



2024-25

Strategic Communications Plan

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Strategic Communication and the District's Strategic Plan

The school district is currently developing its strategic plan for FY26 through FY30. Typically, a strategic communication plan is intricately linked with the district's overarching strategic plan. However, as we approach the final year of our current strategic plan and navigate through a period of transition, our focus for this strategic communication plan will be on FY25 only.

This plan will be tailored specifically to align with the district goals set forth by the superintendent and administration for FY25. It aims to address the immediate objectives and priorities of the district during this transitional phase.

Once the new strategic plan is finalized and adopted, subsequent strategic communication plans will be developed in alignment with the long-term goals outlined in the new district strategic plan. These future communication strategies will encompass a broader, more forward-looking approach to effectively support and convey the district's evolving vision and objectives over the longer term.

2024-25 District Goals

The following districtwide goals were set by the superintendent and district leadership for the 2024-25 school year.

Family Engagement

Positive communication between teachers and families is key to student success. When we connect with encouragement and care, we build trust that helps students grow. Engaging families in their children's education creates a supportive environment, encouraging regular attendance and active participation.

- Send personalized, positive updates to parents/guardians about their child at least four times a year through phone calls, Parent Square, emails, or notes.
- Provide a physical report card each semester to high school students who are behind on credits, detailing how to recover them.
- Ensure accurate parent/guardian contact information to improve reachability by 3%.
- Increase overall student attendance from 91% to 92.5% and the number of students attending 90% of the time or more from 66% to 68%.

Growth for All

Our goal is to ensure every student, including Alaska Native and special education students, succeeds. By providing tailored support and embracing diversity, we create an environment where all students can thrive and reach their full potential.

- Increase graduation rates for Alaska Native students and special education students by 2%.

- Track and support freshmen to ensure they start strong and earn their initial credits.
- Improve the number of students passing Algebra 1 in one year.
- Increase the number of Alaska Native students reading at grade level, as measured by mClass from Spring 2024 to Spring 2025.
- Offer ongoing career exploration opportunities in all middle schools.

Literacy

Literacy goes beyond just reading and writing; it's the foundation for all learning and opens doors to a brighter future. By encouraging a passion for reading, we help students explore new ideas, think critically, and communicate well.

- Increase reading growth for students in grades K-9 by 2% from spring 2024 to spring 2025.
- Improve the percentage of students meeting or exceeding 41% proficiency in reading for grades 3-9 by the end of this period.
- Show growth in reading proficiency for grades K-3 as measured by mClass from spring 2024 to spring 2025.
- All secondary schools will introduce a reading intervention class, alongside existing support programs in our middle and high schools.

Core Communication Opportunities

In fall 2023, the school district contracted with the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) for an in-depth, independent review of the school district's overall communication program. The audit identified strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement. The following core opportunities were identified:

- Create structures and develop plans to support the communication function.
 - Designate a specific time frame for the completion of a strategic communication plan
 - Integrate reflection and plan time into regular communication processes
 - Communicate strategically to enhance comprehension and involvement
 - Include proactive issues management as part of communication planning
- Incorporate marketing strategies into strategic communication efforts and planning.
 - Define Fairbanks Schools' desired brand
 - Position the superintendent as the brand leader for education in Fairbanks Schools
 - Create printed marketing materials to tell the Fairbanks Schools story

- Build a coordinated outreach program to real estate agents
- Create and implement a budget communication strategy.
 - Educate staff at all levels about the school funding system
 - Take your finance story to the community
 - Incorporate the district's history into budget communications
 - Use graphics and charts to make complicated information more understandable
 - Hold community forums on the district budget
 - Consider creating an employee budget communications committee
- Maximize the communication potential of the district and school-level websites.
 - Determine the key features required for an ideal Fairbanks Schools website and identify the platform that can offer them most effectively
 - Conduct user testing and analytics to improve navigability and relevance
 - Set expectations for regularly updating websites with current content and hold staff accountable for maintaining these efforts
- Increase transparency regarding decision-making processes, particularly the role public and employee input plays.
 - Determine the best method for involving stakeholders in the decision-making process
 - Consistently share how stakeholder feedback influenced the outcomes of the decision-making process
 - Develop consistent systems for communicating key information about decisions
- Implement standardized parent communication practices across buildings and departments.
 - Simplify and standardize the tools used for communicating with parents
 - Incorporate important district news and messages into school communications
 - Optimize the use of e-newsletters at both the school and district levels
 - Establish communication expectations for teachers
- Create protocols for all staff with regular communication responsibilities, whether formal or informal.
 - Clearly define the communication role of administrators and departments to ensure a uniform, timely, and even distribution of information
 - Establish a standardized process for important internal communication
 - Continue to offer communication training and programs

Key Audiences

Key audiences are segmented groups of the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District who are pivotal to realizing our strategic plan goals and serve as partners to accomplish the objectives outlined in this plan.

FNSBSD Internal Community: All staff and School Board

Effective internal communication is crucial for fostering employee engagement and building strong connections within FNSBSD. A systematic approach to internal communication ensures that critical information reaches employees and facilitates meaningful interactions with the superintendent and FNSBSD leadership.

By actively involving our staff as brand ambassadors and maintaining consistent communication, we gain valuable insights into the challenges faced in our schools. This understanding enables us to better equip our staff to address questions from external stakeholders.

Furthermore, engaging with employees regularly allows FNSBSD leaders to stay informed about how changes impact staff, ensuring that we can address concerns and adapt strategies effectively.

FNSBSD External Community: Families and students, including alumni

Building trust with families and students is essential for a successful educational experience and relies on providing accurate, timely information through a variety of print and digital communication tools. This approach fosters effective two-way engagement, ensuring that students receive the support they need to thrive throughout their academic journey.

Families are a crucial stakeholder group for school districts. Their involvement and feedback are integral to shaping effective educational practices and policies. Our leadership team understands that nurturing this partnership is key to optimizing student outcomes. By actively engaging with families, we not only build trust but also enhance collaboration, making it possible to address concerns, celebrate successes, and work together towards shared educational goals.

Fairbanks North Star Borough Community Stakeholders

Transparent and consistent messaging are the key to building trust in the FNSB community that reaches beyond our school buildings. These relationships are vital to creating buy-in and support to deliver on our promise of a high-quality education.

The superintendent and FNSBSD leadership are dedicated to partnering with and engaging the FNSB community through various communication methods to ensure our community is well-informed. We know that community partners and leaders are critical in spreading the good news, key messages, accomplishments, and challenges of the school district.

The following represent FNSB community stakeholders:

- Prospective employees
- Elected officials
- Community partners, including faith-based institutions
- Businesses and business leaders
- FNSB residents
- Volunteers
- Realtors
- Higher education institutions

Communication Structure

The first step in responding to communication needs is to assess the situation by identifying who is directly impacted. Understanding which stakeholders are involved—whether they are internal teams, students, parents, or the broader community—helps us prioritize communication efforts. It's also important to recognize any secondary or indirect groups that might be affected, ensuring no critical audience is overlooked.

Once we've identified those impacted, we determine **who specifically needs to be communicated with**. This involves a layered approach, starting with those most affected and expanding outward. Communication efforts should align with the urgency and level of impact experienced by each audience, this determines **when stakeholders are communicated with**. High-priority groups may need immediate, frequent updates, while others may only require periodic communication. Timing is key—whether the message requires urgent action or can be communicated more gradually.

We consider **how to deliver the message**. This is based on the audience's needs, the nature of the event, and the context. Different communication tools—emails, texts, phone calls, social media, or in-person meetings—may be used depending on the audience. Ensuring the tone and content of the message are appropriate for the situation is crucial to maintaining trust and credibility.

We're thoughtful about **what information is communicated**. The content must be clear, accurate, and relevant, ensuring only essential and verified information is shared. This helps prevent confusion, especially in high-pressure situations. The language and format must also be accessible, considering factors like literacy levels and any barriers to understanding. This ensures that the message is both delivered and fully understood by all stakeholders.

