

Thomaston-Upson School System Communications Plan

I. Internal Communications

GOAL 1: IMPROVE DISTRICT-WIDE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

- Work with Board of Education members on what they would like to communicate with staff/employees. Set up meetings between Board members and staff/professional organizations.
- Work to ensure all faculty/staff receive complete and same information.
- Introduce new and existing employees to their coworkers so staff will know who does what in the district.
- Have meetings on district-wide efforts or involvement in efforts
- Work with staff in developing plans for internal communications efforts. ie: toolkits that will provide best practices in communications for building administrators; communicating with diverse populations, etc.

GOAL 2: IMPROVE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATION WITH STAFF

- Have direct and immediate knowledge of any internal communications needing to reach staff with expectations for dissemination.
- Have an ongoing timeline with expected district publications or communications and publicizing these so they can be properly promoted and recognized.
- Meet one or 2 times a year with principals to discuss how they communicate with their staff, how they would like to communicate with employees and the community and their expectations/desires for communications.
- Supply administrators with public relations fact sheets (talking points) and other easy-to-use communication tools as needed when issues arise.

GOAL 3: IMPROVE DISTRICT COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS AND STAFF

- Communicate important information to employees first before they hear it from another source.
- Improve school newsletters, disseminating ideas about content that would allow employees to brag about their school, such as a brag board.
- Invite employees to submit stories on topics on which they have expertise

II. External Communications

GOAL 1: Develop and maintain positive, collaborative relationships with parents and community stakeholders to strengthen support for T-U Schools.

- Work with schools that have not established media coordinators to get this program started. Stress the importance of submitting news items, photos, etc. to the Office of School & Community Relations. This should be done weekly.

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- Consider new options for Tours of Schools.
 - Consider the following – Grandparents Tour of Schools; Business Partners Tour of Schools; Realtors Tour of Schools; Retired Teachers Tour of Schools, etc.
- Continue with district representation at parent/community events, such as PTO meetings, School Council Meetings, PIE, etc.
- Continue with district and school-level representation on community and civic organizations/boards.
- Work with Partners in Education to expand the impact of business partnerships with students and schools.
- Provide opportunities for recognition of parent and community volunteers. Work with schools to come up with a plan.
- Encourage students and staff to communicate news and events within the community; encourage school staff to share information about T-U Schools with friends, neighbors, and community members.
- Consider providing new opportunities for stakeholder education and stakeholder involvement. Avenues may Include:
 - Superintendent's or Principal's Community Advisory Council
 - Coffee and Comments – early morning meetings at local restaurants where patrons can ask questions of the Superintendent or BOE or other administrators
 - Principal's Lunch and Learn
- Continue to utilize parent meetings, BOE forums, Principal Forums, and other methods to foster effective, face-to-face, two-way communication.
- Provide opportunities for public input that don't require attendance at a meeting. Consider "open forums" ie: Board Office Open Door Day – drop by 1 day a month to ask a question, make a comment, etc. No meeting, no waiting – The Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, or Assistant Superintendent will quickly and effectively provide you with the information you need. Or consider an electronic forum – Live on Twitter from 12 Noon – 1 p.m. the Superintendent will answer your questions, etc, etc.
- Find ways to establish regular communication with the non-parent public

GOAL 2: Use a variety of media and methods to maximize awareness and support of the T-U School System's goals and programs. Types of media may include, but are not be limited to

***Electronic:** websites; social media; texts; email; School Messenger Automated Call System (formerly SchoolReach); mobile app; Infinite Campus Parent Portal

***Print:** newspaper; newsletters; brochures; rack cards; postcards

***Video**

***Radio**

- Publish important information through newsletters, newspapers, radio, websites, bulletin boards, and other outlets. **Utilize results of stakeholder surveys to guide methods of communication.**
- Improve district and school websites and ensure these are up to date and accurate. Train personnel at all schools to ensure school sites are well-maintained.
- Create district brochure, rack card ,or annual report. Distribute this to Chamber of Commerce, local realty offices, etc.

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- Work with schools to create a brochure that is school-specific and can be used during prospective student tours or other parent and community functions.
- Work with Fine Arts Center Director to create a postcard or rack card for the FAC that can be mailed to prospective renters or given to groups touring the facility.
- Utilize school functions—athletic, CTAE, fine arts, etc. – to promote T-U Schools messages to stakeholders.
- Implement a mobile app communication system. (This is a Hold item.)
- Send home information to parents at the beginning of the school year with useful facts about the schools, helpful websites, and other informational resources.
- Utilize School Messenger Call System at schools and district office.