

GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
AD HOC COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE
FRIDAY, APRIL 29, 2016
8:30 A.M.
CENTRAL OFFICE, ROOM 5

Members Present: Susan Austin, Gary Baker, Rebecca Beyus, Mark Russell, Marthee Thorndike, Lee White

Members Absent: Karen Bryer, Dennis Colclough, Gretchen Newsome

Chairman White called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

1. Purpose of the GPS BOE Ad Hoc Communications Sub Committee – the purpose of the committee is to create a Communications Action Plan for Groton Public Schools. Susan Austin shared a draft of what has been done to date along with guidelines entitled, “How to Develop a Communications Plan” (attached).
2. Process, Planning, Results
 - Discussion ensued regarding what we are already doing. Rebecca suggested that we do an internal audit of communications.
 - With the charge of creating an action plan, we need to find out what our short- and long-term objectives would be.
 - Who is the audience? (Parents, Community, Staff, and Board of Education); What is the purpose? (Public relations to promote the schools, facilitate two-way communication, promote learning, manage safety and crisis).
 - Means of communication (such as print, electronic, social media, video, TV, news, forums, etc.), and methods of communication (owned media, earned media, advertisement or sponsorship).
 - The committee discussed magnet competition and how to keep our students here and provide choices in Groton Public Schools; new schools project; end-of-year communications from the schools/Superintendent.
 - It was decided to add teacher and administrator representatives to the committee for the next Ad Hoc Communications meeting.
 - Review surveys that have been done to date; need for feedback and focus groups.

The committee’s next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 4th, at 8:00 a.m. in room 5 at Central Office. Agenda topics are: (1) review short- and long-term objectives and (2) review key stakeholders.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

**Groton Public Schools
Community communications Plan
2014 - 2016**

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
<p>Community Forums/Meetings</p> <p>Goal: Improve teaching and learning with fiscal support and long term planning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional development for teachers, BOE, families and community on Common Core State Standards CMT information to BOE Community events held at each school throughout the year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCSS/SBAC – and how instructional shift look in the classroom setting. BOE monthly updates School events like Family math, Family Literacy, STEM PT Council monthly updates Community event like STEMFEST Budget advisory involves all stakeholders Long Term Planning Task Force 	<p>Surveys, Forums, Focus Groups at district and school level</p> <p>Re. Teaching and Learning, Budget and Finance, long term planning to improve our schools and equalize opportunities for ALL.</p> <p><i>One book, problem, district –Places You'll Go!</i> March 3, 2016</p> <p><i>Mental Health Summit</i> at FHS April 7th, 2016</p> <p><i>CTSUBCEN STEMFEST</i> at WSM May 11, 2016</p> <p>Subtrail and StoryCore</p>
<p>Internal Communication</p> <p>(Central Office to Schools, Schools to Central Office, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three-Year Plan for ELA & Math - Shared with Administrators and staff GPS Committees meets to review priorities Information about Common Core State Standards presented to administrators (Administrator meetings and Principal meetings) Information about Common Core State Standards presented to all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three-year Implementation Plan ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies; also, Unified Arts, World Language District Improvement plan aligned to School Improvement Plans and Student Learning Objectives CCSS PD across disciplines – August and November 2014) 21st Century Committee meetings per calendar Curriculum updates shared with Administrators (retreat Aug '14), Principal meeting and Administrator 	<p>Third year of Three year plan – extend another 2 years.</p> <p>Focus on supporting delivery of CCSS and GPS curriculum, instruction, assessment and PD</p> <p>Columbia U – Calkins Readers/Writers</p>

Internal continued	<p>teachers (Tuesday afternoon professional development-collaborative common core Tuesdays)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> meeting agenda item and Faculty District Improvement Team (meet each month), Wellness co. and Safe schools and positive behavior supports. Form 21st Century Learning Collaborative, Groton Teaching and Learning Collaborative identify Best Practices (begin Readers/Writers/Math workshop model (scientifically research based INSTRUCTIONAL core models) Information about SBAC (formative and summative) 2014 presented to administrators (winter)/spring) Updates about SBAC presented all teachers (winter, spring) Superintendent Board Notes – Administrators weekly notes 	Workshop Lesley U – Fountas Early Literacy NCTM – Austin Math Workshop
Electronic Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link to CCSS Resources on GPS website Twitter Edmodo (math/Sci) Blogs (elem math/STEM) plan Community Forum for 2014-2015 Posting of CCSS information/resources on Public Folder in Outlook and on the website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update CT Core Standards - Resources and information on GPS website Twitter facebook Edmodo (math/Sci/ELA) Blogs (math/STEM/ELA/IB) Prepare Community Forum on teaching and learning (district, school, community based) Update posting on Public Folder in Outlook and Google Docs, new webpage for teachers to access EZ GPS Budget and Ed info to send electronically, post on web, tweet, facebook. 	Other ideas for electronic communication? Upgrade website
Printed Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newsletter focusing on CCSS Schools participating SBAC Assessment Pilot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GPS “Our Schools” Brochure to send home, post on web, tweet, facebook. News articles School newsletters Teacher newsletters 	Continue publication online and sent home Continue GPS brochures

