department collaboration.
 - iii. Strengthening transparency, community pride, and stakeholder engagement.
2. Investing in our Staff to Transform Student Outcomes
 - a. We will invest time, resources, and allocated funding to develop our staff to encourage and support a healthy work environment that promotes continuous growth and meaningful collaboration.
 - b. We commit to:
 - i. Building a legacy of academic success by becoming a destination district.
 - ii. Advancing equity and excellence through professional development.
 - iii. Expanding access, engagement, and morale around professional learning.
3. Build Trust and Community
 - a. We will evaluate and redesign our communication processes to ensure clear, timely, and accessible updates, building trust and promoting transparency with our students, families, staff, and community.
 - b. We Commit To:

- i. Establishing clear, consistent, and transparent communication practices.
- ii. Strengthening communication to build community and shared understanding.
- iii. Building trust and cultivating relationships.

Core Values

- The brilliance of ourselves and others: Everyone has the capacity and responsibility to inspire and nurture growth and potential.
- Authentic community engagement: Partnering actively with staff, families, and communities to enhance student success.
- High expectations: Setting and reaching high achievement goals to help students and staff reach their full potential.
- Advocacy for equity: Standing for the dignity of each person and working to remove barriers so everyone succeeds.
- Collective responsibility: Sharing the duty to create a welcoming, equitable learning environment where all belong.
- Persistent effort: Building a culturally responsive, data-driven system where learners and staff thrive.
- Racial consciousness and cultural competence: Recognizing and valuing diverse backgrounds to cultivate a strong sense of belonging

Board Policy

St. Louis Park Public School Board has approved several district policies that are directly related to communication. This communication plan is an extension of those policies.

550 Distribution of Announcements and Other Information Through the Schools

512 School-Sponsored Student Publications and Activities

524 Internet and Technology Responsible Use - Students

424 Employee Internet and Technology Responsible Use

409 Employee Publications, Instructional Materials, Inventions, and Creations

722 Public Data and Data Subject Requests

435 Professional and Ethical Workplace Standards

Communication Priorities

St. Louis Park Public Schools must prioritize effective communication in order to ensure that all stakeholders are informed about the district's goals, initiatives, and events. The district should strive to create multiple channels of communication both in-person and online. This includes hosting meetings and events at schools, utilizing social media platforms, and creating a website with up-to-date information about the district. The district should also actively reach out to parents, teachers, and administrators to ensure that all stakeholders are informed about the district and its plans.

The priority of the communication plan is to be clear and transparent about when and where stakeholders can access district information. As technology evolves so do the platforms that we use for communication. The district can't utilize every social media or internet platform that our stakeholders may use. Instead, the district will be selective, yet consistent, with the platforms that it uses while making sure that all stakeholders know the location or avenue for gaining information, asking questions, and providing feedback.

The district should create a safe and open environment for feedback, allowing stakeholders to provide their thoughts and suggestions. Open communication will ensure that stakeholders feel informed and included in the decision-making process.

The *SLP Communication Preferred Method Chart* is intended to provide a quick reference to what method of communication the district will utilize based on the type of communication. The information being sent will determine who will receive the information using these methods of communication. All emergency alerts and school closings will be sent to the Emergency Contacts listed for each student in the district's Student Management System (PowerSchool).

Type of Communication	Website	Text	Parent Square Phone Alert	Parent Square Post	Email	Social Media	News Media
Emergency Alert	☐	☒	☒	☐	☒	☐	☐
School Closing (weather)	☒	☒	☒	☐	☒	☒	☒
Event	☒	☒	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐

Promotion							
Announcements	☒	☐	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
General Information	☒	☐	☐	☒	☒	☐	☐
Newsletters and Campaigns	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☐

Families can expect most school and district communications to be sent near the end of the school day. This timing helps minimize disruptions while ensuring families receive timely updates. In an urgent or emergency situation, alerts may be sent during the school day so families can take immediate action if needed.

