

COLTON SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNICATIONS PLAN 2017- 2019



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COLTON SCHOOL DISTRICT 30429 S. Grays Hill Road Colton, OR 97017

Mission

A partnership of parents, students, school and community dedicated to quality learning and the continual pursuit of excellence.

District Goals

1. Support Professional Growth & Instructional Effectiveness
 - Focus on supporting student growth through an effective instructional program
 - Work in collaboration with administration and employee groups to enhance evaluation, training and compensation systems in order to attract and sustain a quality professional staff for all students within budget limitations.
2. All students will demonstrate appropriate individual growth in Literacy as indicated by the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP).
 - Implement Literacy Plan to fidelity
 - All students will be reading at grade level by the end of the 3rd grade
 - All educators will utilize data to inform teaching, learning, and leading
 - Implement Technology Plan to fidelity with a focus on instructional technology
3. All students will demonstrate appropriate individual growth in Mathematics as indicated by Measures of Academic Progress (MAP).
 - Implement the new Math curriculum to fidelity
 - Increase activities/programs/opportunities in STEM
 - All educators will utilize data to inform teaching, learning, and leading.
 - Implement Technology Plan to fidelity with a focus on instructional technology
4. Colton School District Graduation Rate will be at least 90%.
 - Focus on College and Career Readiness Standards District Wide
 - RTI model implemented to fidelity
 - Focus on preparing all students for high school graduation and beyond

- Increase partnerships with local businesses and colleges to promote CTE programs, internships, dual credit options, and school to work programs.
- Increase student grade level achievement at each grade level

**MAP is our District-wide assessment system to determine if students are at grade level in Reading and Math.*

The 2017-2018 Colton School District Comprehensive Improvement Plan can be found on the front page of the district website.

Strategic Communications Plan Background

Colton School District recognizes that maintaining an open dialogue with our community is a vital component of District operations. As the district continually redefines how to best utilize its limited resources, a constant effort must be made to understand the educational and organizational expectations of our shareholders. The Colton School District staff and the Board of Education is committed to a viable, sustainable, and credible communications system.

A communication system is only as good as the commitment to contribute to its success. Planning for and requiring shared responsibility will ensure a high quality system that meets the needs of all shareholders. The Colton School District is committed to improving the lines of communication both internally and with the community at large.

Providing frequent, clear and results-driven communication is critical to fostering trust and increased loyalty to the district. A break in communication creates a void where individuals and community fill in the blanks with their own determinations this may lead to misperceptions and destructive opinions. We will use all means possible to improve communications with all shareholders.

The purpose of the Colton School District Communications Plan is to present a clear and concise framework for communication with our school community. The plan primarily addresses two types of school district audiences: **internal** (students, teachers, staff, administrators, and School Board) and **external** (parents, businesses, civic groups, faith-based organizations, media, and other members of the Colton community).

****Note:** Crisis Communications are detailed in our CSD Emergency Procedures Plan.

Colton staff support and involvement in this plan is critical – particularly, teachers and front office staff because they are considered highly influential sources of information for the public. Our CSD staff carries the message of the school district to their families and friends who in turn form opinions about the schools. Therefore, our top priority is the goal of clearly communicating our unified message at all times.

The Superintendent will manage publications, marketing, community relations, and offer leadership on all comprehensive communication services and strategies for the district.

Two driving questions for our work will be:

- 1.) How does this benefit our students/employees?
- 2.) How do we communicate to our shareholders?

Guiding Principles

The following principles guide the strategic communication plan. We believe that.....

- Effective public engagement is essential to creating an environment in which students, staff, families, and community members participate and contribute.
- Communication is a primary function of leadership and a responsibility of all employees.
- Well-informed employees and citizens provide positive community support.
- Open, two-way communication is critical to building trust with shareholders.
- Accurate, understandable, and timely communication is essential to the decision-making processes of the school system.
- Using a variety of sources and strategies enhances the school system's ability to communicate effectively and thoroughly.
- Communications strategies must be explicitly linked to the strategic mission and goals of the school system.

In short, three core principles will guide our work: truthfulness, transparency and continuous improvement.

Truthfulness

Colton School District must be honest and transparent in communicating with the public. Trust is the single most important factor in successful communication efforts. The District must be forthright in its communication and provide reliable information, for which it will be wholly accountable to shareholders, and willfully engage the public in the challenges and opportunities it faces.

Transparency

Colton School District will raise the level of dialogue about its schools by educating shareholders on District processes, educational philosophies and methodologies, relevant state and federal issues and laws, budget information, facilities and any other critical issues. The District will continue to invite any and all questions, responding as quickly, clearly, and completely as possible.

Continuous Improvement

Colton School District embraces a philosophy of continuous improvement in all areas of operations and performance to include communication efforts. The District's progress in

communication efforts will be regularly measured against clear, well defined benchmarks through constant evaluation of goals.

Goals

1. Develop and maintain positive, collaborative relationships with all shareholders.
2. Utilize a variety of media to maximize awareness of the District's Strategic Plan including mission and goals.
3. Establish an effective employee communication plan to improve internal communication and employee engagement.
4. Establish strong, positive connections between individual schools and their community.
5. Achieve coordinated communications, both internally and externally, regarding safety issues and crisis management.
6. Create key messages and talking points to establish "one clear voice" throughout all communication channels.
7. Establish a clear brand identity for the District to help communicate our mission. This brand should align with our strategic plan and be included on all District communication in order to become our "identity."
8. Maintain a proactive media relations program to assist District communications on local, state, national and international levels.
9. Utilize effective operational practices to provide good customer service, increased efficiency and quality communication methods.

Target Audiences for Communication

Internal

1. Students
2. Staff
 - A. District Level
 - i. Classified
 - ii. Licensed
 - iii. Administrators / Supervisors / Confidential Employees
 - B. Site Level
 - i. Classified
 - ii. Licensed
 - iii. Administrators
3. School Board

External

1. Parents / Families
2. Prospective Employees
3. Parent Organizations
4. Key Communicators
5. Business Community
6. Elected Officials
7. Civic Groups
8. Law Enforcement
9. Neighborhood Associations
10. Senior Citizens Groups
11. Military
12. Faith-Based Groups
13. Community Groups
14. Colleges and Universities
15. Private Schools / School Districts / ESDs
16. Electronic Media – Website, E-mail, Connect Ed, Facebook, television, GoogleDocs, twitter, text, etc.
17. Printed Media – newsletters, newspapers, flyers, etc.

Objective

Our objective is to improve internal and external communication systems with the specific goal of creating open, two-way communication between the Board of Education, administration, staff, students, parents and the Colton communities.

1. Clarify district flow of information
 - 1.1 Distribute organizational charts to all staff showing decision-making process, reporting, and accountability structure.
 - 1.2 Charts will include individual areas of staff responsibility for communication.
2. Provide ongoing training and support for administrators in effective communication with staff and the public.
 - 2.1 Provide continuing training session as part of principal's meetings on how to train teachers and staff to communicate their school's message.
 - 2.2 Subscribe to school communication publications and relay pertinent ideas and information to administrators.
 - 2.3 Supply administrators with public relations fact sheets and other easy-to-use communication tools as needed when issues arise.
 - 2.4 Provide communication training sessions to site-level staff.
 - 2.5 Create quick, web-based form for schools to utilize when reporting an upcoming event to the Superintendent's office.
3. Provide regular information on district-wide issues
 - 3.1 Distribute information from meetings on need-to-know basis.
 - 3.2 Distribute all external publications and news releases to all employees via email and post on website.
 - 3.3 Issue short, bulleted FYI sheets to staff and parents on issues of immediate concern.
 - 3.4 Formalize a policy for district communication with teachers and site staff.
 - 3.5 Establish a "State of Schools" report delivered by the Superintendent to be aired on website twice a year in December and April.
4. Create a system to encourage flow of information from parents/community to the district
 - 4.1 Encourage parents and community members to sign up for district-wide and school-wide internet listservs (automatic mailing lists from internet).
 - 4.2 Conduct electronic surveys (email) at district and site levels to provide feedback on flow of information.
 - 4.3 Offer informal meeting opportunities to receive input.
 - 4.4 Establish informational email account to receive feedback from community.

- 4.5 Expand use of the Parent Portal to facilitate communication between parents and schools.
5. Publish and distribute informational pieces
 - 5.1 Develop Collateral Pieces
 - 5.1 a. District/School Informational Brochures.
 - 5.1 b. Newsletters – to be emailed via the listserv.
 - 5.1 c. Press release as needed.
 - 5.2 Create public relations video to share all good things going on in our schools.
 - 5.3 Post information on district website.
6. Communication with civic, community and religious groups
 - 6.1 Include groups in mailing and provide opportunities for them to sign up for our community listserv.
 - 6.2 Attend community meetings as needed to provide information.
 - 6.3 Provide district communications materials to key leaders.
 - 6.4 Develop partnership with groups.
 - 6.5 Develop program for touring District schools and facilities. Participants could include senior citizen groups, community members, civic leaders, etc. Tours will be narrated by the appropriate staff members, and will vary depending on needs.
7. Be visible in the community
 - 7.1 Attend community organization meetings.
 - 7.2 Encourage participation in local service clubs.
 - 7.3 Host Colton School District “town hall” meetings or forums when appropriate.
 - 7.4 Encourage school staff to talk positively about CSD schools to friends, neighbors and community acquaintances.
 - 7.5 Seek business partnerships through contacts in local groups.
8. Promote the success of Colton School District personnel
 - 8.1 Produce a monthly video series focusing on student, staff member, program, school, department, etc. Video to be uploaded to district website and shown at Board meetings.
 - 8.2 Highlight staff with articles in district communications pieces, outside media, and through recognition at events.

Assessment and Accountability

The Colton School District will create a tracking system to measure communication effectiveness.

