

COMMUNICATION PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Tipp City Exempted Village Schools is to provide an exemplary education so that all students become responsible participants in society.

VISION

The vision of the Tipp City Exempted Village Schools is to build a community of lifelong learners committed to scholarship, leadership, citizenship and service. The school district will provide independent and collaborative educational experiences to develop and promote each student's intellectual, physical, social and emotional growth.

WE BELIEVE

- ❖ We believe that all individuals can learn.
- ❖ We believe that all individuals are valuable and worthy of respect.
- ❖ We believe in encouraging all students to strive for their greatest potential.
- ❖ We believe all individuals are entitled to an environment that is conducive to learning.
- ❖ We believe a safe environment is essential for learning.
- ❖ We believe in preparing students to be active, responsible citizens.
- ❖ We believe it is imperative for students, school, home, business and community to be partners in education.
- ❖ We believe the entire educational process should be evaluated and improved continually.
- ❖ We believe in an exemplary staff focused on continual professional development.

BACKGROUND

The Tipp City Exempted Village Schools is committed to improving and maintaining a two-way flow of communication with all stakeholders, internally and externally. Good communication builds credibility, improves relationships, fosters goodwill, and earns trust. It supports teaching and learning, boosts students' achievements, and enhances the district's overall reputation. It is our job to keep stakeholders informed and involved about policies, academics, programs, activities and other important areas. Transparent communication is vital to create a better-educated, supportive community and promote public confidence. Knowledge empowers people and stimulates an appreciation for the value the district has to its residents and Tipp City's future vitality.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Communication Plan is to present a clear, concise framework to improve internal and external communication systems with the goal of creating open, honest, beneficial, two-way communication between the BOE, administrators, staff, parents, and community members. Tipp City Exempted Village Schools must communicate **WITH** our stakeholders not merely **TO** our stakeholders. Many taxpaying residents simply want to know what is taking place inside our schools and how the district is spending their money. This blueprint outlines how the district regularly informs community stakeholders of student successes, opportunities, policies, and challenges facing the district. *NOTE: Crisis Communications for incidents such as hazardous materials spill and bomb threats are outlined in the TCEVS Emergency Procedures Manual.*

SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

Communicating successes of our students, teachers, and schools builds support and further strengthens the district's reputation. Promoting Tipp City Exempted Village Schools to those who do not have children in the district can help them to see the value created in our community by providing a quality education to students. TCEVS must consistently communicate how local tax dollars benefit education and why the funding is so important to continued success. Communicating about challenges and negative issues is equally important. By informing all stakeholders with honest, accurate information, the district builds trust throughout the community. Stakeholders must trust that TCEVS shares information and **THEY**, in turn, will share concerns with the district.

COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES

Be truthful
Be transparent
Be concise
Be timely
Be accurate

FIVE LEVELS OF COMMUNICATION

School building administrator to home
Classroom teacher to home
School District staff to home
School District staff to community
School District staff to media

COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

- Communicate with all affected parties.
- Each message should be audience specific.
- Choose a communication vehicle(s) appropriate to the message and the audience receiving the message.
- Provide regular, unbiased reporting of policy changes, project progress and important issues.
- Communicate what people need to know BEFORE they need to know it.
- Meet regularly with committees and/or committee chairs regarding projects, activities and developments.
- Offer opportunities for private communication as appropriate.

COMMUNICATION DELIVERY

Content
Intended Audience
Method
Frequency

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

■ **Keep Communications Simple, Brief and Accurate**

- Use clear, concise, easy-to-read style for all general written materials.
- Proofread documents for errors and clarity.
- Provide opportunity for feedback when appropriate.
- Maintain and routinely update TCEVS websites.

■ **Keep Communications Appropriate to the Audience and Situation**

- Identify the most effective communication method(s) to target a specific audience.
- For tense or difficult communication, interact face-to-face when possible.
- Use multiple communication channels when appropriate and available.

