

Communication Plan Becker Public Schools



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Introduction

In order to build and maintain trust among key stakeholders, Becker Public Schools will be honest and transparent in all forms of communication with the public to the extent permitted by data privacy laws and other legal obligations.

District Mission

The mission of Becker Public Schools is to develop 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.

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 if those statements would result in the release of private data about students, employees, or other individuals. Staff are expected to be mindful of their roles and status as School District employees and should avoid communications that will foreseeably have a disruptive effect on the efficiency of the School District operations. Media inquiries regarding such matters must be directed to Directors and Building Administration. Employees also must not purport to speak on behalf of the School District without express approval. The Director of Community Education and Superintendent will oversee district-level communication and may also be used as a resource on specific inquiries.
- Official communications on behalf of the School District 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 should strive to be constructive and collaborative whenever possible.
- 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.

Nothing in this plan shall be interpreted or applied to prevent or dissuade any employee from exercising legally protected (or required) speech. This includes but is not limited to speech protected pursuant to the Public Employment Labor Relations Act (“PELRA”); the Minnesota Human Rights Act; the Maltreatment of Minors Act; the Safe and Supportive Schools Act; the Minnesota Whistleblower Act; the Occupational Health and Safety Act (“OSHA”); the terms of applicable collective bargaining agreements; and any other state, local, or federal law or District policy that permits or requires internal or external reporting. Retaliation for exercising any protected activity is strictly prohibited.

Additionally, nothing in this plan shall be interpreted or applied to inhibit any employee’s right to speech as a private citizen on matters of public concern, except to the extent any such speech rights are outweighed by School District’s interest in promoting the efficiency of the public services it performs through its employees.

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

Evaluation and Measurement

The following resources may 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, as well as the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (“MGDPA”), written parental permission is required before releasing any personally identifiable information regarding a student, unless the school has designated the data as directory information or valid exception applies. A parent may elect to opt-out of release of directory information by completing and submitting the Directory Information Opt-Out Form.

See School District Policy 515 for more information regarding the proper handling of student data.

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

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 employees' signatures. Additional identifying information such as Titles, honors, degrees. And pronouns may optionally be included alongside the employee name. If sending email from a smartphone or tablet this signature block 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

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

References

National School Public Relations Association

<http://www.nspr.org>

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: