

2023

BISD

STRATEGIC

COMMUNICATION

PLAN

2024

Approved by BISD Board of Directors on July 27, 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01

Introduction

02

Mission statement

03

District Improvement Plan

04-06

Goal 1: Strengthen Internal Communications

07-08

Goal 2: Strengthen the connection between BIRD and families/community partners

09-10

Goal 3: Enhance Board of Directors' communications with the public

11

Timeline

Our roadmap to strengthen connections, improve engagement, celebrate successes & value partnerships.

INTRODUCTION

Bainbridge Island School District is committed to open, honest and ongoing communication with staff, families and the greater community. Effective two-way communications help establish and strengthen relationships -- and positive relationships are essential for a strong school system.

In the Fall of 2022, BISD underwent a Communications Audit implemented by the National School Public Relations Association. The audit examined BISD's communication efforts, assessed their effectiveness and provided customized recommendations to enhance BISD communication practices. The audit's [final report](#) included eight recommendations and corresponding action steps. Recognizing that implementing the recommendations takes time, effort and financial resources, BISD will focus on three goals for the 2023-24 school year.

- **Goal 1 - Internal Communications:** Strengthen internal communications between District Office and employees. Employees will feel informed, engaged, valued and understand the role they play in helping BISD achieve its mission.
- **Goal 2 - External Connections:** Strengthen the connection between BISD and families/community partners. External stakeholders will help celebrate BISD's successes and partner with BISD to help mitigate our challenges.
- **Goal 3 - Expand and enhance the Board of Directors' communications:** The public will view the board as leaders committed to achieving BISD's mission.

This plan is a working document and provides BISD with a framework for its communication efforts. It is important to note that these goals and refinements are in addition to current communication practices and are not replacements.

The success of the plan will be measured using data from the [Center for Educational Effectiveness](#) (CEE) Survey and results from the School Communication Performance Evaluation (SCoPE) Survey. Considerations to note: 1) parent/guardian participation in the CEE survey decreased by 61% from 2022 to 2023 2) [SCoPE provides a scorecard](#) to compare BISD to other districts. However, comparisons are not provided for all questions.

If you have questions about this plan, please contact BISD Public Relations Officer Erin Bischoff at ebischoff@bisd303.org.

BISD MISSION STATEMENT



As a community, we collectively commit to honoring and nurturing the unique skills, talents and passions of every student. We provide a welcoming and respectful environment where students flourish and forge a life-long love of learning through relevant, engaging learning experiences. We empower our students to find purpose and contribute to a more just and equitable world.



We believe...

- in every child;
- everyone has the potential and the right to lead a meaningful and productive life;
- all students can learn at high levels when provided with engaging learning opportunities that both support and challenge them;
- social and emotional health is as important as academic performance;
- diversity is essential to a vibrant community;
- strong, supportive relationships are the foundation of all that we do;
- empathy and critical thinking skills are essential for citizenship in a diverse and connected world;
- in becoming an anti-racist, inclusive organization that eliminates educational disparities and challenges traditional practices and norms;
- our families and community are our partners in the success of each child.



BISD DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLAN



TEACHING & LEARNING

All students will engage in learning experiences that empower them to become productive citizens of a diverse society who are committed to social and environmental justice.



EQUITY, ANTI-RACISM, INCLUSION, DIVERSITY & JUSTICE

Bainbridge Island School District will ensure our students feel honored, welcomed, respected, and connected. We are committed to embracing and honoring our island's diversity and creating a vibrant and inclusive community. We will engage our community in becoming an anti-racist organization ensuring equitable access to learning, opportunities, and resources for all students.



HEALTH, WELL-BEING & SAFETY

Bainbridge Island School District will focus on and develop students' social and emotional skills to lead positive and healthy lives with strong connections, feeling of belonging, and a sense of hope throughout their time in the Bainbridge Island School District.

GOAL 1:

Strengthen internal communications between District Office and employees. Employees will feel informed, engaged, valued and understand their role in helping BISD achieve its mission.

OBJECTIVE (1A) - INFORMED & ENGAGED

In the 2023-24 school year, the District Office will make a concerted effort to prioritize and strengthen communications between the District Office and BISD employees.

OBJECTIVE (1B) - VALUED

In the 2023-24 school year, the Communications Department will partner with Human Resources and building/department leaders to develop an ongoing campaign to celebrate and recognize employees.

MEASUREMENTS (1A)

- The rating provided by staff to the CEE survey question **District leadership communicates effectively with my school** will increase from 54% (in 2023) to 59% in 2024. (Note, in 2022 it was 57%.)
- In the 2022 SCoPE survey, staff rated their **overall satisfaction with communication from both their worksites and the district office** as a 3.7 (on a 1-5 scale). BISD will issue an in-house communication survey at the end of the 2023-24 school year and the number will increase to 4.0.
- In the 2022 SCoPE survey, staff rated **I trust the communication I receive from the district** as a 3.9 (on a 1-5 scale). BISD will issue an in-house communication survey at the end of the 2023-24 school year and the number will increase to 4.2.

MEASUREMENTS (1B)

- The response to the CEE statement **We celebrate progress toward improvement plan goals** will increase from 63% to 68% in 2024.
- In the 2022 SCoPE survey, staff rated **how valued they felt as an employee** as a 3.3 (on a 1-5 scale). BISD will issue an in-house communication survey at the end of the 2023-24 school year and the number will increase to 3.6.

STRATEGIES & TACTICS

1.1 Improve internal email management to reduce communication overload.

- Develop guidelines on “all staff” emails — who can send & when.
- Reinstate the Employee Newsletter — with a different look, different content (such as employee talking points, standing “corner” information, etc.) and a different publishing schedule than the Community Newsletter.
- Create an ongoing staff form for feedback/questions to address in future communications.

1.2 Keep District Office Administrators, Building Administrators and Office Managers in the communication loop.

- Continue with the Admin Abstract and add office managers to the distribution list.
- This group is the first to know about crises or sensitive communications.

1.3 Communicate first with staff before sending messaging to the wider public (when possible).

- Include information about when the message will be shared with the broader community (i.e., “This message will go out to families in ten minutes”).

1.4 Incorporate processes for determining communication responsibilities on a routine basis.

- Make communication part of a standing agenda item at Admin meetings.
- Use a template to designate communication responsibilities.

Agenda Item	Action	Individual(s) Responsible for Next Step	Deadline

1.5 Develop and implement strategies to strengthen the engagement of staff members in BSD decision-making processes.

- Ask for input only when the input will be valued and honored — if a decision has already been made, don't ask for employee input because doing so breaks down trust.
- When soliciting input, be sure to:
 - Look for ways to engage a wide range of participants.
 - Share how the input will be used in the decision-making process.
 - Follow up with the results.

1.6 Create and maintain opportunities for staff to interact with District Office Leaders.

- Superintendent Day @ _____ where the Superintendent is onsite for the day; Walk & Talk with building admin, informal conversations over lunch, optional staff Listening Tour after school (to be completed Fall 2024).
- Schedule annual Director visits at staff meetings so staff can connect names with faces.

1.7 Design and implement an annual Communication Survey to track progress and alert us to challenges.

- Model it from the SCoPE Survey (which can serve as a baseline).

1.8 Develop and implement a variety of avenues to recognize employees.

- Employee spotlight in the employee newsletter with a tie back to the DIP.
- Recognition program — such as Employee of the Year at the building or department level.
- District Office recognition campaign (new hires, years of service, milestones such NBCT).

GOAL 2:

Strengthen the connection between BISD and families/community partners. External stakeholders will help celebrate BISD's successes and partner with BISD to help mitigate our challenges.