■ **Communicate Early and Often**

- Make sure employees have timely access to information. (They are the best link to the district, parents and community; what they say impacts how the district is perceived.)
- Be proactive in communicating issues of immediate concern.
- Continue to expand use of website and social media to share positive stories.
- Follow up if necessary.
- Make phone calls or one-on-one visits when necessary.

■ **Provide Timely Information**

- Have key information readily available and posted on line for quick reference.
- Provide information sheets on key TCEVS topics of importance and interest such as the budget, facilities plan, and/or levy.

■ **Communicate with a Staff Focus**

- Ensure questions or concerns have been addressed by listening actively.
- Maintain Staff Suggestion Box (preferably electronically and anonymously)
- Follow up if necessary.

■ **Emphasize Customer Support**

- Staff should identify self and his/her building/position to the caller.
- Extend a pleasant greeting and make eye contact to the visitor.
- Treat all callers/visitors with respect and professionalism.
- Callers/visitors must leave or hang up with an answer to or referral regarding the issue, concern, or question.
- Never be dismissive, argumentative, or unfriendly.
- Secure contact information for follow-up if necessary.
- Return all calls within 24 hours. Calls received on Friday(Saturday or Sunday) must be returned by Monday at 3:00.

COMMUNICATION GOALS 2013-2014

All communication efforts will support the Board of Education and Superintendent in their commitment to the district's vision, mission and goals by clearly communicating with staff, parents and the community. The district seeks to ensure an effective, transparent two-way, mutually beneficial communication system exists between the district and its stakeholders.

- Enhance and maintain a strong, positive connection with parents and other internal stakeholders through improved, transparent two-way communication.
- Strengthen and maintain strong, positive relationships with external stakeholders through improved, transparent two-way communication.
- Improve and maintain the district's website to provide a clean and consistent message for the district and a go-to venue for timely, accurate information.
- Increase the public's access to online financial information and provide tools that empower constituents to interact with the Tipp City Exempted Village Schools.
- Establish an effective media relations program to inform the public, promote TCEVS, and continually enhance the public's perception of the district.
- Create a culture of customer support district-wide.
- Support members of the Board of Education in their efforts to engage the community around district issues and initiatives.

COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Communication tools include the following:

■ District Website

- Individual School and Department Websites
 - Tippecanoe High School
 - Tippecanoe Middle School
 - LT Ball Intermediate School
 - Broadway Elementary School
 - Nevin Coppock Elementary School
 - Board of Education Central Office

■ Online Calendar

- District-wide
- Individual School Calendar
 - Tippecanoe High School
 - Tippecanoe Middle School
 - LT Ball Intermediate School
 - Broadway Elementary School
 - Nevin Coppock Elementary School
- Athletics
 - Tippecanoe High School Athletics
 - Tippecanoe Middle School Athletics

■ One-Call Alert System

- Phone calls
- Text Messages
- Emails

■ Social Media

- Twitter
- Facebook

■ E-mails

- Staff
- Family/Home/Parent

■ Daily Morning School Announcements

- Tippecanoe High School
- Tippecanoe Middle School
- LT Ball Intermediate School
- Broadway Elementary School
- Nevin Coppock Elementary School

- Weekly Quick News(e-newsletter)
- Monthly School Newsletters
 - Tippecanoe Middle School
 - LT Ball Intermediate School
 - Broadway Elementary School
 - Nevin Coppock Elementary School
- Community Connection Newsletter
- School Marquees
 - Tippecanoe High School
 - Tippecanoe Middle School
 - Broadway Elementary School
 - Nevin Coppock Elementary School
- Photo Galleries
 - District
 - Tippecanoe High School
 - Tippecanoe Middle School
 - LT Ball Intermediate School
 - Broadway Elementary School
 - Nevin Coppock Elementary School
 - Smugmug
- News Releases
- Media Coverage
- Events
 - Back-to-School Nights
 - Parent/Teacher Conferences
 - School sponsored functions
- "Town Hall" Community Meetings

METHODS

Identify the communication tools most widely accepted and preferred by the community. The district will adjust outreach accordingly. Some methods currently being used include:

