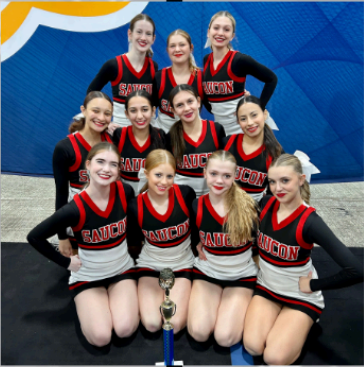




# SAUCON VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNICATION PLAN **2024-25**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**..... 3

**TARGET AUDIENCES**..... 4

    Primary Audiences..... 4

    Additional Audiences..... 4

**KEY MESSAGES**..... 6

**COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES**..... 7

**COMMUNICATION CALENDAR**..... 9



**SAUCON  
VALLEY  
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From March to June 2024, the Saucon Valley School District engaged in a robust communication audit and planning process.

Led by the Donovan Group, this process involved an inventory of the district's current communication practices, including the methods used to reach target audience members to determine what is working well and any potential areas of improvement. The inventory centered on the results of a community-wide communication survey, along with a review of the current website and the new Finalsite website under development.



The communication audit enabled the district to better understand community members' perceptions of the organization, get a sense of what they think about the district's current communication efforts, and determine which types of information are of particular interest. The audit helped SVSD determine how to better engage and inform members of its community.

Upon the finalization of the audit, the district began developing this comprehensive communication plan. The purpose of the plan is to enable SVSD to make key improvements to its communication efforts in the short term, while allowing the district to expand the plan over time.

The following goals have been identified for the Saucon Valley School District's communication and engagement efforts:

- Tell the district's story and highlight the positive things happening in its schools on a daily basis.
- Expand and improve the district's digital presence and communication efforts.
- Streamline communication channels for enhanced accessibility and clarity.
- Engage ALL members of the community, including non-parents and staff.

The plan that follows includes a variety of communication and engagement efforts meant to enable the district to reach these specific goals.

With this in mind, the plan has been designed to be updated midway through the 2024-25 school year. It exists as a living document that will be refined over time and continually revised according to best practices and the district's emerging needs.

# TARGET AUDIENCES

As the Saucon Valley School District implements its communication plan, it must carefully consider the audiences with which it will be communicating.

This plan seeks to engage every member of the district's staff, every student attending the district's schools, every family member, and every community member. However, to effectively implement the plan, the district's audience has been divided into smaller, more specific groups.



## Primary Audiences

- **Parents/guardians/caregivers of current students:** It is important for the district to communicate with parents whose children currently attend Saucon Valley schools, as these parents speak with other parents on a regular basis. They can serve as important spokespeople for the district.
- **Staff members:** Teachers and staff members are often the most trusted sources of district-related news for the entire community. These individuals should be equipped to communicate proactively and help tell the district's story.
- **Students:** As students get older, they begin to form strong connections with the schools they attend. SVSD must foster these connections so that students know the district is working hard to ensure they receive the best academic and extracurricular opportunities possible. Engaged students go on to become engaged alumni.
- **District residents:** Community members who do not have children attending SVSD have a vested interest in the district, as the schools contribute to the community and homeowners pay school taxes. This group also includes students' grandparents (who may attend community and school events), senior citizens, and other community members who reside within the district.

## Additional Audiences

- **Alumni:** Alumni represent a group with a lasting connection to the district. They are made up of people who can speak directly to the benefits of a SVSD education.
- **Business leaders:** Local business leaders and business owners serve as credible sources of information and can help the district tell its story. They can also be a great resource for valuable community partnerships, assisting with fundraising and providing internship opportunities to students. The district aims to strengthen its connections with large employers while maintaining and expanding relationships with small businesses.
- **Service groups:** The community is home to numerous engaged service organizations. These groups have a stake in the community and success of the school district.
- **Faith community:** Religious leaders within the community are individuals with direct connections to SVSD students whose families are active in their church or other religious institutions.
- **Municipal/county leaders and state lawmakers:** Elected and administrative officials at the city, county, and state levels have the ability to influence policies that directly affect the district. Efforts should be made to inform these officials of the district's strategic initiatives, programs, and positive news and events.

