



Communications to Families and Community Subgroup

Final Report • 7-30-20

Subgroup Members

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In drafting a strategy to communicate to families and the community about the LPS school reopening plan, the Communications to Families and Community Subgroup also reviewed:

- The district's overall communication practices
- Platforms the district and individual schools already use
- Platforms the district would like to add to its toolbox for the upcoming school year
- Communications goals for the upcoming school year

HOW DO WE CURRENTLY COMMUNICATE WITH OUR FAMILIES?

District:

- Website
- Blackboard Connect
 - Phone calls
 - emails
- Social Media
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - Instagram
 - YouTube channel
- Translation/Bilingual Family Liaison Outreach
 - District phone calls and emails are routinely translated in Spanish, Khmer, Portuguese and Swahili, with additional key messages translated in Arabic, Lao and Vietnamese.
 - Bilingual Family Liaison team does outreach work to linguistically diverse communities including outreach to community/religious organizations.
 - Use of the Language Line to help with interpretation services

Individual schools utilize some or all of the following platforms:

- Classroom-based communication apps like ClassDojo, Remind or Bloomz
- Website
- Blackboard Connect
 - Phone calls
 - Emails



- Social Media
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - Instagram
- Smore newsletter
- [Attached survey includes details of what each school uses for communications tools](#)

WHAT ARE OUR GOALS FOR THE COMING SCHOOL YEAR?

- Utilize the mass text notifications feature in Blackboard Connect
 - would require collection of mobile numbers and entry of this data in Aspen
- Smore newsletter
 - Package has been purchased for the district which includes enough licenses for every school to have one, the district itself, plus select district departments.
- Make sure every school in the district has a Facebook page
- Add language-based Facebook pages
 - We recently launched a Spanish language Facebook page and would be looking to add pages in other core languages (Portuguese, Khmer and Swahili).
- Utilize mobile application WhatsApp to help reach linguistically diverse families.
- Recommend that each individual school develops a communication plan that includes consistency of communication (and platforms used) throughout the school.
- Conduct a communications survey, asking families across the district how they currently find out about district/school updates and how they prefer to receive updates.



WHAT ARE ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES?

Need for an updated contact list

In order to effectively communicate with families, we need an accurate contact list to assure our messages are being received. In particular, we need to get a more accurate list of email addresses (and mobile phone numbers to implement text messaging capabilities).

We will need to make a concerted effort at the individual school level to collect this information and enter it into Aspen at the start of the school year.

WHAT ARE SOME KEYS TO SUCCESS?

Utilizing all of our tools

In order to effectively reach as many families as possible, we also have to utilize all of our communication platforms. This may result in some redundancy for families following all platforms, but by utilizing the website, Blackboard (calls/emails), social media, newsletter, classroom apps, etc. in disseminating important information, we increase the chances of the message being received.

Consistent flow of information from the district to the schools

Messages that originate at the district level, can still be (and should be) shared by individual schools to further reinforce the message. An example would be the district posts a message and the individual school leader shares the message with their staff in order for teachers to disseminate to families (via classroom apps). The message is also shared on the individual school's social media.



COMMUNICATING THE LPS REOPENING PLAN

Having established what we currently have in our communications toolbox, communications strategies, and what we would like to add to it/accomplish this coming school year, we can turn our attention to communicating the LPS Reopening Plan.

Utilizing all of our communications platforms will be key. These platforms (Blackboard Connect, social media, classroom apps, newsletters) should be used to drive families to a main hub on the website where reopening info will be housed.

Components of Communicating the Reopening Plan

Districtwide

- **District Website** - Section of district website dedicated to the district reopening plan; will include all relevant content and act as a hub for this topic; this webpage can be crossposted on all individual school websites
- **Final Report** - Detailed explanation of the district's reopening plan; includes graphics and pictures to help reinforce content; families should understand the full ins and outs of the plan after reading this.
- **Executive Summary** - Acknowledging that not everyone may read a lengthy report, we will provide a 1-2 page summary of the Final Report; includes key points from the Final Report; families would have a general understanding of the plan after reading this.
- **Community Forums** - Either hold virtual community forums via Zoom or record a video of administration presenting key components of the reopening plan



- **Translation** - The Blackboard Connect messages and content on the website itself, including the final report, will need to be translated in our core languages, and the Bilingual Family Liaison team will handle additional outreach work to assure that our linguistically diverse communities are also receiving this high-stakes information.
- **Updated Contact Info** - Prior to - and as part of - the rollout of the reopening plan, begin a push to update family contact information so we have as many up-to-date contacts as possible.
- **Communications Plan** - Include communications plan in the rollout of the reopening plan so parents/families know where to go for information and how the district/schools will be communicating with them.

School-Based

- **Videos/Forums** - Since the district plan and social distancing protocols will impact each school community differently, have individual schools post videos (or hold forums) explaining what will be different, and virtually walking them through the building to see how we are making it safe.
 - Additionally, hold regular Zoom forums with parents to share school information.
- **School-Specific Plans** - Any school-specific plans should be posted on the school's individual website
- **Remote Learning** - Need for regular communication on expectations and assignments under any remote learning scenario between teachers/parents and teachers/students.
 - Additionally, provide tutorials for students/families on how to use the online education tools/platforms the school is utilizing.