It is critical for our stakeholders to reach out to us when they have concerns or questions. If information is not available through our primary channels as illustrated in the *SLP Communication Preferred Method Chart* then the next step is to contact the district. This is the most effective and expedient way to gather the information needed. It is important to start communication with the person who is closest and has the most information on the situation. The *Point of Contact Progression Chart* provides a progression of contacts that can be used to effectively gather information and work through situations. When contacting the district, please utilize this progression chart. District staff will ask and redirect your calls as needed to maintain the integrity of this system.

Topic	1st Contact	2nd Contact	3rd Contact	4th Contact	5th Contact
Classroom/Instruction	Teacher	Principal	Director of Learning & Innovation	Assistant Superintendent	Superintendent
Academics	Teacher	Counselors or Social Workers	Director of Learning & Innovation	Assistant Superintendent	Superintendent
Behavior/Discipline	Teacher	Assistant Principal	Principal	Assistant Superintendent	Superintendent
Special Education	Teacher	Principal	Director of	Executive	Assistant

			Special Education	Director of Student Services	Superintendent
Athletic	Coach	Activities Coordinator/Athletic Director	Principal	Assistant Superintendent	Superintendent
Extracurricular	Advisor	Activities Coordinator/Athletic Director	Principal	Assistant Superintendent	Superintendent
Technology	Teacher	Digital Media Specialist	Principal	Director of Learning & Innovation	Executive Director of Technology
Community Education Early Learning					
Community Education Youth Enrichment					
Community Education Kids Place					
Community Education Adult/Seniors Enrichment					
Transportation		Assistant Principal	Principal	Assistant Superintendent	Superintendent
Facilities/Rentals					

ParentSquare

St. Louis Park Public Schools uses ParentSquare to keep families informed and connected. To help you know what to expect, we use two primary types of communication: **Smart Alerts** and **Posts**.

- Smart Alerts: Smart Alerts are used for **important or time-sensitive information** that families need to know right away. These messages are designed to grab your attention

and may be delivered by text message, email, app notification, and/or phone call, depending on your notification preferences. Examples of Smart Alerts include:

- School closures, late starts, or early dismissals
- Emergency or safety information
- Urgent transportation updates
- Immediate schedule changes
- Time-sensitive reminders that require prompt attention

Because these messages are urgent, they are sent using ParentSquare's Smart Alert feature to help ensure families receive the information as quickly as possible, and it will not appear in the feed.

Posts: Posts are used for **general information, celebrations, and routine updates**. They are not urgent and are intended to keep families informed about what's happening in our schools and district. Examples of Posts include:

- School and district newsletters
- Upcoming events and activities
- Classroom or school highlights
- Student achievements and celebrations
- Volunteer opportunities
- Family engagement events
- Program updates and reminders
- Community resources

Posts can be viewed in the ParentSquare app, on the ParentSquare website, or through email notifications based on your account settings.

What You Can Expect

Our goal is to communicate clearly while respecting your time and attention.

- **Smart Alerts** are reserved for information that is urgent or requires immediate awareness.
- **Posts** provide routine updates, news, and information that help you stay connected to your student's school and the district.

We encourage all families to download the ParentSquare app, activate their account, and review their notification preferences so you receive communications in the way that works best for you.

Communication Strategies

Several strategies can be used for effective communication. This district focuses on the following seven strategies for internal and external communication.