- Benchmarking - will be used to ascertain what communication strategies are being implemented in other school districts.
- Focus Groups – will be conducted in groups of six to ten people to collect qualitative information as needed.
- Surveys – electronic surveys will be used to ascertain people’s opinion and to collect quantitative information.
- Email receipt requests – counters will be used on the website to measure the numbers of hits for each story.
- Interpersonal Contact – Informal word-of-mouth surveys will be conducted to gauge the level of effectiveness of Communications Plan.

The Communications Plan will be reviewed and updated twice a year, or as deemed necessary by the Superintendent and/or Board of Education. This communications plan is only a draft to be implemented until a communications cadre is established to edit/modify/create and then formalizes a comprehensive communications plan aligned with the Colton School District Strategic Plan.

Credits: This Communications Plan was modeled after a number of key resources and research to include: Hampton City Schools Communications Plan Internal & External (2011); Moberly School District Comprehensive Communication Plan (2010-2013); Dunlap Community Unit School District #323 Communication Plan (2012-2014); Tucson Unified School District Communications Plan (2013-2014); and Orange Unified School District Communications Plan (2014).

Colton School District 53

TITLE: Media Communication and Requests

GENERAL DESCRIPTION: This procedure applies to media communication and requests in Colton School District. It ensures the proper line of communication is followed.

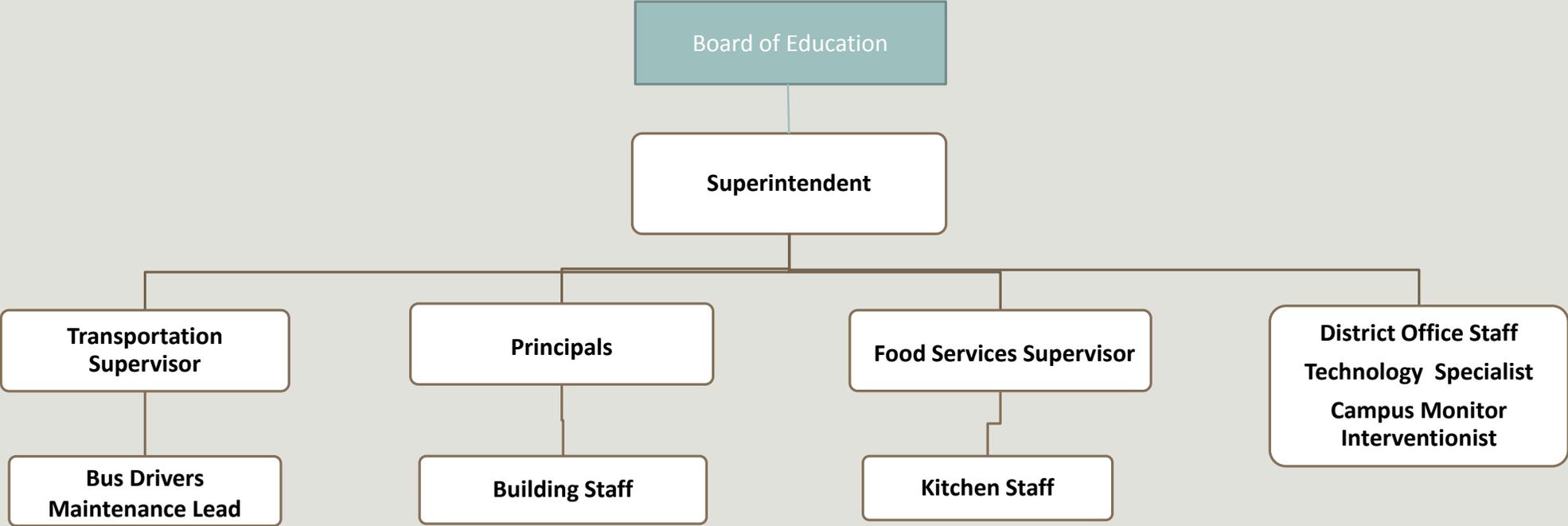
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Superintendent is District Spokesperson and Key Contact for Media

REFERENCE OR AUTHORITY: Media Communication and Requests Policy under Review

PROCEDURAL STEPS:

- I. The Superintendent is responsible for coordinating the information sharing with the media.
- II. The Superintendent will appoint additional spokespersons as appropriate, including and not limited to building principals, athletics directors, activities directors, administrative designees, and supervisors.
- III. The Superintendent will work with each school site or program's designated administrator when it is necessary to share information with the media.
- IV. District employees will receive approval from the Superintendent prior to sharing school district information with the media.
- V. The approval may be given to an employee to maintain direct media connections when appropriate (e.g., sports season, ongoing activity).
- VI. Colton School District ensures the protection of student privacy and will not release any information that may reveal a student's identity.
- VII. Colton School District respects the privacy of its teachers and employees and will not release any personal or personnel-related information unless required by law.
- VIII. Colton School District will not comment on any case that is before the courts.
- IX. Colton School District will refer all questions related to police investigations to proper authority.

Colton School District Organizational Chart



Colton School District Communication Chart

