



GETTYSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

2019-2020

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COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNICATIONS PLAN BACKGROUND

Gettysburg Area School District strives for open, honest and ongoing communication with our stakeholders. We understand that maintaining a two-way conversation with stakeholders is essential for building relationships that are the foundation for a strong public school system.

This communications plan was designed to establish a comprehensive and integrated communications process for effective communication with all stakeholders. It aligns with the district's strategies and benchmarks.

This communications plan is a working document that is reviewed on an annual basis by the Communications Office. In all communications, the Board of Education and Gettysburg administration strive to disseminate accurate and timely information about district policies, procedures, achievements, decisions and critical issues. We are committed to minimize misinformation, observe confidentiality and other restrictions imposed by law and Board policy, and to promote a climate of trust between the school district and its stakeholders.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE MISSION

The mission of the Gettysburg Area School District Communications Office supports the district's partnership with its stakeholders by providing open, transparent and strategic communication through extending our reach to hear the voices of everyone in our community in order to have a positive impact on all Gettysburg students.

DISTRICT STRATEGIES AND BENCHMARKS

- Student Success
- Student Learning
- Manage Resources
- Community Relations

INTENT

The Comprehensive Communications Plan is intended to achieve the following:

- Implement a communications program that assists the district to achieve its strategies and benchmarks.
- Build strong relationships with all stakeholders.
- Enable the district to present itself accurately to audiences.

STAKEHOLDERS

Gettysburg Area School District is committed to ongoing communication with our schools and with the community. The goals presented in this communications plan are based on meeting the goals of these main audiences:

- Internal
 - Administration
 - Board of Education
 - Classified/Support staff
 - Professional Staff
 - School Resource Officer
- Parents and Students
 - Students
 - Parents/Guardians
 - Parent Organizations
 - Student Organizations
- External
 - Taxpayers
 - Business leaders
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Media
 - Alumni
 - Gettysburg Area Education Foundation
 - Government officials
 - New residents

- Prospective residents
- Neighboring school districts

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

The district can more effectively provide consistent and unified messages by identifying and managing all communication avenues. A multifaceted approach to overall communications helps to ensure greater impact of messages. The following list details the internal, external and interpersonal communication channels Gettysburg Area School District utilizes:

- Electronic
 - Website
 - District homepage
 - School homepages
 - Social Media
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - Instagram
 - YouTube
 - School district social media pages
 - Internal eNewsletter
 - External eNewsletter
 - Google calendars
 - Peachjar
 - Blackboard Connect
 - Skyward
 - Email
- Print
 - *The Vision* newsletter
 - New resident brochure
- Media
 - *Gettysburg Times*
 - Other print media
 - Local television media
- Interpersonal
 - Board of Education (bi-monthly meetings)
 - Back-to-School Opening Day celebration (annually, for all staff)

Communications Goal 1: Refine the use of current tools (social media, app, e-newsletters, etc.) to ensure they are used to maximum capacity.

Objectives

- Increase digital media following (see below chart) through organic reach.
- Increase positive/informational social media posts over the previous year by 5% (2018-19, Facebook: 307, Twitter: 258, Instagram: 195)

Platform	Current (July 2019)	One Year Out (July 2020)
Facebook	3,961	+8% (+317) = 4,248
Twitter	526	+20% (+105) = 631
Instagram	1,097	+12% (+132) = 1,229
GASD Mobile App	569	+60% (+341) = 910
Internal eNewsletter	0	
External eNewsletter	0	

Strategy	Audience	Person	Timeline
***** Develop, implement, maintain and track a social	District	Andrew	Ongoing

media editorial calendar for the 2019-20 school year			
***** Weekly analysis of social media metrics for board update and archival	Internal Board	Andrew	Weekly
***** Create “events” on Facebook for major events within the district for which we want parent/ community involvement	Parents Staff Community	Andrew	Post approximately 1 month in advance Remind 1 week & 2 days out
Personalize/humanize district stories via social media with continued use of #GASDisGreat	Parents Staff Students Community	Andrew	Ongoing

Evaluation

Communications Goal 2: Develop and maintain positive, collaborative relationships with all stakeholders (students, parents, staff and community) to strengthen support for the Gettysburg Area School District.

Objectives

- Increase positive communication to students, parents and the community of Gettysburg Area School District's mission, vision, goals and programs by at least 50% as measured by qualitative and quantitative data by the end of 2019-20.

