

Agenda

1. Call Work Session to Order

Presenter: John Nelson, Chair

2. District Mission / Vision Statement

3. Discussion Items:

a. Continued discussion on Anti-Racism Training

b. School Board Goals: (From Board Self Evaluation)

- **Standard #3 - Structure (Inclusive District Culture)**
 - *Create conditions district-wide for student and staff success*
- **Standard # 5 - Advocacy & Communication**
 - *Engage local community and represent the values and expectations they hold for their school*

c.

d. Superintendent Goals:

- **Standard 1: Visionary District Leadership**
- **Standard 2: Ethics and Professional Norms**
- **Standard 3: Inclusive District Culture**
- **Standard 4: Culturally Responsive Instructional Leadership and Improvement**
- **Standard 5: Communication and Community Relations**
- **Standard 6: Effective Organization Management**
- **Standard 7: Effective Financial Management**
- **Standard 8: Policy, Governance and Advocacy**

e.

f. Review / Discussion on DRAFT Community Engagement Plan (proposed Communication Plan)

g. Review / Revise the 2020-2021 Board Action Calendar

h. Discussion on Board Committees (Bond Development, Educational Equity Policy, Community Use of District Facilities, Communication)

4. Adjourn the Work Session



School Board Self-Evaluation

School District and Evaluation Year

North Wasco County 21

2020

North Wasco County 21

2019

Prepared by:

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School Board Self-Evaluation

Report Introduction

OSBA provides access to this School Board Self-Evaluation Survey and summary report through your membership in the association and encourages your board to discuss these findings in an upcoming board meeting. Your results reflect the extent of time your board operates in the five best-practice governance roles identified by research to support student achievement.

Reviewing Your Summary Report

The aggregate summary data of each team member's responses are displayed in horizontal color-coded bar charts. As you look at these, ask each board member to answer:

- What do you see?
- Which standard would you say is the board's strongest?
- Which standard would benefit from more attention?
- What does this mean to your board?

Discuss what the data suggests and try to generate different interpretations. Ask clarifying questions of one another to increase clarity and understanding of one another's perspectives.

Going Deeper

OSBA believes your board will find it beneficial to drill down into the individual items under each of the standards:

1. Conduct and Ethics
2. Vision
3. Structure
4. Accountability
5. Advocacy and Communication

Should your board desire to dig deeper into the data, OSBA provides this opportunity in an onsite facilitated two- to three-hour work session for a fee. During this session, OSBA will help your board identify its improvement focus area and assist you in developing a professional development plan where the board will be asked to:

- Identify available time for board-superintendent team learning
- Determine use of a learning facilitator (OSBA, in-district staff, consultant, other)
- Establish commitment from individual board members to participate in the professional development

Thank you for your time and thoughtful efforts toward improved school governance by completing this School Board Self-Evaluation Survey.

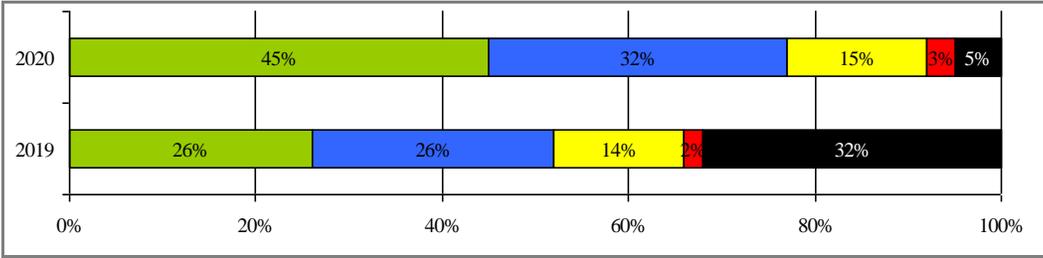
OSBA looks forward to serving your board and being the association dedicated to improving student success and education equity through advocacy, leadership and service to Oregon school boards.



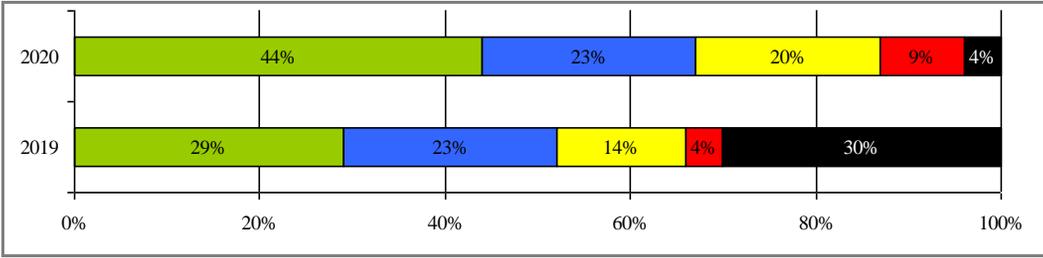
Framework for Governance: Aggregate Data

