
Indicators of Digital Readiness

Indicator	Communication Plan, Guidelines, Outreach, and Reflection
Theme	Leadership
Priority Level	P2
Organizational Level	District

Description of the Indicator

School leaders engage parents and students in home-to-school communications through a variety of venues. While this may include internet-based solutions, it also includes options that do not depend on connectivity in the home.

Why is this indicator important?

Digital Ready schools are careful in cultivating their communication with internal and external stakeholders. They realize that communication needs to more than information sharing, it needs to be bidirectional. Often communication, in districts, is done in silos and varying communication styles and propensities can obscure the idea that the district is a cohesive unit. In addition, school districts tend to select a communication tool, without considering if the tool truly serves a unique purpose. Therefore, a communication plan formally defines who should be given specific information, when that information should be delivered and what communication channels will be used to deliver the information. An effective plan anticipates what information will need to be communicated to specific audience segments. The plan should also address who has the authority to communicate confidential or sensitive information and how information should be disseminated (email, websites, printed reports, and/or presentations). Finally, the plan should define what communication channels stakeholders will use to solicit feedback and how communication will be documented and archived. A digital ready school always seeks to improve and eliminate inefficient or ineffective practices. By creating a process to re-evaluate communication there will be better assurance a district will continue to reflect and improve.

Indicator Rubric

<p style="text-align: center;">Insufficient Evidence of Implementation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(0 Points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● District leaders research options for parental communications and engagement ● They survey connectivity needs among parents before designing communication systems
<p style="text-align: center;">Foundational Stage of Implementation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(2 Points)</p>	<p>Evidence is provided for all previous rubric levels, as well as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● District leaders include specific language and requirements for parental communications and engagement in all district plans, instructional and technological ● They envision a communication system designed for parents that is flexible and adaptable to meet the families' needs
<p style="text-align: center;">Achieving Success in Implementation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(4 Points)</p>	<p>Evidence is provided for all previous rubric levels, as well as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● District leaders develop a comprehensive plan for parental communication and engagement that includes both connected and traditional communications media
<p style="text-align: center;">Exemplary Success in Implementation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(6 Points)</p>	<p>Evidence is provided for all previous rubric levels, as well as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● District leaders design, produce, and deploy a robust communication system that is responsive to the needs of individual families ● The system is flexible and adaptable at the school level ● The system includes specific strategies for drawing parents into frequent dialogue with staff members regarding the needs and accomplishments of their children

Prerequisite action(s)

Districts should have a strategic plan that states what their goals are for students and a vision of how communication fits into that plan. After forming a parental communication committee districts should have taken inventory of and evaluated their current means of parental communication via a survey; and identified strengths, weaknesses and gaps.

After taking stock of all of the ways and means that the district uses to communicate with parents, districts should define their goals for parental communication and indicate where there are gaps in the goals and the communication.

Districts should have a strategic plan that states what their goals are for a student who leaves the district at the end of their educational journey within the district. They should then consider how parental communication supports that vision and mission. Finally, they should have formed a parental communication committee and taken inventory of their current means of parental communication and they should have identified strengths weaknesses and gaps.

At this indicator districts will have evaluated parental communication efforts. They will have taken stock of the ways districts communicate with parents, who communicates what and why. In addition, districts will have developed guidelines for communication so that communication supports the overall district's vision and mission. The avenues for bi-directional communication will also be assessed and increased.

Prior to doing these steps the district should have an overall vision and mission. They should have a clear picture of what they want for their students when they leave the district, and what needs to happen for that ideal to be realized.

Who in the school/district should lead and be involved with this indicator?

The communication team should include the: Board of Education, Central Administration, Building Administration, various faculty members, parents, student leaders, and outside organizations involved in school communication.

How to execute the action

This will need to be combined into 4 parts: Plan, Guidelines, Outreach, Reflection

Plan:

With the committee, reflect on the mission and the vision of the district. Is the current parent communication strategy aligned with that mission and vision? Identify what steps need to be taken to analyze the current plan and create an updated plan that fits in with the strategic plan.

Guidelines:

1. With the committee reflect on the mission and the vision of the district. Is the current parent communication strategy aligned with that mission and vision?
2. Establish a timeline for gathering feedback on the effectiveness of the current parental communication strategies.
3. Identify what steps need to be taken to fill the gaps in a way that aligns with the strategic plan
4. Create an action plan for identifying goals and working on a timeline to improve and expand parent communication and engagement strategies
5. Review all the different ways that the school communicates with the parents from the previous actions. The committee should consider what should be the main characteristics of all of the communications.
6. Create a checklist of things to keep in mind when communicating with parents.
7. Have a system in place to collect feedback from parents related to the goals.