In addition to addressing the who, when, how, and what, it's essential to include the "why" in all communications. Clearly explaining **why the message is being shared** helps the audience understand its importance and relevance to them. It provides context, answering why they need to know this information and how it impacts them directly. By addressing the "why," we not only increase the audience's engagement but also help manage their expectations and responses. This clarity ensures that stakeholders understand the significance of the communication and are better prepared to act or respond accordingly.

By following this step-by-step approach, we ensure that communication needs are met with a clear strategy and an effective response.

Regular Communications By Date

The following calendar highlights the regular, planned communications that go out throughout the academic year.

Summer	All School Year	1st Quarter
<p>June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kindergarten Round Up & Backpack Giveaway Highlight summer school activities <p>July</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare for Back to School: Prepare for Welcome Back event for teachers 	<p>Monthly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Superintendent newsletter Press releases <p>Bi-Weekly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record and post podcast episodes <p>Weekly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gold Stars for staff Social media posts Crisis response/school support 	<p>August</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Back Event for Teachers Back to School First Day of School <p>September</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WVH School Board Candidate Forum Emergency Comms Testing <p>October</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open Enrollment for staff End of 1st quarter Board Reorganization
2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter
<p>October</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent-Teacher Conferences <p>November</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent-Teacher Conferences State of the Schools at Chamber of Commerce <p>December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of First Semester Proposed Budget Winter Break - activities 	<p>January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed Budget Legislative priorities <p>February</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended Budget Parent-Teacher Conferences School climate survey <p>March</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of 3rd Quarter Spring Break 	<p>March</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statewide testing begins Recommended Budget <p>April</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Presentation to the Borough Academic calendar preparation and feedback <p>May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduation Photography Last Day of School End of 2nd Semester School year close out with principals Approved Budget

Communications by FY25 Goal

Key Objective: Family Engagement

Positive communication between teachers and families is crucial for student success, so teachers will send personalized updates four times a year, we'll provide detailed report cards for high school students behind on credits, ensure accurate contact information, and aim to boost student attendance rates.

Tactics	Tools	Key Audiences	Timeline	Responsible
Encourage ParentSquare Adoption	Email, social media	Families, Staff	1st Quarter, regular reminders through year	Communications, schools
Provide Messaging Support for Teachers	Email	Staff - teachers	1st Quarter, regular reminders through year	Superintendent, Teaching & Learning
Attendance and Unexcused Absences Notifications	Email, text, social media	Parents/Guardians	Begin 1st Quarter and continue through year	Asst. Superintendent/Communications
Report Cards Sent Out via ParentSquare	Email, text, social media	Parent/Guardians	End of 1st semester, End of 2nd semester	Communications/Asst. Superintendent and IT

Key Objective: Growth for All

Our goal is to ensure every student succeeds by providing tailored support, with specific targets to increase graduation rates for Alaska Native and special education students, support freshmen, improve Algebra 1 pass rates, boost grade-level reading for Alaska Native students, and offer career exploration in middle schools.

Tactics	Tools	Key Audiences	Timeline	Responsible
CTE Website Refresh	Website	Secondary students and families	1st semester	CTE, Communications
Highlight Alaska Native student success and accomplishments	Website, social media, email, video	Families, staff	End of Quarters, as needed	Communications, Student Support Services
Highlight events, supports, and opportunities available for Alaska Native students	Social media, email	Families, students	Throughout school year	Communications, Student Support Services

Highlight special education student success and accomplishments	Website, social media, email, video	Families, staff	End of Quarters, as needed	Communications, Special Education
Highlight events, supports, and opportunities available for special education students	Social media, email	Families, students	Throughout school year	Communications, Special Education

Key Objective: Literacy

Literacy is crucial for all learning and future success, so we aim to boost reading growth and proficiency for students in grades K-9, enhance reading interventions, and introduce new support programs in secondary schools.

Tactics	Tools	Key Audiences	Timeline	Responsible
Share literacy resources and supports for families	Social media, website, email	Families	1-2x per month	Communications, Teaching & Learning
Highlight literacy successes in schools	Social media, email	Families, staff	1x per quarter	Communications, Teaching & Learning