Strategy	Audience	Person	Timeline
Create dynamic videos to highlight district curriculum	Parents Staff Students Community	Andrew	November, April
Highlight alumni through the district spotlight initiative	Students	Andrew	Monthly
***** Recognize staff, volunteers and community partners through the GASD Glows Program - Highlighting GASD's Greatest	Parents Staff Community	Andrew, district staff & community	Every other month beginning in October
Send out 2019-20 communications survey (the last one was sent out 2017-18)	Parents Staff	Andrew & Jason	Spring 2020

	Students Community		
Communicate key messages using a variety of media, including but not limited to district and school websites, social media, mobile app, texting, e-mail, e-newsletters, print media and/or direct mail	Parents Staff Students Community	Andrew	Ongoing
Create and send an external district e-newsletter once per quarter, detailing positive news from around the district and dates to remember	Parents Staff Students Community	Andrew	October, January, March, May
Create “A Second Grade Conversation” video that will be shown on the district opening day and through social media	Parents Staff Community	Andrew & Jason	August 2019
***** #ThankATeacher Campaign 2020	Parents Staff Students Community	Andrew	May 2020
***** “I think #GASDisGreat because...” viral social media campaign	Parents Staff Students Community	Andrew	Fall 2020
Assist in planning two (2) parent engagement events for the 2019-20 school year	Parents Staff Community	Andrew & Jason	Fall 2019 & Spring 2020
***** Create a district-level podcast through a	Parents	Andrew,	Fall 2019

collaborative effort with the high school journalism class	Staff Students Community	Jeremy and high school journalism	
Enhance positive collaboration efforts with media outlets	Community	Andrew	Ongoing
Increase school visitations to at least once per building, per week	Parents Staff Students	Andrew	Ongoing

Evaluation

Communications Goal 3: Establish effective employee communication programs to improve internal communication, employee engagement and district climate.

Objectives

- Establish opportunities for two-way communication, and expand opportunities for staff to have input in decisions that affect them as measured by qualitative and quantitative data by the end of 2018-2019.
- Increase recognition of employees internally and externally by at least 50%.
- Establish employee satisfaction in the district as measured by qualitative and quantitative data by the end of 2018-2019.

Strategy	Audience	Person	Timeline
***** Create an internal district e-newsletter once per quarter, detailing positive news from around the district.	Staff	Andrew	October/November, January, March, May
Recognize staff through the “GASD Glows,” program (previously the Staff Spotlight)	Staff	Andrew & district staff	Monthly
***** Research, set-up and roll-out platform to professional staff for direct communication to parents that provides an alternative to email (e.g. Remind,	Parents Staff Students	Andrew, Ann and coaches	Spring 2020

etc.)			
Continue using #GASDisGreat hashtag to increase the sense of community feeling	Parents Staff Students Community	Andrew & district staff	Ongoing
***** Implement an annual staff climate/communication survey to establish baseline data regarding employee satisfaction and preferred methods of communication	Staff	Andrew & Jason	May 2020
***** Create brief opening day video to kick off the school year	Staff	Andrew & A-Team	August 2019
Introduce communications coordinator to all new faculty and staff through the generous contribution of gift bags by local merchant	Staff	Andrew	August - September 2019

Evaluation

Communications Goal 4: Expand and promote the Gettysburg Area School District brand and build on image and reputation.

Objectives

- Establish a single brand representing Gettysburg Area School District.

Strategy	Audience	Person	Timeline
***** Lead the district’s branding initiative by refreshing or updating the current logo and creating a style guide for consistency	Parents Staff Students Community	Andrew & Brand Ambassadors	April 2020
Establish a digital portfolio of the GASD brand	Parents Staff Students Community	Andrew & Brand Ambassadors	April 2020
Remove all elements throughout the district that do not represent the established GASD brand	Parents Staff Students Community	Andrew & Brand Ambassadors	Fall 2020
Update carousel photos on the website weekly	District	Andrew	Weekly
Rebrand district mobile app in conjunction with	District	Andrew	Summer 2020

district efforts			
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Evaluation

Communications Goal 5: Coordinate communication, both internally and externally, regarding safety issues and crisis management.

Objectives

- Respond within two hours, or in a timely manner to any crisis situation that requires mass notification.
- 100% of staff will complete the run, hide, fight online training.
- Revise digital citizenship training for students and staff.