1. Use The Most Appropriate Approved Channel:

- Choose the most appropriate channel for the message
- The more difficult the situation, the more important it is to communicate face-to-face
- Ensure the message is compliant with district policies
- Check with the administration before using any new channels

2. Clear, Concise, and Error Free:

- Write in simple, easy-to-understand language
- Be as precise as possible
- Keep messages concise and to the point
- Proofread for informational errors as well as any grammar, punctuation, spelling, omitted words, repeated words, spacing/format, and typographical errors.
- Minimize the use of acronyms or abbreviations

3. Talk to the Audience with a Focus on Customer Service:

- Understand the needs of the audience
- Show respect for the other person and their feedback
- Provide customer service in a friendly and helpful way
- Be open to feedback and questions

4. Communicate Early and Visibly:

- Be proactive in communicating information to stakeholders
- Get the message out in multiple ways (e.g. email, website, etc.)
- Make sure messages are seen and heard

5. Develop Common Messaging:

- Develop a unified approach to communication
- Ensure all messaging is consistent and clear
- Be aware of any cultural differences that may affect the message

1. Utilize Proper Communication Chain of Command:

- Ensure messages are delivered through the correct channels
- Establish a chain of command where communication is shared in a logical and organized manner

- Follow the communication hierarchy for approvals
- Be aware of any protocols that must be followed

2. Provide Opportunities for Feedback and Questions:

- Encourage feedback and questions
 - Be open to constructive criticism
 - Be responsive to inquiries
-

Website

Having an up-to-date website is essential for effective communication. A website can provide a platform to share important information and updates, as well as engage with key stakeholders. It can also be used to showcase events and services, improve customer service and support, and build brand awareness. An up-to-date website is key for staying competitive and staying connected with those who matter most. The district website is the primary source of information for our students and parents.

To maximize the potential of an up-to-date website for communication, there are a few strategies to consider.

- Ensure the website is easy to navigate and all information is clearly laid out
- Keep the website content up-to-date with fresh content, including any recent news or announcements
- Ensure that all content posted to the website is consistent with the school district's mission and vision
- Maintain an accurate calendar and include new events as soon as they are available
- Leverage the website to communicate upcoming events and activities
- Utilize the website to provide useful information and resources for families
- Utilize multimedia elements such as images, videos, and audio to engage visitors
- Make sure the website is accessible to all users, regardless of device or disability

Social Media

Social media should not be the primary source of information from the school district as it may not reach all of the school district's stakeholders. Social media is often used to connect with younger generations, but parents, staff, and other stakeholders may not be as active on social

media platforms. Additionally, messages shared on social media can be easily lost among the vast amount of content that is shared on these platforms. The school district website or direct email/phone communication should be the primary source of information as it is more comprehensive and can reach all stakeholders.

It is important for a district to only approve specific social media platforms because it ensures that all communication is consistent, clear, and in line with the district's objectives. By limiting the number of platforms used, the district can ensure that all messages are cohesive and that there is no confusion among stakeholders. Also, it helps to save time and resources, as it reduces the need to monitor and manage multiple accounts. Additionally, using only approved platforms allows the district to better control the message and ensure that all posts comply with district and platform policies and standards.

Social media can be used to support the official communication provided on the website or through email and phone alerts by providing an additional platform for disseminating information to stakeholders. It is a great tool that can be used to share quick updates, announcements, or reminders with the school district's followers. It can also be used to highlight positive stories and accomplishments from the school district, which can help build a positive reputation and create a sense of community.

Any social media account for a district-sponsored activity will need district approval and consistently follow the standards and strategies listed below. Requests for new social media accounts will be reviewed and approved by the Communications Department.

The following standards will be used by the district when developing official accounts:

- Gain district permission to establish an account
- Establish a clear purpose for the account
- Develop an appropriate name and use consistent district branding
- Create a detailed profile that includes contact information, a link to the school district's website, and other relevant information
- Ensure that all security measures are in place to protect the account and its content
- Turn off/disable or require approval for any public comments
- Provide clear guidelines for staff regarding the use of the official social media accounts

The following strategies shall be used by staff utilizing social media for district communication:

- Make sure all posts adhere to the school district's mission and vision
- Only post content that has already been communicated through the website or phone/email messaging
- Use social media to promote important messages and updates from the school district
- Share positive stories and accomplishments from the school district

- Utilize social media to promote upcoming events
 - Don't post any confidential or sensitive information
 - Don't post content that is not related to the school district
-

Email Communication Protocols

When done correctly, email is a great resource for communicating information. An email should never replace a meeting or face-to-face conversation when those are more appropriate.