- **Future residents:** The district should make efforts to market itself outside of the Saucon Valley community, targeting families moving to the region for employment and other opportunities. This may involve working with local employers to share the district's story.
- **Local media:** The district is served by the [Saucon Source](#), other regional publications (including [The Morning Call](#) and [Lehigh Valley News](#)), local radio stations, and Lehigh Valley-based TV news affiliates (including [WFMZ](#)).
- **Realtors and mortgage lenders:** One of the best ways to engage parents considering a move into the district is to work with local real estate and mortgage lending professionals, who serve as highly trusted sources of information for these newcomers. SVSD seeks to ensure these professionals have the information they need to be effective spokespeople for the district.

# KEY MESSAGES

1. **The Saucon Valley School District ensures that all of our students achieve their greatest potential, graduating as leaders prepared for meaningful and productive lives in our local community and our global society.**
  - We establish high expectations for our students and support their intellectual, emotional, social, and physical growth. We strive to support students' individuality and the countless number of ways young people can learn and grow.
  - We foster a collaborative, caring, respectful environment within our schools.
  - We offer equitable access to learning for all students and offer a range of unique academic and extracurricular experiences for our students that provide access to learning opportunities and pathways that address their unique needs. These include Dual Enrollment, experiential learning, Spanish Immersion, sensory rooms, and Unified Sports.
  
2. **Our district nurtures a culture of academic excellence and maintains an improvement-minded orientation with regard to the quality of our instruction, programs, and services.**
  - We have an unwavering commitment to continuous improvement through focused strategic initiatives, highly effective curriculum and instruction, and ongoing professional learning.
  - We offer rigorous academics, discipline-developing athletics, and extracurricular activities that challenge our children.
  - We strive to make the best and most efficient use possible of the investments our community has made in its local public schools. This means properly maintaining our facilities and careful fiscal stewardship of our tax dollars while ensuring students continue to have access to top-quality programs and services throughout their K-12 journey.
  
3. **Our district is committed to building trust by keeping our community informed and honoring the Saucon community's educational history.**
  - We value transparency and the trust that stems from clear, consistent, and well-articulated communication.
  - We are committed to timely and transparent communication and keeping our families, students, and staff informed about academics, district finances, school climate and safety, and other issues of interest.
  - We want to celebrate our successes as a district and those of our staff and students.
  - We want our students, staff, families, and community members to know what is transpiring in our district and actively engage in our schools.
  - We seek to honor and elevate the commitment our forebearers made to public education in our close-knit community.

# MONITORING SUCCESS

An important aspect of any communication strategy is establishing a process and metrics to evaluate success on an ongoing basis. To that end, the Saucon Valley School District will implement several measures to evaluate its communication efforts through this plan:

## **1) Tracking of Communications Tactics**

The district will create a monthly communications calendar that includes all tactics listed in the Communication Plan. In Spring 2025, the district will formally evaluate the success of its efforts in completing the listed tactics.

## **2) Use of Metrics**

Through various tools, the district will regularly measure data associated with website visitors, ParentSquare communications, social media accounts (including number of followers and engagement data), and open rates and click-through rates of electronic communications. Interim data from these analyses will be available to chart interim progress at the midpoint of the 2024-25 school year and make strategic refinements.

## **3) Communications Surveys**

In 2025, the district will field a follow-up communication survey to compare baseline data with longitudinal data to determine ongoing progress and needed growth moving forward.

The Saucon Valley School District may make use of the National School Public Relations Association's [Rubrics of Practice and Suggested Measures](#) as additional indicators.

# COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

The following are several goals for SVSD to pursue over the next year. Under each goal are the tactics the district will use to reach members of its target audience.