■ Always
 ■ Most of the time
 ■ Some of the time
 ■ Never
 ■ Don't know

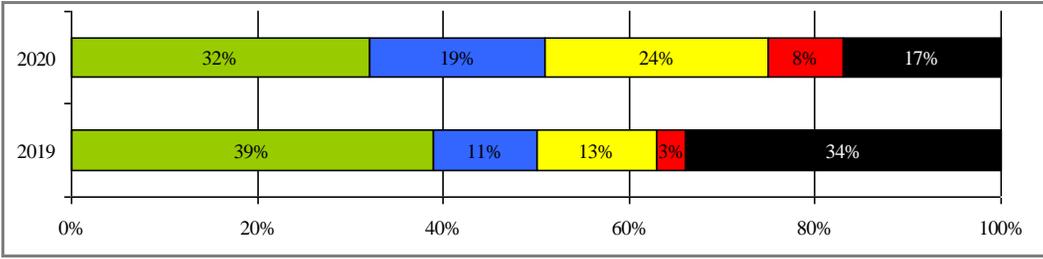
Standard 1
Code and Ethics:
Provide responsible school district governance



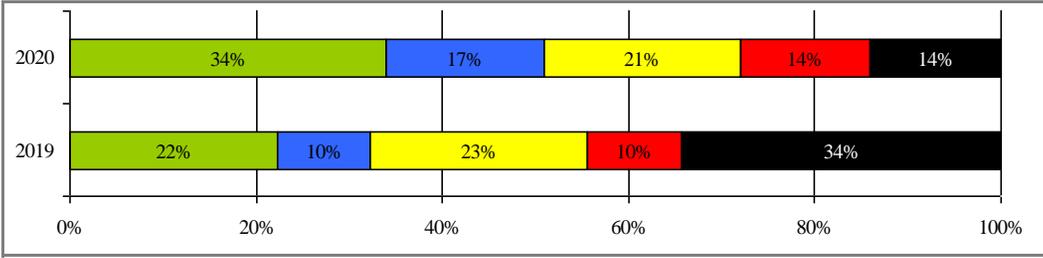
Standard 2
Vision:
Set and communicate high expectations for student learning with clear goals and plans for meeting those expectations



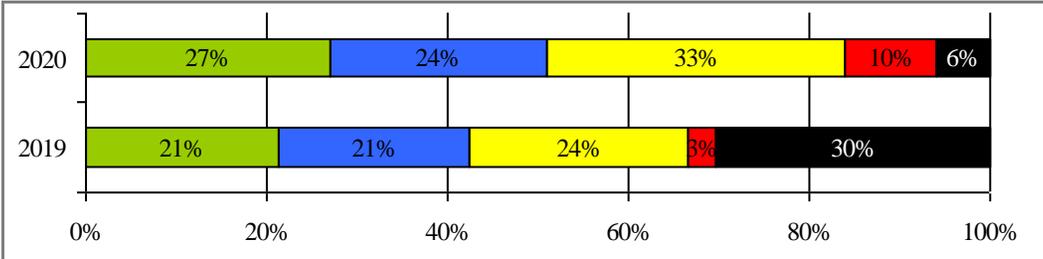
Standard 3
Structure:
Create conditions district-wide for student and staff success



Standard 4
Accountability:
Hold school district accountable for meeting student learning expectations



Standard 5
Advocacy and Communication:
Engage local community and represent the values and expectations they hold for their schools



STANDARD 1

VISIONARY DISTRICT LEADERSHIP

DESCRIPTORS

- Leads a collaborative process with the board to design (or reaffirm) the district mission and vision that reflects a core set of values and priorities.
- Leads the diverse stakeholder involvement in the development (or revision) of the district's continuous improvement plan based upon the district's mission and vision.
- Implements the district's continuous improvement plan and communicates its progress.

RATING



COMMENTS

STANDARD 2

ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL NORMS

DESCRIPTORS

- Ensures ethical decisions and cultivates professional norms and culture including equity, fairness, integrity, transparency, trust, collaboration and perseverance.
- Makes ethical and legal recommendations to the board.
- Models ethical behavior in their own conduct and cultivates ethical behavior in others.

RATING



COMMENTS

STANDARD 3

INCLUSIVE DISTRICT CULTURE

DESCRIPTORS

- Develops and maintains a supportive, equitable, culturally responsive and inclusive district culture.
- Evaluates, cultivates and advocates for equitable access to safe and nurturing schools, and the opportunities and resources necessary to support the success and well-being of each student.
- Ensures equitable, inclusive and culturally responsive instructional and behavioral support practices among teachers, administrators and staff.

RATING



COMMENTS

STANDARD 4

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND IMPROVEMENT

DESCRIPTORS

- Evaluates, designs, fosters and implements coherent systems of curriculum instruction, supports, assessment and instructional leadership.
- Implements coordinated systems of support, including coaching and professional development for staff.
- Manages an appropriate system of assessments, data collection and analysis that supports instructional improvements, equity, student learning and well-being, and instructional leadership.
- Ensures instruction throughout the district utilizes culturally responsive practices and all staff are trained.

RATING



COMMENTS

STANDARD 5

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

DESCRIPTORS

- Develops and implements effective and collaborative systems that engage multiple and diverse stakeholder groups.
- Engages and effectively communicates with diverse families, community partners and other constituencies to strengthen student learning.
- Cultivates relationships and partnerships with members of the business, civic and local government in support of their advocacy for district, school and community needs.
- Goes beyond the district and local community to advocate for students at the county, regional and/or state level.

RATING



COMMENTS

STANDARD 6

EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT

DESCRIPTORS

- Implements equitable strategies, processes and systems to recruit, hire, develop and retain high-performing personnel who demonstrate a shared commitment to student success.
- Establishes productive relationships with associations while managing labor relations and contracts effectively.
- Creates and maintains organizational structures that maximize the district's capacity to positively impact student learning.
- Creates a comprehensive system of professional development for all staff to continuously improve and increase their leadership capacity.