When communicating via email keep in mind the following drawbacks:

- **Lack of emotion:** It can be difficult to accurately convey emotions through email. This can lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretations.
- **Lack of immediate feedback:** Responding to emails can take time, meaning that the recipient may not get an immediate response.
- **Overload:** People can become overwhelmed by the influx of emails they receive, and may miss important messages.
- **Errors:** Emails can be sent with errors, such as typos or incorrect information, which can lead to confusion.
- **Security risks:** Emails can be vulnerable to security risks such as phishing attacks.

The following strategies should be used when communicating through email:

- **Be Responsive:** Respond to emails promptly. Same-day response is preferred but no longer than 48 hours when possible. Don't leave emails unanswered for too long. If needed, provide an update instead of waiting until all information is gathered.
- **Verify Recipients:** Only send emails to the appropriate and intended recipients. All emails should be limited to the specific people who need the information. Verify all recipients in a group email before sending. Do not add a recipient to an email without stating it at the beginning of the email. Do not use Reply All unless all recipients need the information. Always ensure that internal communications do not have external recipients.
- **Use Clear Subject Lines:** A clear and descriptive subject line will help the recipient quickly understand the content of the email.
- **Personalize Messages:** Try to personalize emails when possible. Use the recipient's name and relevant details to make the message more personal.

- **Use a Professional Tone:** Always use a professional and respectful tone when communicating through email. Avoid using slang or jargon, and use appropriate language and grammar. Signature blocks should be professional.
 - **Be Concise:** Keep emails as concise as possible. Stick to the relevant points and avoid writing long emails.
 - **Use Appropriate Formatting:** When necessary use bold text, bullet points, and other formatting options to make emails easier to read. Be strategic in the use of formatting options as too much will make emails difficult to read.
 - **Proofread:** Before sending an email, proofread it to make sure it is free of any errors.
 - **Use Attachments:** If necessary, use attachments to provide additional information. Make sure the attachments are in a format the recipient can open.
 - **Be Professional:** Do not forward emails or attachments without the consent of the sender. Do not forward internal communication to external recipients.
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Internal Communication

A significant amount of information is shared daily within the school district. [Internal communication plans](#) need to be developed to ensure the effective and timely sharing of information within the district.

Goals of Internal Communication

1. Provide open and transparent communication
2. Set clear expectations for when and how to communicate
3. Foster collaboration through communication
4. Provide timely information sharing for effective decision making
5. Include effective feedback loops

Strategies for Internal Communication

- When possible communicate face-to-face
- Facilitate regular staff and committee meetings
- Use email for sharing information
- Schedule important dates early and make them available on common calendars
- Ask for feedback

How to Develop a Communications Plan

To properly ensure timely and effective communication, it is important that buildings, programs, and committees develop a written communication plan. Communication plans include:

- Communication goal
 - What do you need to know?
 - What do others need to know?
 - Target audience
 - Method of communication
 - Who is responsible?
 - Frequency
 - Feedback loop

Feedback Loops

It is important that any time information is shared by the district that a method for feedback is available. A feedback loop is a process of collecting and responding to feedback from stakeholders to continuously improve district communications. It involves five steps which include the development of a communication plan, sharing information, asking for feedback, analyzing the feedback, and taking action on that feedback. Feedback loops can be used to not just improve communication but also the programming, protocols, and policies of the district. The intent of the feedback loop is to help decision makers understand the impact that we make as a district. Effective use of feedback loops will help build trusting relationships with our stakeholders.

Develop Communication Plan

Buildings, programs, and committees develop written communication plans to ensure proper feedback loop responsibilities.

Share Information

Send out new or updated information as needed. Include ways in which feedback was used in decision making process.

Ask for Feedback

Develop an appropriate communication channel to actively seek feedback.