Strategy	Audience	Person	Timeline
Provide regular communication of safety processes and procedures both internally and externally	Parents Staff Students Community	Andrew & Jason	Fall, Spring
Assist with digital citizenship efforts throughout the district, ensuring we meet the digital accessibility standards	Staff Students	Andrew & Ann	Ongoing
Touch base with or attend at least one safety committee meeting to ensure communication efforts regarding safety are paramount	Parents Staff Students Community	Andrew & Safety Committee	Anytime during the school year

Evaluation

******* Indicates Brand New Strategy for 2019-20**

APPENDIX

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

In accordance with [Board Policy 911](#), Gettysburg Area School District Communications works with the media on a regular basis. Our goal is to be helpful and provide information in a timely, transparent manner.

When the Media Calls

To protect our students' privacy and ensure that reporters receive all information needed, staff are instructed to direct all inquiries to the Communications Coordinator.

Personnel authorized to speak to the media include Communications Coordinator, Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Board of Education, Athletic Director and other staff as determined on a case-by-case basis.

Media Permission

Staff are familiar with students' media permission status, which is listed on the staff resources page under Communications. All parents/guardians must opt-out of these permissions at the beginning of each school year or when a student begins enrollment within the district.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY GUIDELINES, TIPS AND RESOURCES

The Gettysburg Area School District encourages the appropriate use of social media for professional learning, sharing of resources, and highlighting the great things that are happening within the district. Staff is expected to use social media in a professional and appropriate manner, just as expected in the [Pennsylvania Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators](#).

The Social Media Policy (Board Policy 815.1) should be viewed along with the Responsible Use of Electronic Resources, E-mail, and the GASD Network Policy (Board Policy 815). The Social Media Policy is an extension to the Responsible Use Policy (RUP). Here are some highlights from the Social Media Policy:

- No one is monitoring social media accounts. In the RUP, it states in the confidentiality section that “authorized network administrators...will not indiscriminately read electronic mail or information...without just cause.” An account would only be accessed if required by law, needed for an investigation, or to protect the account from hackers.
- If your account is considered a district account, then be sure to make it a limited forum (public may comment with guidelines) or a non-public (public may not comment) forum. In order to make your account a limited forum, include this [link](#) to the district’s guidelines for Public Comment on Social Media in the about section and/or pin a post with this link to the top, so all users see it at all times.
- Staff should not text or direct message students or parents. There may be exceptions to this (e.g. field trips, trips abroad). These exceptions should be discussed with a building administrator prior to using texts with students/parents in this situation. Secondary staff should use Gmail, It’s Learning and skyward to communicate with students and elementary staff should use Gmail. Staff should coach and redirect students and parents to use these resources for communication. At this time teachers may continue to use apps like Remind/Seesaw for school

business; however, please stay tuned for any changes or updates for these classroom management/communication apps.

- Staff should **NOT** tag individual students. It is fine to tag district accounts, organizations, clubs, third-party social media accounts, etc. Hashtags, such as #GASDisGreat and #WarriorWay (others created around an event/focus) are fine to use in social media posts.
- Staff must follow building procedures to check that students' photographs can be shared online. Building office staff should have an up-to-date media opt-out list for the building.