RATING



COMMENTS

STANDARD 7

EFFECTIVE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

DESCRIPTORS

- Develops a proposed budget in accordance with board priorities and district direction.
- Manages the equitable implementation of district resources aligned with the budget adopted by the board.
- Communicates the budget priorities and ensures regular updates on implementation of the budget.

RATING



COMMENTS

STANDARD 8

POLICY, GOVERNANCE AND ADVOCACY

DESCRIPTORS

- Develops relationships, leads collaborative decision-making and governance, and represents and advocates for district needs in local, county and state policy conversations.
- Cultivates a respectful and responsive relationship with the district board of education focused on achieving the shared mission and vision of the district.
- Implements, maintains and communicates district, state and national policy, laws, rules and regulations to staff, board and other appropriate stakeholders.

RATING 

COMMENTS



North Wasco County School District #21 Communications Plan ROUGH DRAFT

Mission Statement:

Graduating all students to be college and career ready; challenging, inspiring, and empowering them to be healthy and productive citizens.

Vision Statement:

North Wasco is a premier school district. We provide students a rigorous and relevant education with schools performing academically in the top 5% of the nation. Our students are inspired by a talented, innovative, and highly effective staff that values continuous professional growth. Our district graduates citizens who are ethical and motivated to achieve their limitless potential. North Wasco is fully embraced by the community, reflecting its health and well-being.

Introduction

Consistent, streamlined communications that are provided in a timely fashion help schools meet rising demands for information from parents and other stakeholders, as well as act as an engine that fuels engagement and buy-in for supporting student achievement, with the goal of improving the overall learning experience and boosting individual student outcomes.

The North Wasco County School District understands how critical that maintaining an open dialogue with the community is to its operations and is directly tied to student success. The district leadership is constantly looking for ways to best optimize its limited resources, so therefore, it is incumbent upon the district to create public-facing communications to help foster understanding among all stakeholders, including students, teachers, classified staff, administrators, board, leadership, community leaders, and media.

This goal has resulted in the development of a viable, sustainable, and credible communications plan aimed at satisfying the informational needs of all NWCS D stakeholders.

Plan Goal:

The goal of this communications plan is to provide clear, timely, truthful, and helpful communications to all North Wasco County School District stakeholders and earn their trust as an informative, reliable, and student-centered resource. This plan is also to be regarded as an ongoing work-in-progress as continuous improvement is at the heart of this document.

CORE COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES:

1. Keep communications proactive, timely, concise, clear, and simple; train staff on how to communicate within community using best practices that enhance those community relationships.
2. Keep messaging student- and faculty-centered while addressing stakeholder concerns.
3. Create topical handouts for easy distribution online and in person that outline school district objectives / goals / outcomes or explain complex concepts in easily-relatable terms.
4. Reach out to under-served and under-represented populations by providing Spanish-language translations for any district-produced announcements, newsletters, reports, communications, and marketing materials.
5. Identify clear communications channels that quickly and easily disseminate information, and use those channels appropriately.
6. Handle difficult situations face-to-face to reduce misconceptions or misunderstandings.
7. Foster strong relationships with media representatives to better understand angles used in news stories.

Types of district communications

Media Relations	Reminders / Notices / Alerts
Community Relations	Building Reporting
Emergency / Crisis Communications	Annual Reports
Employee Communications	District Newsletter
Communications Training	Website
Superintendent Updates	Live Meeting Broadcasts
Social Media Content (feel good stories)	Town Hall / Stakeholder / Planning Meetings
Social Media Posts	

Constituent groups include:

Students / Community
Licensed and Classified Staff
School-to-School
Superintendent / Leadership
Board of Directors

COMMUNICATIONS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

1. Community relations

Strengthen community relationships through clear, valuable, and transparent communications that inform, educate, and engage audiences and strengthen support for school district's mission and vision.

ACTION:

- A. Work with licensed and classified staff to give them key district talking points to bring up with parents and other community contacts.
- B. Superintendent outreach and speaking opportunities via local business meetings, service clubs, and local events to maintain visibility and accessibility.
- C. Actively translate all materials being sent to public domain into Spanish language.
- D. Gather public comments at every board meeting.
- E. Board actively promotes school announcements, public meetings, special events of interest, projects, and student / teacher success stories through 1-on-1 interactions as well as on social media through post shares.
- F. Create local community advisory panel focused on communications – meets 2x/year to garner input from community.
- G. Consistently post stories on all school district social media outlets on regular basis.
- H. Curate / monitor comments and respond to questions or concerns actively.
- I. Inform public and stakeholders of important meetings or issues.
- J. Create quarterly surveys for parents / community to provide input to district, including feedback on budgets and planning.
- K. Reach out to parents individual or through PTO to get more engagement in key district initiatives / planning.
- L. Stream all board meetings LIVE on Facebook.
- M. Hold yearly town hall meetings to gather feedback.
- N. Assign a board member to each school to facilitate closer connection to administrators / licensed / classified staff and students.

2. Media Relations

Develop a strategic media relations plan that builds up school district's community profile.