## **STRATEGY #1: Tell the district's story and highlight the positive things happening in its schools on a daily basis.**

*By every measure, there are many positive things happening in SVSD. The district will increase the sharing of positive news, stories, and achievements.*



### **Tactics:**

- Encourage teachers and staff to share positive news, updates, activities, and photos from schools and classrooms via the district's branded [Google Form](#). Share these stories via news articles on the district's website, news releases, monthly Spotlight on Saucon Valley videos, and social media posts.
- Create 4-6 news items per month on the new district website. Create and distribute news releases for selected items.
- Establish a weekly schedule for all school e-newsletters.
- Create and distribute the monthly Spotlight on Saucon video through all communication channels.
- Create and distribute a Year in Review newsletter, highlighting information, points of pride, and stats from the previous school year and telling the district's story.
- Create and distribute a video message to parents and staff in mid-August, generating excitement for the upcoming school year. Post the video to the district website and share via social media.

## **STRATEGY #2: Expand and improve the district's digital presence and communication efforts.**

*The district will work to enhance its new website (launching summer 2024), its presence on social media, and its use of parent/community communication platforms.*

### **Tactics:**

- Continue creating and posting a series of social media posts and updates on a variety of topics each week. Customize these posts by leveraging the submissions made using the [Google Form](#).
  - Explore the use of boosted posts on Meta (Facebook and Instagram).
- Create a district Instagram account and begin posting photos and content on a weekly basis.
- Review and implement the recommended updates to the new district website, per the [website audit](#) completed in March 2024.
- Create and distribute a series of communications to announce the launch of the new website, including a news release, parent/staff email messages, and social media posts.
- Establish one or more staff members to serve as lead(s) for making website updates.
- Educate families, staff, and community members in utilizing ParentSquare effectively.
  - Provide step-by-step guides or video tutorials for setting preferences.
  - Provide professional development to staff members.
  - Conduct workshops and informational sessions, if needed, including at back-to-school nights.
- Identify communications coordinators within each school building to assist principals.



### **STRATEGY #3: Streamline communication channels for enhanced accessibility and clarity.**

*Improve user-friendliness and consolidate information on a single, reliable platform to meet community expectations for streamlined and consistent communication.*

#### **Tactics:**

- Encourage widespread adoption of ParentSquare for essential updates (e.g., lunch menus, urgent notices) over social media platforms.
- Continue using email as the primary method for general, non-urgent communications, aligning with community preferences. (Tailor communications to specific age groups to enhance relevance and effectiveness.)
- Prioritize text messages and phone calls for urgent or crisis-related communications due to their immediacy and accessibility.
- Allow families and community members to opt-in to specific communication platforms (phone, text, email) based on their preferences to reduce message overload and enhance transparency.

### **STRATEGY #4: Engage ALL members of the community, including non-parents and staff.**

*The district and board will work to engage with all district community members through regular community outreach events and regular communication through established platforms*

#### **Tactics:**

- Distribute the district's Year in Review throughout the community.
- Organize regular cultural, educational, and recreational events open to the wider community.
- Promote district offerings and opportunities, outside of academics, to engage non-parents and staff.
- Utilize Zoom or live-streaming platforms for meetings and events.
  - Provide instructions for accessing virtual meetings to increase community participation.
- Investigate the use of electronic signage to communicate important information and events to families and to the community

# COMMUNICATION CALENDAR

Based on the goals, audiences, messages, and tactics outlined above, the following is a suggested communication calendar for SVSD to implement from July through December of 2024.

