



**bps**  
EMPOWER EVERY LEARNER  
TO THRIVE  
BISMARCK  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**EXCELLENCE**

**INCLUSION**

**LEADERSHIP**

**INNOVATION**

Together, our strong relationships build inclusive, collaborative, and innovative environments that create agency and inspire a passion for learning, excellence, and discovery.

Mission Vision Values

# **bps** School Board

# *Communication Plan*



# Purpose

The Bismarck Public School Board Communication Plan outlines a strategy for communicating with all district stakeholders. The priority goal of this plan is to effectively communicate with community members, while continually reinforcing confidence in and awareness of the BPS mission, vision, and values.

This communication plan is a working document designed to:

- Foster strong relationships with stakeholders.
- Provide focus and direction for messages/methods.
- Enable the School Board and district to present itself accurately and credibly to audiences.
- Make communication channels between stakeholders and the Board consistent and reliable.

The Bismarck School Board aligns the practices in this document with the district's Strategic Plan to operationalize the Mission of "**Empowering Every Learner to Thrive.**" Additionally, the plan is designed to function within a coherent governance structure, ensuring that communication practices foster excellence in the district's four strategic priorities: environmental excellence, personal excellence, learning excellence, and operational excellence.

## Audiences

Communication methods outlined in this plan are tailored to the needs of the following stakeholder groups:

- Students
- Teachers
- Administrators
- Support Staff
- Parents
- Business Partners
- Legislators
- City/County Leaders
- Civic Groups
- News Media
- PTOs
- Citizens
- Community Partners
- Higher Education Institutions



# Engagement

This plan proposes the regular use of multiple communication methods to best engage the identified audiences:

- In-person discussion
- Working committees
- Focus groups
- News media collaboration
- Email
- Newsletters
- Press releases
- Social media
- Community forums



# Objectives

The Bismarck School Board hopes to realize the following objectives:

1. Develop and maintain positive, collaborative relationships with stakeholders to strengthen support for Bismarck Public Schools.
2. Engage the community in routine, effective communication to ensure stakeholders are well-informed about district affairs and board governance.
3. Support strong, positive connections between BPS and the community.
4. Ensure systems are established to provide coordinated internal and external communication, with a focus on two-way dialogue, employing the most effective tools.
5. Ensure board members are visible and accessible within schools and the broader community.

# Commitments

The Bismarck School Board endeavors to maintain an ongoing dialogue with community partners. In furtherance of this goal, the following communication targets have been established:

- Community forums will be held each school year.
- Strategic Priority Committee will meet regularly.
- Update district families monthly via the district's newsletter.
- A survey will be shared yearly to collect community feedback.
- Regular use of social media and formal news outlets will be used to share information.



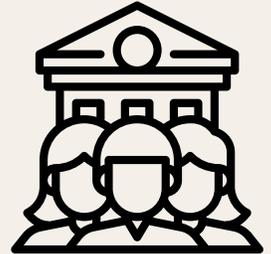
# Governance Culture

The Bismarck School Board believes that alignment between Governance, Strategic Priorities, and Instruction helps ensure a strong educational system.

## Coherent Governance

The Bismarck School Board has adopted the “Coherent Governance” model as a framework to clarify their roles and responsibilities, empowering and enabling them to govern effectively. The model includes Student Results Policies, Operational Expectations Policies, Governance Culture Policies, and Board-Superintendent Relationship Policies. The board shall:

- Focus on setting the vision and direction rather than internal preoccupation.
- Prioritize strategic leadership more than management details.
- Encourage all voices to be heard.
- Build trusting and respectful relationships.



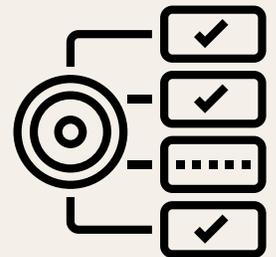
### Linkage

Coherent Governance is strengthened with linkages tying policy with the classroom. This keeps our focus on what is most important for student success.



## Strategic Priorities

The Bismarck School Strategic Plan is a contract between the school district and its owners - the residents of Bismarck School District. It provides a road map to create the educational experiences we want for our children. The strategic priorities are informed by and provide direction for both Governance and Instruction. The plan is comprised of four priorities.