ACTION:

- A. Respond to media requests in timely fashion.
- B. Develop regular editorial calendar to pitch articles to targeted publications.
- C. Designate key point person collecting positive stories from each individual school and then seeding media by sending leads to reporters.
- D. Produce photos / videos to provide additional content, as needed.
- E. Train key district personnel to act as spokespeople through formalized media training program.
- F. Provide media with classroom access to provide background and interview sources.

3. Employee and Board Communications

Create internal communications plan that fosters greater district-wide knowledge of programming, student / teacher success stories, and internal information and resource-sharing.

ACTION:

- A. District internal newsletter distributed to all staff.

- B. Superintendent weekly updates.
- C. Board meeting information sent to all staff.
- D. Facilitate centralized “hub” for information-sharing internally.
- E. Sharing information internally at individual school meetings with building administrators.
- F. Highlight employee (classified and licensed) staff successes on social media.
- G. Provide board members with key talking points and sharable infographics to help illustrate district position on topics.

4. Crisis Communications

Create response mechanism in event of crisis that includes communications chain for responding to media and public inquiries.

ACTION:

- A. Establish key spokesperson for district and coordinate with law enforcement / first responders.
- B. Develop talking points addressing issue, keeping to just facts, not hypotheses.
- C. Proactively develop media call list for school emergency alerts.
- D. Share emergency-related information on school district website and social media.
- E. Share talking points with all staff and remind them to stay on message.
- F. Refer any media / public inquiries to established single spokesperson.
- G. Maintain privacy for any affected individuals.
- H. Set press conference time and location for media to meet.
- I. Provide updates as necessary on regular basis and notify media in advance of announcements.

5. Communications Tools

Monitor technology and other communications tools to determine which ones are most relevant to end audiences. Revise communications strategies to adapt to changing communications technology expectations.

ACTION:

- A. Maintain knowledge of new and emerging social media channels.
- B. Track usage of these new channels and if necessary, survey local audiences to gauge adoption rates, then decide if necessary to add new channel to regular list of distribution platforms.

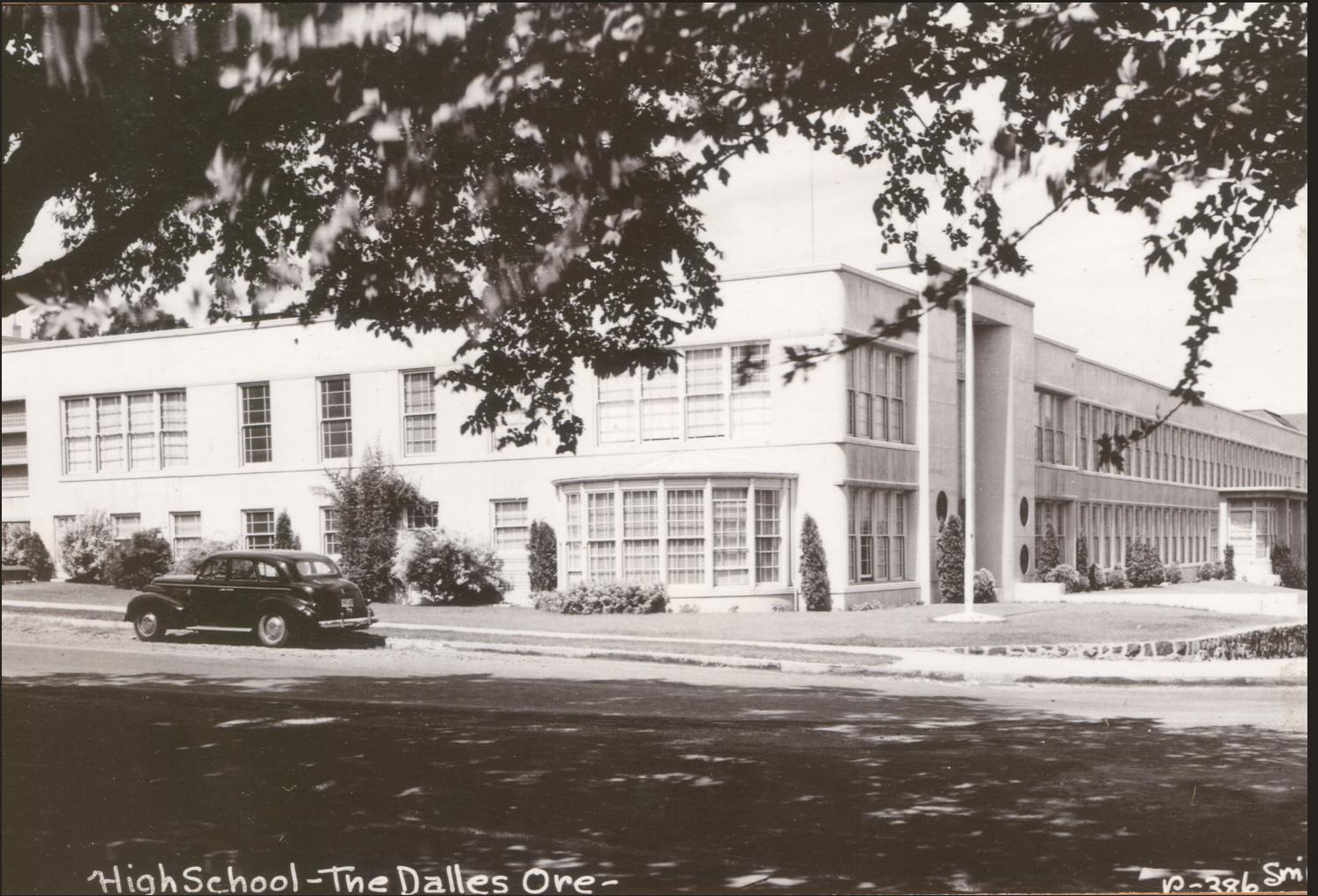
6. Measurement

Create benchmarks for communications to start measuring effectiveness, then evaluate on annual basis to add / subtract / edit activities to build culture of continuous improvement.

ACTION:

- A. Track all media coverage (positive and negative) in terms of articles.
- B. Track all positive stories that have gone out on social media / school district website.
- C. Survey administrators, licensed staff, and classified staff on communications performance.
- D. Send out community survey asking for feedback on communications.
- E. Track social media engagement levels, followers, and website usage on annual basis.
- F. Track newsletter “open” or “click” rates.
- G. Distribute annual media survey to measure district communications satisfaction levels.

ROUGH DRAFT



NORTH WASCO COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT REPORT

JUNE 2019

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ABOUT THE REPORT

OBJECTIVE

A great public school system is a foundational prerequisite to a thriving community. The North Wasco County School District (NWCS D) board, administrators, teachers and support staff are charged with ensuring children in The Dalles region have access to the best possible education. This report endeavours to support the goals of NWCS D by providing attainable steps to improve communications with staff, families, partners and the community.

A strong communications program will promote trust, embrace community values, and help build a shared sense of ownership in the school district's goals and achievements. This report draws on best practices in school communications and considers community input to prioritize actionable steps the district can take.

AUTHOR

Kelsey Cardwell, Strategic Communications Officer, Clackamas Education Service District

Kelsey has nearly 10 years of experience in public relations, marketing, strategic

communications, outreach, digital media and events for small businesses, nonprofits, political campaigns and schools. She graduated from American University with a degree in "Language and Communication Media" and a minor in graphic design.

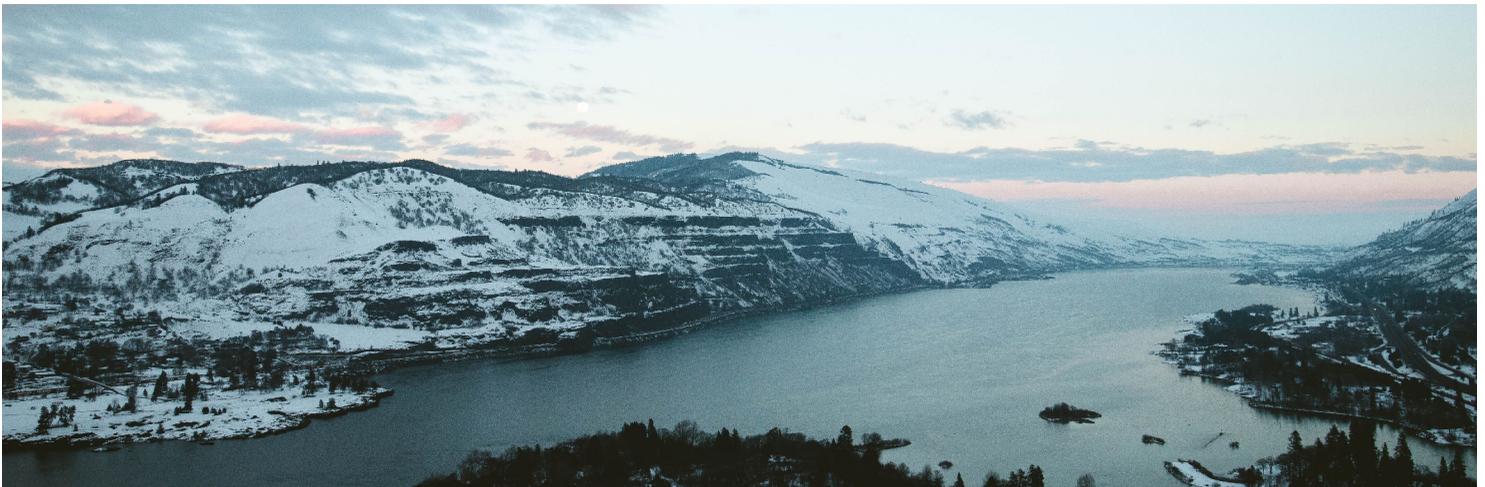
"Strong communications will promote trust, embrace community values, and help build a shared sense of ownership in the school district's goals and achievements."

EMERGING THEMES

Boldly articulate a vision: The district is approaching a significant transition in leadership. Use this as an opportunity to build momentum for a new and bold vision for the future. Give incoming leadership a head start by making the most of the search process.

Empower teachers as spokespeople: North Wasco County School District teachers are trusted and critical ambassadors for the district.

Celebrate shared wins: Work with partners to highlight collective accomplishments and demonstrate how partnerships are leveraged to expand opportunities for students.



KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM STAKEHOLDER INPUT

An online survey and stakeholder interviews solicited feedback to identify patterns of perceived strengths and weaknesses in order to inform communications priorities. The district distributed the survey by email, on their website, on social media and in their front offices. Most interviews were conducted in person and ranged from 20-45 minutes.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS SUMMARY

- 237 total respondents
- Respondents were relatively evenly split between the following age ranges: 28 and under; 29-38; 39-48; 49-58; and 59+
- 90 survey respondents identified as parents, 21 as students, 96 as employees, 77 as community members and 20 as “other”
- Respondents identified with the following school communities:
 - Chenoweth - 33
 - Colonel Wright - 54
 - Dry Hollow - 60
 - Mosier Community School - 16
 - The Dalles Middle School - 106
 - The Dalles High School - 95
 - Wahtonka Community School - 20

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWEES SUMMARY

- Two elected officials
- Two teachers
- Two parents
- Three community partners/liaisons

SURVEY QUESTIONS & RESPONSES

What does North Wasco County School District do best? Check all that apply.

Below is a breakdown of how many people selected each item, with the three most popular responses highlighted:

- Student achievement and opportunity gaps for students from different backgrounds (poverty, language, etc.) - 56
- Transparent and accountable communications with community - 28
- **School safety - 64**
- K-12 funding - 16
- High school graduation rates - 47
- Access to courses and curriculum that’s relevant to real-world jobs - 46
- Class size - 33
- Student attendance - 42
- Safe facilities for learning & activities - 44
- **Student access to modern technology - 71**
- Mental health services for students - 34
- Community and parent engagement - 35
- Kindergarten readiness/early learning - 38
- **Hiring caring, high-quality educators - 139**

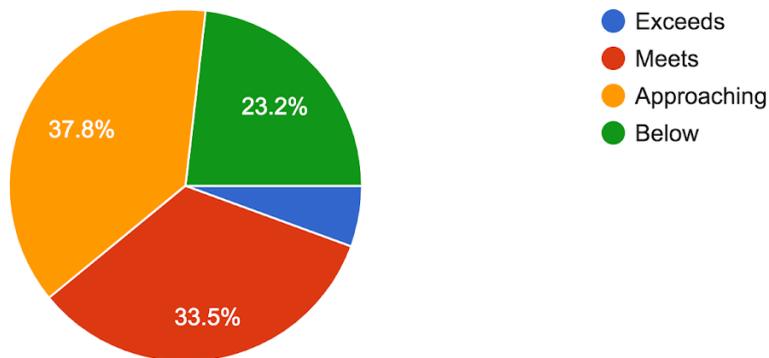
Where is it most necessary that the district improve? Check all that apply.

The five items highlighted in yellow were selected by roughly half or more of respondents.

- Student achievement and opportunity gaps for students from different backgrounds (poverty, language, etc.) - 100
- Transparent and accountable communications with community - 108
- School safety - 82
- **K-12 funding - 113**
- High school graduation rates - 86
- Access to courses and curriculum that’s relevant to real-world jobs - 96
- **Class size - 123**
- Student attendance - 99
- **Safe facilities for learning and activities - 110**
- Student access to modern technology - 66
- **Mental health services for students - 124**
- **Community and parent engagement - 112**
- Kindergarten readiness/early learning - 70
- Hiring caring, high-quality educators - 58

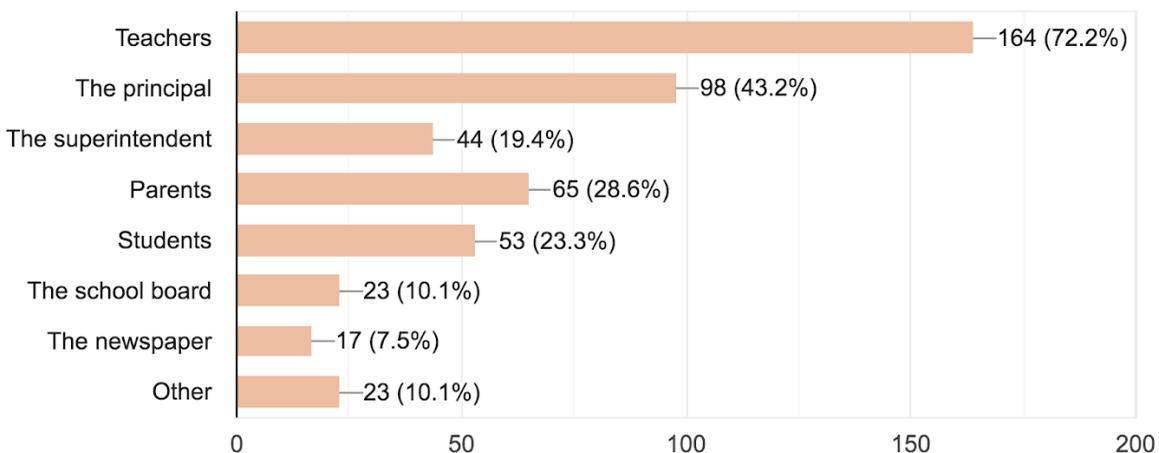
Based on your own expectations and standards for K-12 public education, what overall assessment would you give North Wasco County schools?

233 responses



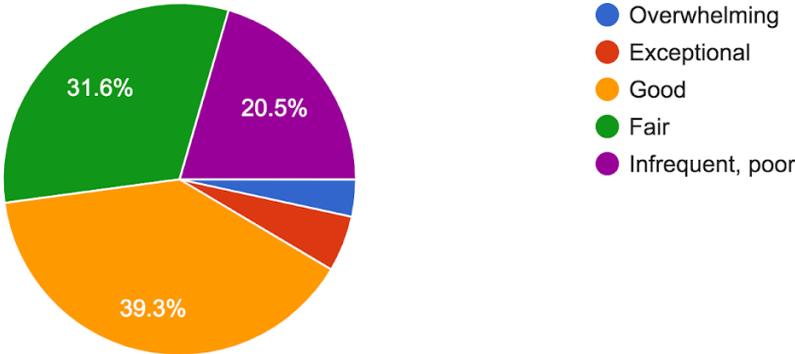
Who do you trust most with information about your school? Check all that apply.

227 responses



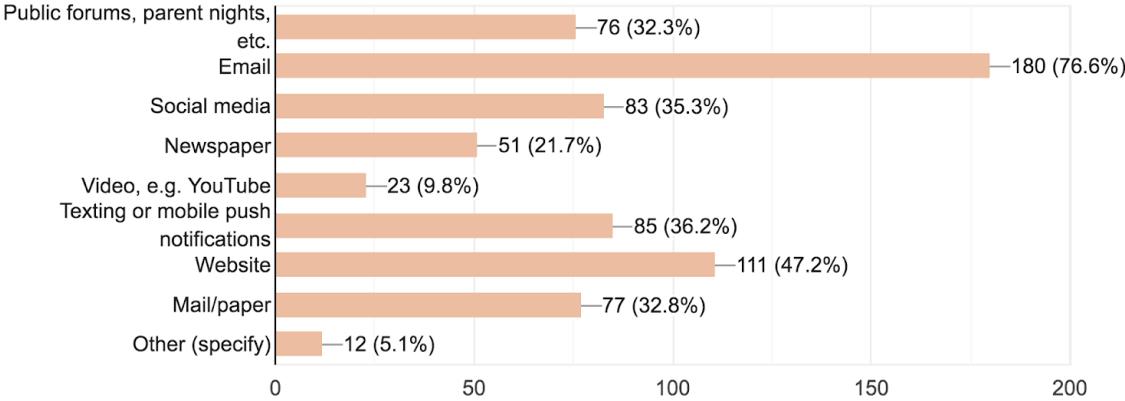
How would you characterize communications from North Wasco County School District?

234 responses



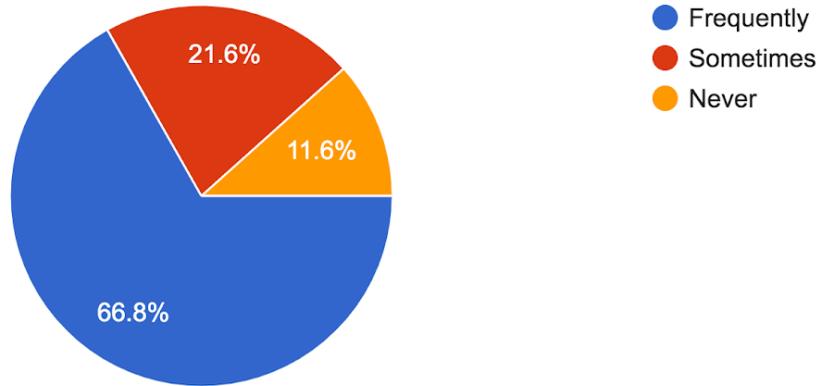
How would you prefer to receive information from the district? Select all that apply.

235 responses



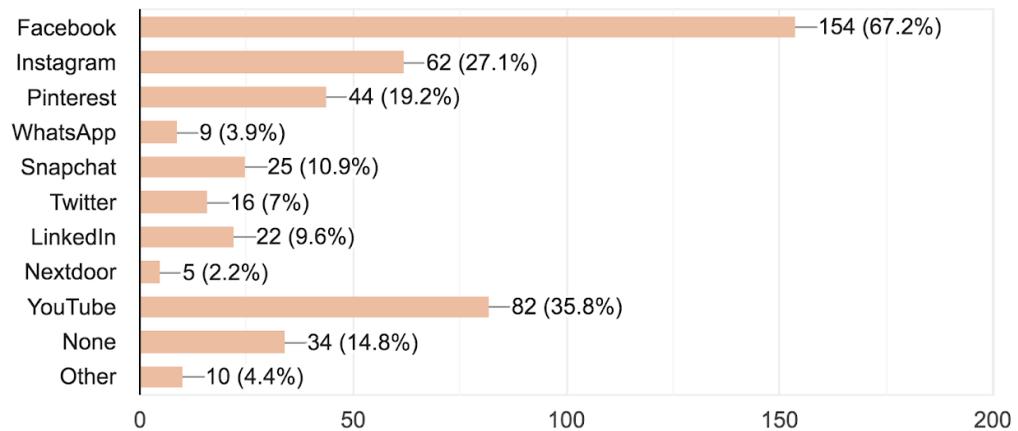
Do you access the internet using your mobile phone?

232 responses



Which social media networks do you use regularly? Select all that apply.

229 responses





GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Below is a synthesis of conclusions made by reviewing survey results, identifying patterns in stakeholder interviews, and reviewing existing communications in *The Dalles Chronicle*, on the website and social media.

- 1. Empower teachers and spokespeople:** In both stakeholder interviews and survey results, teachers were identified as the district's best asset. They are also considered the district's most trusted spokespeople. This is consistent with national data, and this conclusion can help inform the district's communications protocols and procedures. For instance, when there is an important update—like announcing a programmatic decision or a key hire—inform teachers and staff first. Provide them with key talking points ahead of time, so they feel empowered and prepared to respond to questions once a public announcement is made.