Outreach:

1. Identify stakeholders in each building who will initiate collecting feedback.
2. Reach out to a focus group that is reflective of diverse parent groups

Reflection:

1. With your parental engagement committee reflect on the survey of all the district communications with parents.
2. Create a timeline for adjustments
3. Create an action plan for reviewing the current plan, identifying goals, and working on a timeline to improve and expand parent communication and engagement strategies

Committee Create Parental Communication Goals aligned with district vision.

Recommended evidence to submit for successful execution of this action

1. Meeting minutes reflecting on areas of need in parental communication
2. A set of goals connected to parent communication and a timeline to achieve those goals.
3. Detailed list of parent communication venues, purposes and drivers
4. A parent communication checklist for teachers
5. Sample surveys or meeting agendas used to gather feedback on current views of communication by parents.
6. Districts submit an action plan for re-evaluating the communication strategies. This plan will include, a timeline; the people responsible for initiating the feedback collection period, an agenda addressing the protocol used at the meetings, and a template for meeting follow up.
7. Committee Roster of Parent Communication Engagement Committee
8. Agenda from two meetings related directly to parent communication and engagement which includes the committee's reflection (minutes) on the meetings.
9. Submit a list of district communication avenues collected on in the first few meetings.
 - A. For each tool documentation the frequency of use.
 - B. For each tool document the purpose of the use
 - C. For each tool, document if it is primarily used for one-way or two-way communication.
 - D. If it is used as a one-way communication tool

Resources schools can use to complete this action successfully

- <https://www.campussuite.com/school-communications-planning-checklist/>
- This is a syllabus for a college course on communicating with parents. It provides great questions for framing the purpose of the communication:
 - http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:UeIAHq1k8UwJ:www.hfrp.org/var/hfrp/storage/fckeditor/File/parent-teacher_module.doc+&cd=8&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us
- <http://www.d11.org/Communications/Documents/FamilySchoolPartnershipsToolkit.pdf>
- To share with the teachers: <http://www.teachhub.com/parent-teacher-communication-tips>
- This is a great resource for any implementation of systematic change: <http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/>

- Communication protocol worksheet:

- <http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/AlHub-Example-CommunicationProtocolWorksheet-12-2013.pdf>
- <https://www.luminafoundation.org/files/resources/arewethereyet.pdf>
- <https://www.campussuite.com/school-communications-planning-checklist/>
- https://www.google.com/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&rlz=1C1JPGB_enUS668US668&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8

Communication Type	Objective of Communication	Medium	Frequency	Audience	Owner	Deliverable	Format
Kickoff Meeting	Introduce the project team and the project. Review project objectives and management approach.	Face to Face	Once	Project Sponsor Project Team Stakeholders	Project Manager	Agenda Meeting Minutes	Soft copy archived on project SharePoint site and project web site
Project Team Meetings	Review status of the project with the team.	Face to Face, Conference Call, GoToMeetings, Google Hangout, Collaborative/ Online Document (eg Google Doc)	Weekly	Project Team	Project Manager	Agenda Meeting Minutes Project schedule	Soft copy archived on project SharePoint site and project web site
Technical Design Meetings	Discuss and develop technical design solutions for the project.	Face to Face, Google Hangouts, Conference Calls, GoToMeeting		Project Technical Staff	Technical Lead	Agenda Meeting Minutes	Soft copy archived on project SharePoint site and project web site
Monthly Project Status Meetings	Report on the status of the project to management.	Face to Face Conference Call, GoTOMeeting, Google Hangouts		·PMO	Project Manager	Slide updates Project schedule	Soft copy archived on project SharePoint site and project web site
Project Status	Report the status of the project including	Email, Collaborative/		Project Sponsor	Project Manager	Project Status Report	Soft copy archived on

Reports	activities, progress, costs and issues.	Online Document (eg Google Doc)		Project Team Stakeholders PMO		Project schedule	project SharePoint site and project web site
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Certified Schools Exemplars: See links for school evidence

1. [Memorial School, Old Bridge Township Public Schools, 2018 Bronze Certified](#)

The district communicates with all of its stakeholders in a number of different mediums. Our district has a Parent Teacher Association in each school and an all-inclusive PTA Presidents Council comprised of members from each school. School administrators are involved in these monthly meetings and district administrators are involved with the President's Council. There is also a Special Education Parent Teacher Association that is heavily involved in our district, advocating for our Special Education students.

Our Board of Education meetings are advertised, open to the public, televised, and recordings are available online. These meetings serve as a monthly form of communication, but more so, the Superintendent of Schools also presents his "Superintendent's Report" each month. There are also various committee meetings open to the public like Technology and Curriculum and Instruction. Reports from these meetings are shared by the board committee chair-person at the monthly BOE meetings.

In a collaborative effort, teachers across the district showcase the events happening in their school via Twitter and by submitting articles/pictures to be include in the monthly, district newsletter, "OB Online." This newsletter is made available on our district website every month for community members and educators to read.