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Brochures • BOE and Administrator Weekly Notes include teaching and learning and budget updates, can be used to communicate with teachers/families • Budget Presentation, Power Point and Brochure 	Annual Budget Report to the Community
<p>Special Events/Public Relations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit other schools • Hartford testimonies • Presentations • Assistant Superintendent speaks about CCSS on Capital Hill (April) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEARN, CABE, CAPSS, State Dept. of Education - Networking w/other districts across the state and nation. • One District – One book; One District – One Problem (Pocket day) • Symposium Spring • StemFest – parent guides – summer inquire • Children and Families Mental Health and Wellbeing Summitt planning 	<p>Stem Fest Math Promise/Reading Promise Science and Math nights</p> <p>Look for state, national, and international outreach and networking opportunities</p>

How to Develop a Communications Plan

[Home](#)

[How to Develop
a Communications Plan](#)

[Sample Plan 1
from PRSA](#)

[Sample Plan 2
from ARA](#)

[Sample Plan 3
from King County Library
System](#)

New: [Sample Plan 4
from "Any County" School
System](#)

[Crisis Communication Quick
Reference](#)

What is a communication plan? When should it be developed? Where does the information in the plan come from? How do you write one, and why should you bother?

Overworked and underfunded communicators (Are there any other kind?) have a right to ask whether the work involved in developing a plan is worth it. The answer is yes because a written communication plan will

- give your day-to-day work a focus,
- help you set priorities,
- provide you with a sense of order and control,
- help get the chief staff executive and staff to support your program,
- protect you against last-minute, seat-of-the-pants demands from staff and members, and
- prevent you from feeling overwhelmed, offering instead peace of mind.

What Is a Communication Plan?

A communication plan is a written document that describes

- what you want to accomplish with your association communications (your objectives),
- ways in which those objectives can be accomplished (your goals or program of work),
- to whom your association communications will be addressed (your audiences),
- how you will accomplish your objectives (the tools and timetable), and
- how you will measure the results of your program (evaluation).

Communications include all written, spoken, and electronic interaction with association audiences. A communication plan encompasses objectives, goals, and tools for all communications, including but not limited to:

- periodic print publications;
- online communications;
- meeting and conference materials;

- media relations and public relations materials;
- marketing and sales tools;
- legal and legislative documents;
- incoming communications, including reception procedures and voice mail content;
- committee and board communiques;
- corporate identity materials, including letterhead, logo, and envelopes;
- surveys;
- certificates and awards;
- annual reports;
- signage;
- speeches; and
- invoices.

When to Develop the Plan

The best time to develop your plan is in conjunction with your annual budgeting or organizational planning process.

Where to Get Information

Grist for the plan generally comes from five sources:

1. your association mission statement,
2. a communication audit,
3. membership surveys and focus groups,
4. committee and leadership input, and
5. discussions with other staff and departments.

How to Develop the Plan

Take the following steps to develop an effective communication plan:

Conduct a research-communication audit. Evaluate your current communications. Some associations hire firms to do this, but the price for the objectivity of an outside auditor can be high. To conduct your own audit, find out

- what every staff person is doing in the way of communication,
- what each communication activity is designed to achieve, and

- how effective each activity is.

To get the answers you need,

- brainstorm with communication staff,
- talk to other departments,
- interview the chief staff executive,
- interview the board,
- talk to communication committee members,
- survey the membership,
- host focus groups, and
- query nonmembers.

Define objectives. Armed with information from your audit, define your overall communication objectives-the results you want to achieve. These might include

- excellent service to members,
- member loyalty,
- centralization of the communication effort,
- increased employee teamwork,
- improved product delivery,
- visibility for the association and the industry or profession it represents, and
- influence on government, media, consumers, and other audiences.

Define audiences. List all the audiences that your association might contact, attempt to influence, or serve. Included on your list may be

- members;
- nonmembers;
- consumers;
- related associations;
- adversarial associations;
- educators;
- federal, regional, and local governments;
- related industries; and
- the media.

Define goals. With stated objectives, and considering available human and financial resources, define goals-in other words, a program of work for each objective. Goals include general programs, products, or services that you will use to achieve stated objectives. For example, if the

objective is to improve member service, goals might include improved training for the member-service function, special communications directed at first-time members, a reference manual for handling complaints, and ongoing information for members.

Identify tools. Decide what tools will be used to accomplish stated goals. These tools can be anything from a simple flyer to a glossy magazine. Don't overlook less obvious tools such as posters, report covers, Rolodex cards, and Web sites. Brainstorm ideas with your staff.

Establish a timetable. Once objectives, goals, audiences, and tools have been identified, quantify the results in a calendar grid that outlines roughly what projects will be accomplished and when. Separate objectives into logical time periods (monthly, weekly, etc.).

Evaluate the result. Build into your plan a method for measuring results. Your evaluation might take the form of

- a monthly report on work in progress,
- formalized department reports for presentation at staff meetings,
- periodic briefings of the chief staff executive and the department heads, and
- a year-end summary for the annual report.

Developing a written communication plan will take effort. Plan on three or four days the first time you do it. Once in place, the written plan will smooth your job all year long, earn you respect from the CEO and other staff, help set work priorities, protect you from last-minute demands, and bring a semblance of order to your chaotic job.

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Questions or comments? Email [Robin Mayhall](mailto:Robin.Mayhall)