Item	Description	Timing
<b>JULY 2024</b>		
Communication Calendar	Establish a monthly communication calendar for the district and its schools (specific days, times of the month, etc.)	By 7/31
News Releases/ Website News	Create news items for the new district website. Create and distribute news releases for selected items.	Monthly
Social Media	Continue creating and posting a series of Facebook posts and updates on a variety of topics each week.	Monthly
Community Engagement	<i>Organize regular cultural, educational, and recreational events open to the wider community. If possible, utilize Zoom or live-streaming platforms for meetings and events.</i>	<i>As-Needed</i>
<b>AUGUST 2024</b>		
“What’s Special in Saucon?” Stories	Continue sharing positive news/stories from the Google Form via articles on the district’s website, news releases, and social media posts.	Weekly
News Releases/ Website News	Create news items for the new district website. Create and distribute news releases for selected items.	Monthly
Social Media	Create a district Instagram account and begin posting photos and content on a weekly basis. Promote the Instagram account on other platforms.	By 8/16
Social Media	Continue creating and posting a series of social media posts and updates on a variety of topics each week.	Weekly
Welcome Message	Create and distribute a video message to parents and staff in mid-August, generating excitement for the upcoming school year. Post the message to the district website, with accompanying video message. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information to the community about the upcoming school year</li> <li>• Highlight new staff, projects, additions, etc.</li> <li>• Ensure families are informed about ParentSquare settings</li> </ul>	Complete by 8/15 Send by 8/19
Weekly School E-Newsletters	Saucon Valley schools distribute their weekly e-newsletters on Fridays.	Weekly

	<p>The district can use these to embed district-level information of relevance to families and students. They can also include a link to the monthly Spotlight On Saucon video.</p> <p>Each newsletter should include information about all relevant district and school communication channels (including the website, social media, and ParentSquare).</p>	
ParentSquare	<p>Conduct a workshop/informational session or share information via email/website/social media to educate families on utilizing ParentSquare effectively.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optional: Provide step-by-step guides or video tutorials for setting preferences</li> <li>• Allow families and community members to opt-in to specific communication platforms (phone, text, email)</li> </ul>	By 8/30
Website Launch	Create and distribute a series of communications to announce the launch of the new website, including a news release, parent/staff email messages, and social media posts.	By 8/21
Community Engagement	<i>Organize regular cultural, educational, and recreational events open to the wider community. If possible, utilize Zoom or live-streaming platforms for meetings and events.</i>	<i>As-Needed</i>
<b>SEPTEMBER 2024</b>		
“What’s Special in Saucon?” Stories	Continue sharing positive news/stories from the Google Form via articles on the district’s website, news releases, and social media posts.	Weekly
News Releases/ Website News	Create news items for the new district website. Create and distribute news releases for selected items.	Weekly
Social Media	Continue creating and posting a series of social media posts and updates on a variety of topics each week.	Weekly
Annual Report (Newsletter)	<p>Create an Annual Report/Newsletter, available digitally and in hard copy. (Embed QR codes as appropriate.) It can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reiteration of district mission, values, beliefs</li> <li>• About SVSD</li> <li>• Message from Superintendent</li> <li>• Board and Budget</li> <li>• Academics: Score overview, AP Exams, credentialing</li> <li>• Staff/teacher credentials/experience</li> <li>• District Recognitions</li> <li>• Graduating Class Stats (college stats, high honors, scholarships)</li> <li>• Annual highlights</li> <li>• Upcoming school year information (highlights facility, additions, etc.)</li> <li>• Share social media/communication methods</li> </ul>	Draft by 9/30
Annual Report Newsletter	Distribute an Annual Report newsletter, available digitally and in hard copy.	Send by 9/13

Monthly Video	Continue development of the monthly Spotlight on Saucon Valley video, featuring announcements from the Superintendent and other administrators, as needed. (This video should be limited to 2 minutes or less and distributed on the last Friday of every month.) <i>Expand access to the video by sharing with the wider community (via district website and/or social media platforms.)</i>	By 9/27
Weekly School E-Newsletters	Saucon Valley schools distribute their weekly e-newsletters on Fridays.  The district can use these to embed district-level information of relevance to families and students. They can also include a link to the monthly Spotlight On Saucon video.  Each newsletter should include information about all relevant district and school communication channels (including the website, social media, and ParentSquare).	Weekly
Community Engagement	<i>Organize regular cultural, educational, and recreational events open to the wider community. If possible, utilize Zoom or live-streaming platforms for meetings and events.</i>	As-Needed
<b>OCTOBER 2024</b>		
“What’s Special in Saucon?” Stories	Continue sharing positive news/stories from the Google Form via articles on the district’s website, news releases, and social media posts.	Weekly
News Releases/ Website News	Create news items for the new district website. Create and distribute news releases for selected items.	Weekly
Social Media	Continue creating and posting a series of social media posts and updates on a variety of topics each week.	Weekly
Monthly Video	Continue development of the monthly Spotlight on Saucon Valley video, featuring announcements from the Superintendent and other administrators, as needed. (This video should be limited to 2 minutes or less and distributed on the last Friday of every month.) <i>Expand access to the video by sharing with the wider community (via district website and/or social media platforms.)</i>	By 11/1
Weekly School E-Newsletters	Saucon Valley schools distribute their weekly e-newsletters on Fridays.  The district can use these to embed district-level information of relevance to families and students. They can also include a link to the monthly Spotlight On Saucon video.	Weekly