OBJECTIVE

In the 2023-24 school year, the Communications Department will work with building office managers and principals to develop Public Relations/Communications Best Practices for adoption district-wide.

MEASUREMENTS

- The CEE statement **I am informed about progress toward the improvement goals of this school** will increase for families from 45% to 50% in 2024. (Note, in 2022, the response was 59%.)
- The CEE statement **I feel welcome at this school** will increase for families from 57% to 63% in 2024. (Note, in 2022, the response was 76%.)
- In the 2022 SCoPE survey, and using a scale of 1-5, parents rated **I am informed about district goals and plans** as a 2.5. BISD will issue an in-house communication survey at the end of the 2023-24 school year and the number will increase to 3.0.
- In the 2022 SCoPE Survey and using a scale of 1-5, parents rated **overall satisfaction with communication from both the school/teachers and the district** as 3.8. BISD will issue an in-house communication survey at the end of the 2023-24 school year and the number will increase to 4.0.

STRATEGIES & TACTICS

2.1 Develop a systemic approach for school-wide and district-wide communications.

- Implement ParentSquare as BISD's unified communications platform.
- Set expectations for newsletter frequency.
- Create a style guide, shared graphics and best practices (videos/trainings).
- Monthly communication check-in at Admin Meetings.

2.2 Evaluate our communication tools and make sure we are using them properly.

- Share WHY the tools are important to use.
- Provide training (in-person, Screencastifies).

2.3 Work with building leaders to review and establish new volunteer opportunities, including partnering with local seniors.

- Develop a tool that matches skills/interests with available volunteer positions.
- Scale outreach to the senior community using WMS as the model.

2.4 Design and implement an annual Communication Survey to track progress and alert us to challenges.

- Model it from the SCoPE Survey (which can serve as a baseline).

GOAL 3:

Expand and enhance Board of Directors' communications with the public. The public will view the board as leaders committed to achieving BISD's mission.

OBJECTIVE

In the 2023-24 school year, the Communications Department will work with BISD Board Directors to improve interactions between the board members and the public and will commit to at least three new communication strategies.

MEASUREMENTS

- Board participation at outside community events will increase by 20% over 2022-23 numbers. In 2023, board members participated in eight community events. In 2023-24, board members will participate in at least ten events.
- In the 2022 SCoPE Survey and using a scale of 1-5, community members rated **how well informed they are regarding district finances** as a 2.1. BISD will issue an in-house communication survey at the end of the 2023-24 school year and the number will increase to 2.6.
- In the 2022 SCoPE Survey and using a scale of 1-5, community members rated **how well informed they are regarding leader decisions** as a 2.5. BISD will issue an in-house communication survey at the end of the 2023-24 school year and the number will increase to 3.0.

STRATEGIES & TACTICS

3.1 Create/update communications policies.

- Update Policy 4001 & Procedure 4001 - Patron/District Communications
- Update Policy 4006 & Procedure 4006 - Distribution of Materials
- Adopt WASSDA Model Policy & Procedure for Advertising on District Property

3.2 Provide prompt summaries of school board meetings.

- Brief summaries demonstrate transparency and allow the district to frame the conversation.
- Summaries are included in the Staff Newsletter, posted on the Board of Directors website and linked to in the Community Newsletter .

3.3 Enhance the Board of Directors' presence on BISD website.

- Get to Know the BISD Board of Directors -- unified template and photos.
- Letter from the Board President outlining the role of the school board, how to get involved, etc.
- Welcome the community to attend BISD School Board Meetings and communicate clear expectations on how to provide public comment.

3.4 Continue to seek opportunities for engagement between the Board and the public.

- Provide the Board with talking points, presentation templates and media training for outreach.
- Continue with Coffee Chats - with a shared topic/focus.
- Targeted presentations to Community Groups and nonprofits.
- Annual round-robin meeting with other governmental agencies (COBI, BIFD, KRL, Parks).

TIMELINE