In the case of emergency or crisis communications, you can send communications to staff first while communications are being translated for release to families and the greater community.



2. **Embrace digital communication platforms, but do not forget the rest:** Parents and the community at-large overwhelmingly prefer digital modes of communication such as email, website and text notifications. However, there is also still a strong preference across all possible modes of communication.

While the district should continue to promote opportunities for in-person communications such as public forums, especially for its value in developing relationships, be sure to place a high value on keeping the website up-to-date and families informed via email.

It's clear that the district has embraced Facebook, has amassed a large following, and posts regular updates. The community survey supports this strategy. Consider placing more stories and updates in the newspaper that can then also be shared to the website and Facebook page.

Elected officials in particular felt the newspaper was an important outlet for staying informed. A random sample of 59 out of 309 total articles in The Chronicle over the past seven years found that 30.5 percent of the

headlines were positive, 30.5 percent were negative and 39 percent were neutral. This would be a good area to set a goal for improvement.

3. **Leverage partnerships:** NWCS D has an incredible opportunity to highlight how it leverages partnerships to expand opportunities for the region's students, such as those with Columbia Gorge Community College. As a relatively new and energetic leader in the district, the high school

principal is a key potential spokesperson to celebrate these opportunities and achievements.

"Bolstered communications throughout the district's leadership transition will help elevate stakeholder input."

4. **Seize the upcoming leadership transition** to celebrate past achievements, identify community values and carve space for strategic planning. Mitigate inertia and attract quality superintendent candidates by aggressively celebrating achievements and heavily involving community in the search process. Make the most of the search process to identify community values and construct the launchpad for the next superintendent's success. Bolstered communications throughout the leadership transition will also help elevate stakeholder input.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following concrete steps were prioritized to advance the efficacy of communications efforts by North Wasco County School District.



LOW-HANGING FRUIT

1. Make it easier to find news updates on the website: Delete the [“News Release”](#) section of the website and instead use the “Announcements and Latest Headlines” on the home page to place news. Stop the headlines from scrolling and make sure it can prominently display at least 4-5 headlines.
2. Send **the attached press release** to the The Dalles Chronicle, and post to the website and social media.
3. Work with the high school principal to author a column that can be submitted

to the newspaper and emailed to all district parents in English and Spanish at the start of the school year. Since all families will be a part of the high school community, outline gains in AP enrollment, graduation rates, college credits received, and other areas of significant improvement. Share plans and a vision for the future of the high school that addresses both academic and facilities goals.

4. Develop a communications plan for superintendent recruitment and transition.

BIGGER PICTURE

1. As the district transitions to new leadership, develop a boldly articulated vision by identifying community values and developing district goals. Start early by identifying community values throughout the superintendent recruitment process. Find ways to share and celebrate the individual and collective accomplishments that showcase these values in order to build momentum behind the new superintendent and the strategic planning process. Once the superintendent is onboarded, use the strategic planning process to develop clear and consistent messaging that can easily be found in all outgoing communications from the district.

Clearly articulate the district's vision on the homepage of the website, on the footer of press releases, and on all social media accounts.

2. Produce a short video to communicate the district's vision. Identify and celebrate individual achievements of students, alumni and teachers. Share some of the district's most meaningful and valued systemic successes.
3. Hire bilingual and bicultural front office staff to build inclusive, warm and welcoming schools that promote parent engagement. Develop a plan to provide continual customer service training to front office staff, including support for advancing the goals and messaging outlined in a strategic planning process.

THANK YOU!

Thank you for the opportunity to get to know your community and work on this communications audit report. This is an exciting time for North Wasco County School District. We look forward to seeing your community celebrate its recent successes while seizing the opportunity to make the most of a promising future.



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The Dalles, Oregon
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OSBA Model Sample Policy

Code: BCE
Adopted:

Board Committees

The Board [may] [will not] [does] have standing committees. Special committees may be appointed by the Board for specific purposes to serve until their assignment is completed. The entire Board may meet as a committee-of-the-whole.

The function of special committees will be fact-finding, deliberative and advisory, rather than legislative or administrative. The committee will make recommendations directly to the Board as a whole, which alone may take action. Committee meetings may be called by the Board chair, the committee chair or any committee member.

Committee-of-the-whole meetings, called “work sessions,” may be held. Committee-of-the-whole meetings may be called by the Board chair or any [two] Board members.

All meetings of special committees and of committees-of-the-whole will follow the Public Meetings Law. The Board or its committees may sit in an executive session to discuss matters when such session is required or permitted by law.

All matters referred to a committee will be thoroughly investigated. A committee will not have the power to act for the Board except as the Board has specifically authorized, but will make recommendations to the Board. Committee recommendations and reports will become an official part of Board minutes.

A Board committee may appoint advisory members from the staff, student body or community with approval of the Board. Advisory members will be instructed in the committee’s functions and their status. Advisory members may not be included in considering whether a quorum of the committee is present, nor may they vote on recommendations to be made to the Board. Either an advisory member or an ex-officio member may present a written minority report to the Board.

END OF POLICY

Legal Reference(s):

[ORS 192.610 to -192.690](#)

[ORS 332.045](#)

[ORS 332.105](#)