	Each newsletter should include information about all relevant district and school communication channels (including the website, social media, and ParentSquare).	
Community Engagement	<i>Organize regular cultural, educational, and recreational events open to the wider community. If possible, utilize Zoom or live-streaming platforms for meetings and events.</i>	As-Needed
<b>NOVEMBER 2024</b>		
“What’s Special in Saucon?” Stories	Continue sharing positive news/stories from the Google Form via articles on the district’s website, news releases, and social media posts.	Weekly
News Releases/ Website News	Create news items for the new district website. Create and distribute news releases for selected items.	Weekly
Social Media	Continue creating and posting a series of social media posts and updates on a variety of topics each week.	Weekly
Monthly Video	Continue development of the monthly Spotlight on Saucon Valley video, featuring announcements from the Superintendent and other administrators, as needed. (This video should be limited to 2 minutes or less and distributed on the last Friday of every month.) <i>Expand access to the video by sharing with the wider community (via district website and/or social media platforms.)</i>	By 12/1
Weekly School E-Newsletters	Saucon Valley schools distribute their weekly e-newsletters on Fridays.  The district can use these to embed district-level information of relevance to families and students. They can also include a link to the monthly Spotlight On Saucon video.  Each newsletter should include information about all relevant district and school communication channels (including the website, social media, and ParentSquare).	Weekly
Community Engagement	<i>Organize regular cultural, educational, and recreational events open to the wider community. If possible, utilize Zoom or live-streaming platforms for meetings and events.</i>	As-Needed
<b>DECEMBER 2024</b>		
“What’s Special in Saucon?” Stories	Continue sharing positive news/stories from the Google Form via articles on the district’s website, news releases, and social media posts.	Weekly
News Releases/ Website News	Create news items for the new district website. Create and distribute news releases for selected items.	Weekly

Social Media	Continue creating and posting a series of social media posts and updates on a variety of topics each week.	Weekly
Monthly Video	Continue development of the monthly Spotlight on Saucon Valley video, featuring announcements from the Superintendent and other administrators, as needed. (This video should be limited to 2 minutes or less and distributed on the last Friday of every month.) <i>Expand access to the video by sharing with the wider community (via district website and/or social media platforms.)</i>	By 12/20
Weekly School E-Newsletters	Saucon Valley schools distribute their weekly e-newsletters on Fridays.  The district can use these to embed district-level information of relevance to families and students. They can also include a link to the monthly Spotlight On Saucon video.  Each newsletter should include information about all relevant district and school communication channels (including the website, social media, and ParentSquare).	Weekly
Year in Review Newsletter	Begin collecting information for the Year in Review newsletter. This can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reiteration of mission, values, belief</li> <li>● About SVSD</li> <li>● Message from Superintendent</li> <li>● Board and Budget</li> <li>● Academics- Score overview, AP Exams, NOCTI results (BAVTS)</li> <li>● District Recognitions</li> <li>● Graduating Class Stats (college stats, high honors, scholarships)</li> <li>● Staff Profiles</li> <li>● Year highlights</li> <li>● Upcoming year (highlights facility, additions, etc.)</li> <li>● Communication channels</li> </ul>	Specs by 12/2
Community Engagement	<i>Organize regular cultural, educational, and recreational events open to the wider community. If possible, utilize Zoom or live-streaming platforms for meetings and events.</i>	<i>As-Needed</i>