Analyze Feedback

Gather feedback and analyze. Share within the building, program, committee to support decisions.

Take Action

Make adjustments to incorporate feedback in decision making.

FEEDBACK LOOP



Strategies for Meetings

In order for communication to be effective it is important to be intentional on how and when we communicate. In person, face-to-face meetings are highly effective for communication goals when they are conducted thoughtfully and intentionally. The district uses Courageous Conversation protocols. It is used to engage, sustain and deepen intra-racial and inter-racial dialogue about race. It is an essential foundation for examining and addressing institutionalized culture and structures that promote racial disparities.

The Conditions

1. Focus on what is personal, local and immediate.
2. Isolate race.
3. Normalize social construction and multiple perspectives.
4. Monitor agreements and conditions. Establish parameters.

5. Use a “working definition” for race.
6. Examine the presence and role of “whiteness.”

The Agreements

1. Stay engaged.
2. Speak your truth.
3. Experience discomfort.
4. Expect and accept non-closure.

District Branding

It is important to follow district branding in order to ensure consistency and cohesiveness in all communications. Branding helps to create a unified message and identity for the district, and it helps to establish trust and recognition with stakeholders. By following district branding, the district can ensure that all of its communications are professional, on-brand, and recognizable to those outside of the district. **All usage must comply with the standards detailed within the Identity Usage and Style Guide**

[View Brand Style Guide](#)

Summary

A school district communication plan is essential for any public school. It helps school administrators, teachers, and staff to ensure that all stakeholders are informed of important updates, goals, events, and changes. It also provides a clear strategy for how communications should be delivered, who should receive them, and when they should be sent. A clear and effective communication plan helps to promote transparency and build trust between the district and its various stakeholders.

To ensure that the communication plan is effective, district staff should follow the established guidelines and protocols. This includes choosing the appropriate communication channels and methods for each stakeholder group, developing a unified and consistent message, and regularly evaluating and updating the communication plan to ensure that it remains relevant and effective. Staff should also take steps to ensure that all communications are reaching their intended audiences and that the visual style is consistent across all channels. By following these steps, staff can help to ensure that the communication plan is successful in meeting the needs of all stakeholders.

Website (public facing)

Communication Preferred Method Chart

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General Information	☒	☐	☐	☒	☒	☐	☐
Newsletters and Campaigns	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☐

Providing Feedback

It is critical for our stakeholders to reach out to us when they have concerns or questions. If information is not available through our primary channels as illustrated in the *SLP Communication Preferred Method Chart* then the next step is to contact the district. This is the most effective and expedient way to gather the information needed. It is important to start communication with the person who is closest and has the most information on the situation. The *Point of Contact Progression Chart* provides a progression of contacts that can be used to effectively gather information and work through situations. When contacting the district please utilize this progression chart. District staff will ask and redirect your calls as needed to maintain the integrity of this system.

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Athletic	Coach	Activities Coordinator/Athletic Director	Principal	Assistant Superintendent	Superintendent
Extracurricular	Advisor	Activities Coordinator/Athletic Director	Principal	Assistant Superintendent	Superintendent
Technology	Teacher	Digital Media Specialist	Principal	Director of Learning & Innovation	Executive Director of Technology
Community Education Early Learning					
Community Education Youth Enrichment					
Community Education Kids Place					
Community Education Adult/Seniors Enrichment					

Transportation		Assistant Principal	Principal	Assistant Superintendent	Superintendent
Facilities/Rentals					

It is important that any time information is shared by the district that a method for feedback is available. A feedback loop is a process of collecting and responding to feedback from stakeholders to continuously improve district communications. It involves five steps which include the development of a communication plan, sharing information, asking for feedback, analyzing the feedback, and taking action on that feedback. Feedback loops can be used to not just improve communication but also the programming, protocols, and policies of the district. The intent of the feedback loop is to help decision makers understand the impact that we make as a district. Effective use of feedback loops will help build trusting relationships with our stakeholders.