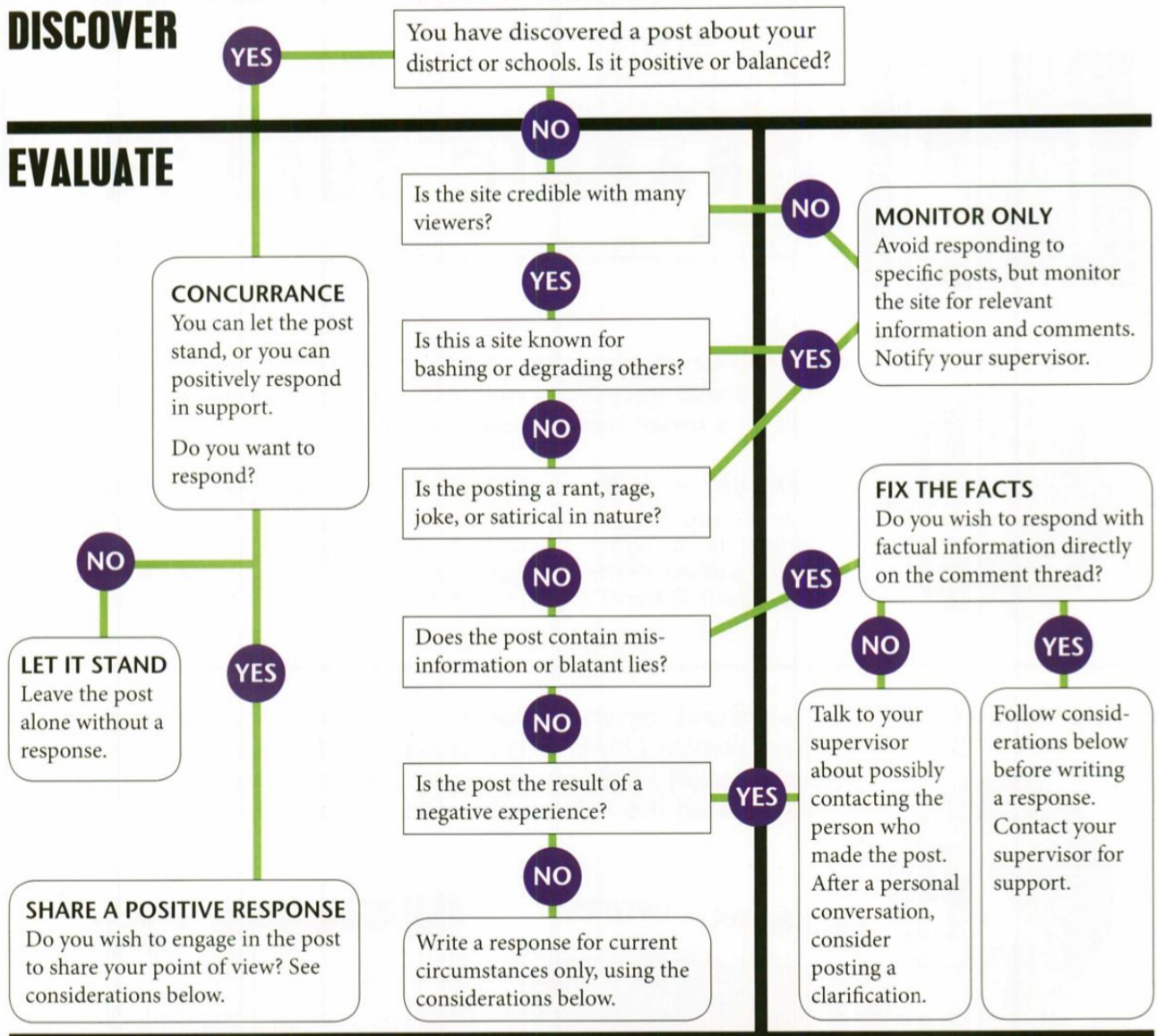
Additional Tips and Resources

- The designation of a social media account is determined by the individual. If an individual decides he/she has a personal account, then it is recommended to remove Gettysburg Area School District (or any other school building) as your place of work or your about/bio information. Staff can create two separate accounts for personal and professional, except when the resource's terms of service (sometimes privacy policy) does not allow two separate accounts (e.g. Facebook). Please read carefully the terms of service and privacy policy for each application.
- If a student or parent messages on a Facebook Page, an automatic response can be set up to redirect them to use your email. This feature is called the Response Assistant and can be found under the Page Settings under Messaging. Click [here](#) to see a quick tutorial on how to set up this feature.
- It is strongly encouraged to utilize privacy settings on personal and district social media accounts. Be sure to check all privacy setting areas in each application. For example, Facebook has multiple security setting layers.
- Staff should consider waiting to friend/connect with students until after they graduate.

- If students/parents request to use text messaging, this can be done via email. Staff need to know each student's carrier, but can then create this new phone email in their contacts, so they don't need to know each carrier's address. As an example, you can text someone with his/her phone number and his/her carrier's email address, e.g. number@vzwpix.com. Click [here](#) to see how to set up this feature.
- [PSEA's Safe Social Media for Educators](#)

GUIDE TO RESPONDING ONLINE

Seeing negative or false comments about our district can be frustrating, but responding with another comment isn't always the answer. Follow this guide to decide what to do next to best represent our district -- and never hesitate to reach out to the communications director at ext. 1218 for support.



BEFORE YOU RESPOND...

If you see a post about a district- or school-level issue that could create mass concern — or if you have questions about any online comment situation — contact your supervisor or the communications director FIRST. And in all cases...

- Be transparent by stating your connection to the school.
- Cite your sources by using hyperlinks, video, images, or other references.
- Take your time to think through your response. Don't rush.
- Respond in a tone that reflects the professionalism, empathy, and mission of your school.
- Give thought to the most effective type of response. Don't debate an issue or get into a negative conversation online. If appropriate, contact the commenter privately for a resolution and follow up online with an update or apology.

CRISIS/EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

This section will go here when it is implemented.

GETTYSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT BRAND

Once the district has gone through its rebranding/stabilization efforts, this section of the Communications Plan booklet will be populated.