- Printed Materials:
 - Daily School Morning Announcements available by email and on the website;
 - District *Quick News* electronically distributed weekly to all staff and those who register to receive it; also available on webpage, Facebook, and Twitter;
 - Monthly School Newsletters electronically distributed to the school community; also posted on school web page, Facebook, and Twitter;
 - Quarterly Community Connection available online and at BOE;
 - Classroom newsletter/flyer distributed by email from the teacher;
 - Brochures for families considering relocation;
 - Pamphlets as necessary;
 - Welcome Packets for all new employees and students/families;
 - Press releases;
 - Local media coverage;
 - Superintendent's blog with a new entry every two to three weeks, or as needed;
 - Board of Education minutes, agendas, notes posted online;
 - Annual Report posted online.

- Email Communication Channels
 - District to home;
 - District to community;
 - District to media;
 - School to parent/guardian;
 - Teacher to parent/guardian;
 - Administration to staff;
 - Staff to staff;
 - Board of Education to administration;
 - Board of Education to staff;
 - Board of Education to community/home

- Website
 - District
 - School
 - Tippecanoe High School
 - Tippecanoe Middle School
 - LT Ball Intermediate School
 - Broadway Elementary School
 - Nevin Coppock Elementary School
 - Teacher
 - Support Groups
 - Athletic Boosters
 - LT Parent Association
 - Parents Involved in Education(PIE)
 - Parents Who Care
 - STEAM Boosters
 - Tipp City Music Boosters

- On-line calendar
 - District-wide
 - Individual School Calendar
 - Tippecanoe High School
 - Tippecanoe Middle School
 - LT Ball Intermediate School
 - Broadway Elementary School
 - Nevin Coppock Elementary School
 - Athletics
 - Tippecanoe High School Athletics
 - Tippecanoe Middle School Athletics

- On-line Message Board

- One-Call Phone Notification Alert System

- Phone Calls
- Text Messages
- E-mails

- Parent Portals

- Pinnacle Internet Viewer
 - Up-to-date grades
 - Progress Reports
 - Attendance records
- PayForIt Online Lunch Payment Program

■ Social Media

- Facebook
- Twitter

■ Face-to-Face, Personal Contact

- Individual Meetings
- Coffee Talks
- Town-Hall Gatherings
- Parent Groups
- Community Organizations/Civic Groups
- Focus Groups
- Informational tables at community-wide events

TARGET AUDIENCES

Communication plays two critical roles: informing and promoting. There are multiple internal and external audiences considered and targeted in this communication plan.

INTERNAL

- Students
- Parents/Guardians
- Board of Education
- Staff
 - Administrators
 - Classified
 - Certified
 - Licensed
- Parent Groups
- Support Organizations

EXTERNAL

- Community Members (without children enrolled in the district)
- Parents of children not yet in school
- Local Government Officials
- Elected Officials
- Civic Groups
- Law Enforcement
- Senior Citizens/Senior Citizen Groups
- Key Community Leaders
- Business Organizations/Community
- Service Organizations (e.g., Rotary Club, Optimists)
- Media
- Prospective Employees
- Realtors

IS YOUR EVENT NEWSWORTHY?

If you can answer yes to most of the following questions, the answer is probably yes!

- Is it a first? If it's a first time something has happened it might be news.
- Is it a well-known cause or event?
- Does your event pass the "-est" test? Is it the smallest, biggest, fastest, strangest, or anything else that ends in those three letters?
- Will your event be visually appealing?
- Will students be active and engaged?
- Does your event correspond with some national or international holiday?
- Does your event have a tie-in with a current event on the local, state, or national level?
- Does your event involve a celebrity or anyone with some local or national prominence?
- Does your event have a unique twist to an old lesson or event?

REQUEST FOR MEDIA COVERAGE

Title of your event/activity: _____

Submitted by: _____

School: _____

Email: _____

Include the number of students involved, names and grade level of students (when applicable), names and title of staff (when applicable), and supporting organization.

WHO:

Describe the event or activity with some detail.

WHAT:

Give specific date(s) and time(s).

WHEN:

Include the building and location. Be specific.

WHERE:

Purpose (award, fundraiser, community service, unique teaching method)

WHY: