

# **Communication Plan**

## **Becker Public**

### **Schools**



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## **Introduction**

In order to build and maintain trust among key stakeholders, Becker Public Schools will always be honest and transparent in all forms of communication with the public.

## **District Mission**

The mission of Becker Public Schools is to prepare self-directed learners to thrive in a changing global community.

## **Belief Statements**

Community Members should understand the changing landscape of education to engage with, participate in, and support the educational system.

Staff Members should be adaptable to learn new information and skills, which facilitate learning so students are prepared to thrive in an ever-changing world.

Students should become self-directed learners, self-disciplined, and autonomous workers, while being creative thinkers with a drive for innovation.

Parents should collaborate and understand the new realities of today's learning environment to model and teach self directed behavior and life-long learning in an environment that fosters these expectations.

## **Supporting Statements**

Community Members will obtain factual information to become informed about the changing needs and dissolving boundaries of traditional schooling, be asked to financially support the school district, and become more involved through volunteerism in a variety of ways.

Staff will provide more digital learning opportunities and less traditional classroom instruction.

Students will have an education more focused on problem-solving skills rather than knowledge-based skills, more options and control with their own education, be more immersed in technology, and have increased collaboration with their peers.

Parents will need to accept and support the realities of the changing learning environment, instill core values, prepare children for change, and be motivated to pursue their own growth and education.

## **Key Components of the Plan**

- To ensure compliance with data privacy laws and other legal considerations, employees may not make statements to the media, individuals, or entities outside the District relating to student or personnel matters. Inquiries regarding such matters must be directed to Directors and Building Administration. The Director of Community Education and Superintendent will oversee district communication and may also be used as a resource on specific inquiries.

- Communication must be tied to the goals, objectives, and emphasis of the school district mission statement.
- Key messaging should position Becker Public Schools as a collaborative, “community centered” school district that is committed to providing an exceptional education for all students
- Improving the use of communication technology must be a priority if Becker Public Schools is to maintain a strong public image.
- While technology has and will continue to expand Becker Public Schools’ reach, it will be supplemented with valuable face-to-face interactions.
- Internal communication must be positive and a priority.
- School building communication should be a major component of the communication effort.
- Effective stakeholder engagement requires interpersonal connections.
- Becoming a listening organization requires a commitment at all levels.

## **Target Audiences**

In order to maintain a comprehensive communications plan, target audiences need to be identified. Communication is a reciprocal process and thrives on continual feedback through a two-way process. Every opportunity will be made to make communication reciprocal and engaging. It is important to view these groups as both audiences and communicators.

### **Internal Audiences:**

- Students
- District Employees
- School Board
- Volunteers

### **External Audiences:**

- Parents
- District Taxpayers
- Business Leaders
- Media Outlets (local newspaper)
- Legislative Leaders
- Ministerial Leaders
- PTSA
- Law Enforcement/Fire Department/First Responders

### **External Audiences -wider scope**

- Regional Media
- Prospective Employees
- Prospective students/parents
- Alumni
- Retirees and former employees

**Through implementation of this plan, the following behaviors and attitudes are the focus:**

**Internal Audiences:**

- Take pride and ownership of the district
- Stay informed on key issues related to the school community
- Exhibit district values of “Being a Bulldog”

**External Audiences:**

- Feel engaged and involved in their district
- Exhibit community pride and trust in the district
- Support Becker Public School District through active engagement
- Feel community feedback is heard, wanted and used
- View the district as fiscally responsible.

## **Communications Goals**

- To communicate more effectively, Becker Public Schools will work with Internal and External Audiences to move messaging forward.
- Provide proactive information with consistent messaging
- Utilize various media outlets to ensure the district mission, goals, achievements are accurately told
- Establish in conjunction with the Human Resources Department, an effective employee communication plan to improve internal communication and employee engagement
- Develop district-wide communications procedures and processes to ensure timely and accurate communication
- Provide training to district leaders in marketing, public and media relations, customer service and the communication skills

## **Media Relations Plan**

Daily	Weekly	Monthly
<p>Update Social Media sites regarding current district happenings (Superintendent, Principals, Department Directors)</p> <p>Ensure website is current, up-to-date and functional (Superintendent, Principals, Department Directors)</p>	<p>Principals and Department Directors updates to Internal and External Audiences</p>	<p>Food Service menus posted to the website and local newspaper (Food Service Director)</p> <p>Represent district at Chamber of Commerce, and local civic groups.</p> <p>Publicly thank sponsors, donors, grants via news release and social media (ask before you print names of donors)</p> <p>Communicate School Board update to staff (Superintendent)</p>

Trimester	Annually	As Needed
Honor Rolls (Principals)	Graduates (Principals)	Respond to requests for information or community activities relevant to the school (hot topics)
Recognize and thank volunteers (Principals, Department Directors)	Class Statistics (Principals)	Announce student and staff awards and honors
Recognize Extracurricular individuals, teams and clubs (Activities Director)	Parent Reminder for contact information (Principal)	Announce grants
	Complete Review and Revision of website (Superintendent, Tech Department, Principals, Department Directors)	Attend job fairs, and community events to recruit for best potential employees
	Provide Training staff members on communication (HR Director, Assistant Superintendent)	Attend Public meetings to discuss topics of importance to the community (Superintendent, Principals, Department Directors)
	Announce new staff members via press release, back-to-school newsletter (Principals)	Provide Training to staff on communications/public relations
	Conduct a survey including questions regarding the district's communications practices (January) (??Superintendent)	Voter referendums or other public and district taxpayer information
	Announce retirees via press release) (HR Director)	
	Review and revise communications related policies and procedures (May/June) (Cabinet members)	
	Announce TOY and other annual awards (May/June) (Principals)	

## Evaluation and Measurement

The following resources will be utilized to evaluate and measure the effectiveness of this communication plan. This plan will continually be evaluated and updated as needed.

- Media Survey (direct mail, newsletter, newspaper)
- Employee Survey
- Social Media usage - social media followers
- Community Feedback
- Website usage

## **Public/Private Educational Data**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records; Under FERPA, written parental permission is required before releasing any information from a student's education record, unless the school has designated the data as directory information or the requesting party falls in one of the categories below.

Student Educational Data may be released without permission to the following parties:

- School officials with legitimate educational interest
- Other schools to which a student is transferring
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student
- Organizations conducting certain studies on behalf of the school
- Accrediting organizations
- To comply with judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law

The following student data, designated as directory information, can be released to anyone requesting it:

- Name
- Address
- Age
- Gender
- Grade level
- Date of attendance
- Participation in activities
- Height and weight (if athletic related)
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Any photograph, video or recording of a student's likeness

A parent may elect to opt-out of release of information by completing and submitting the Directory Information Opt-Out Form.

## **Voice and Tone**

Being consistent with elements of our brand, including voice and tone, builds brand awareness and stronger relationships with our stakeholders - making them feel engaged with, and informed about our schools.

### **Guidelines:**

#### **Be conversational and informal**

- Try to write in first person (you, we us)
- Avoid acronyms unknown to the general public
- Use action verbs to avoid past tense

#### **Be informative and trustworthy**

- Avoid opinion-based information
- Cite where you are receiving information from
- Provide thorough information with fact.

**Be professional and friendly**

- Don't use inappropriate language
- Always use spell check and re-read content
- Let your positive, upbeat attitude shine through
- Don't speak in an "Institutional" voice

**Be quick and to the point**

- Use bullets points and small blocks of content
- Eliminate words that don't add value or understanding
- Use charts when appropriate to convey meaning

## **District Name**

In order for stakeholders to easily identify our school district, a common and consistent name needs to be used. For this reason, **Becker Public Schools**, has been chosen as the official name for our district that should be used on all internal and external communication and marketing pieces. The exception to this would be legal documents requiring a specific naming convention or documents requiring the use of our district number.

**Acceptable Name:**

Becker Public Schools

**Not Acceptable Names:**

Becker Public School District

Becker Schools #726

School District #726

# Logo Usage, Signature Color Palette, Font

The Becker Public Schools logo includes the Bulldog with lower teeth showing and the Becker Public Schools with dog in circle and lines trailing behind and the script word "Dogs". These logos should be used and appear prominently on all district publications.



## FONTS

*Rage*  
Good time      ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

## COLORS



295c  
CMYK  
RGB:



7688c  
CMYK  
RGB:



Cool Gray 8c  
CMYK  
RGB:



301c  
CMYK  
RGB:



## **Email Signatures**

All outgoing emails must include a signature that follows the format below. Quotes, slogans, graphics or stationary templates should not appear as part of your signature. If sending email from a smartphone or tablet this signature does not need to be used; however, it should be replaced by “sent from my iPhone” as an example.

Name | Job Title (include grade or subject area for teachers)

Becker Public Schools | Building or Program Name

Street Address | Becker, MN 55308

Office #: 763-261-#### | Fax #: 763-261-#### | Cell #:(If you have a district cell phone

[www.becker.k12.mn.us](http://www.becker.k12.mn.us)

***The mission of Becker Public Schools is to prepare self-directed learners to thrive in a changing global community.***

## **References**

National School Public Relations Association

<http://www.nspra.org>

Palmdale School District, Palmdale School District’s Communication Plan 2020-2025

<https://www.palmdalesd.org>

Communications Plan and Branding Guide Big Lake Schools (Revised January 2021)

<https://biglakeschools.org>