**Learning  
Excellence**

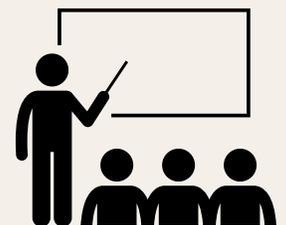
**Personal  
Excellence**

**Environmental  
Excellence**

**Operational  
Excellence**

## Instruction

The BPS Strategic Plan is a contract between the school district and its owners - the residents of Bismarck School District. It provides a road map to create the educational experiences we want for our children. The strategic priorities are informed by and provide direction for both Governance and Instruction. The plan is comprised of four priorities.



# Strategic Committees

Specific board governance policies shall be aligned to strategic committees aligned to the priorities of the district. This will ensure that what is being done at the school board level is informed by, and reflected in, the goals within the district's strategic plan. This alignment will support the efforts in our classrooms and programs that are also aligned to the strategic plan. This alignment is intentional and will reinforce that what is most important for the success of our students, is being supported at all levels of the organization.

## Learning Excellence

- Coherent Governance Policy Review & Refinement
- Results Review & Indicator Alignment
- Review Strategic Priorities and Objectives
- Teaching - Learning - Personalized Learning - MTSS A



Policy:  
OE-11  
R-2

## Personal Excellence

- Coherent Governance Policy Review & Refinement
- Results Review & Indicator Alignment
- Review Strategic Priorities and Objectives
- Human Capital - MTSS B - Inclusive Practices - Activities

Policy:  
OE-10  
R-3  
R-4

## Environmental Excellence

- Coherent Governance Policy Review & Refinement
- Results Review & Indicator Alignment
- Review Strategic Priorities and Objectives
- School Safety - Culture - Climate

Policy:  
OE-10  
R-3  
R-4

## Operational Excellence

- Coherent Governance Policy Review & Refinement
- Results Review & Indicator Alignment
- Review Strategic Priorities and Objectives
- Finance/Funding - Transportation - Technology - Facilities

Policy:  
OE-4  
OE-5  
OE-6  
OE-7  
OE-12

# Committee Structure

The board engages in a repeated and reoccurring process of collaboration and engagement to further the district's strategic priorities.

## Norms

- The committee shall be advisory to the Board, and shall make recommendations by consensus.
- The committee and members shall be solutions focused.
- The committee shall take minutes, which will be supplied to the Board.
- Members shall take a role in keeping the meeting on task and productive.
- Members shall keep an open mind to differing opinions and voice concerns in a respectful and professional manner.
- Members shall be respectful of members time by starting and ending on time.
- Members have a responsibility to share information back with groups they represent.

## Composition

Each committee will be comprised of 8-12 members.

Board members will be assigned annually to represent each committee.

**Representation:** We strive to have committee members that represent a wide range of stakeholders in our community. These could include the following:

**District:** Leadership, Educators, Staff, Students

**Community:** Parents, Community Leaders, Stakeholders, Partners

## Frequency / Duration

Each committee shall meet a minimum of three times per year, but may meet more as needed.

Meetings will last 1 hour.

# Measurement

Efficacy of district work is determined by targets and indicators in reports. The following metrics are reviewed to determine the effectiveness of board communication efforts (specific targets may be set as needed):

- Annual community survey results from OE-3 and OE-9
- Newsletter readership numbers
- Stakeholder attendance at community events
- Social media engagement
- Person-to-person feedback
- Other board-determined measures...



# Partnerships

As a community organization, the Board partners with several outside groups to further its mission of engaging all stakeholders:

- News Media
  - The Board engages news media and works in conjunction with district Community Relations to provide media notices and arrange for news coverage.
- Community Groups
  - The Board considers community groups and government organizations when distributing information to outside audiences.

## Projects

## Details

## Outcome

### Community Forums

Community members have a chance to discuss district business and share concerns in an informal setting

- The board engages stakeholders in productive two-way communication
- Stakeholders gain a greater understanding of board work

### Board Bulletin

The Board shares an update with BPS families and staff once per month in a district newsletter

- Readers learn about board work and initiatives
- Stakeholders engage the board in more productive two-way dialogue