



Annual Communications Plan

2017/2018 School Year

Purpose:

The purpose of this communications plan is to provide objectives and action items to enhance proactive and effective strategic communications within the North Vancouver School District (NVSD) in order to support NVSD's efforts towards realizing its vision, goals and values. This plan serves as a guide for internal and external communications regarding communication initiatives for staff, students, parents/guardians and the broader community.

Need/Opportunity:

NVSD is committed to continual improvements in order to realize our vision, achieve our strategic goals and uphold our values. Communication plays an integral role in moving towards success in these areas. One tenet of the NVSD vision is: *We build trust, respect and mutual understanding through open, proactive communications that convey the achievements and challenges of the school district.* There is a need to embed strategic proactive communication initiatives into the strategic goals of NVSD. This plan provides that link.

About this plan:

NVSD's Communications Committee drafted this plan. The plan is divided into NVSD's six strategic goals. Annual communication objectives and tactics to achieve these objectives have been determined. Each year, the Communications Committee looks at NVSD's strategic goals and assesses communication needs within each goal. Clear, achievable and measurable objectives, along with concrete tactics to reach these objectives, have been established for the year. Every year, the current Annual Communications Plan is reviewed and progress is presented to the North Vancouver Board of Education, along with the Annual Communications Plan for the next school year. The plans are posted on the NVSD website.

Communications Objectives, Tactics and Evaluation:

Strategic Goal #1: **Expand**

[Expand the availability of best instructional practices and enriched curriculum.](#)

Communications objectives:

- Celebrate professional learning.
 - **Tactics:** work with schools and staff to generate blog posts, social media sharing, website news articles and staff newsletter items highlighting professional learning and

collaboration time; local media outreach highlighting professional learning; include an item on professional learning in the 2018 Community Report.

- **Evaluation:** This objective was partially achieved. There were three blog posts regarding staff professional learning, but no website news posts and no item in the 2018 Community Report. There was success, however, on Twitter; staff across the school district regularly shared on Twitter the powerful learning opportunities they are engaging in.
- **Lessons learned:** There is a need to share more about staff professional learning because it directly impacts student learning. Twitter posts related to staff learning can be leveraged by then being flushed-out and used as blog posts, website news posts, media outreach topics, and community report items.
- Consolidate communication about professional learning opportunities for staff.
 - **Tactics:** create a section on the internal staff web Portal for all professional learning opportunities (internal, from educational partners and external), create a process for ensuring all professional learning opportunities are posted to the new Portal section, communicate regularly throughout the year to all staff about the new Portal section.
 - **Evaluation:** Half of this objective was achieved. The new staff web Portal section for professional learning was created. A process was created for ensuring all opportunities are posted there. However, the new web Portal section still needs to be promoted to staff.
 - **Lessons learned:** Based on initial staff feedback, there is demand for a central location for professional learning opportunities. We need to regularly communicate to staff to ensure they know where to access information about professional learning opportunities.
- Celebrate initiatives taking place in classrooms related to new curriculum, assessment, technology, learning in nature, sustainability, Aboriginal education, and supporting diverse learners.
 - **Tactics:** work with schools and staff to generate blog posts, social media sharing, website news articles, staff newsletter items, media outreach and 2018 Community Report articles highlighting new curriculum, assessment, technology, learning in nature, sustainability, Aboriginal education, and supporting diverse learners.
 - **Evaluation:** We did fairly well in terms of celebrating initiatives related to curriculum, assessment, technology, learning in nature, sustainability, Aboriginal education, and supporting diverse learners. However, we did better in some areas than others:
 - Curriculum: 1 website news post, four blog posts
 - Assessment: 1 website news post, 1 blog post
 - Technology: 1 website news post, 9 blog posts, 1 community report item, 1 news media story
 - Learning in nature: 2 website news posts, 2 blog posts, 2 community report items, 1 news media story
 - Sustainability: 8 website news posts, 7 blog posts, 3 community report items, 5 news media stories

- Aboriginal education: 7 website news posts, 5 blog posts, 2 community report items, 2 news media stories
- Supporting diverse learners: 11 website news posts, 5 blog posts, 3 community report items, 9 news media stories
- **Lessons learned:** We need to continue sharing about these topics. We need to make an effort to share more about curriculum and assessment.

Strategic Goal #2: **Encourage**

Encourage the growth of collaborative, adaptive and personalized learning environments.

Communications objectives:

- Support staff and student collaboration by utilizing web-based platforms.
 - **Tactics:** clean-up staff internal web Portal and create a communications plan to inform staff about the new Portal organization (including Portal training) to support staff collaboration.
 - **Evaluation:** This objective was partially achieved. A plan for cleaning-up the Portal was created and clean-up started.
 - **Lessons learned:** This is a very big project that needs more time dedicated to it.

Strategic Goal #3: **Nurture**

Nurture an inspiring and healthy work environment.

Communications objectives:

- Make it easier for staff to find and access resource documents and other school district related materials/resources/personnel.
 - **Tactics:** Portal clean-up to improve consistency and searchability (enabling staff to easily access what they need), Portal training/communication regarding the clean-up and new consistency standards, support internal staff communication by creating district personnel and responsibility lists on the Portal.
 - **Evaluation:** This objective was partially achieved. A plan for cleaning-up the Portal was created and clean-up started. The plan includes new consistency standards, training about these standards for staff who manage Portal departments, and training for all staff on how to navigate the restructured Portal. The plan also includes technology updates to improve searchability.
 - **Lessons learned:** This is a very big project that needs more time dedicated to it.
- Make the permissions process easier for staff and parents by moving permission forms online.
 - **Tactics:** move student permission forms online onto the School Cash Online system, create/execute a communications and training plan for staff, create/execute a communications and training plan for parents.

- **Evaluation:** This objective was partially achieved. Four district-wide permission forms were moved online to the School Cash Online system. However, most permission forms are still in paper form. Staff and parents were communicated with and trained.
- **Lessons learned:** The School Cash Online system is OK for forms, but is not the best platform. The set-up is confusing for parents because it is a finance system so references payments, checkouts, purchases and receipts (even though forms do not require payment). Also, there is no flexibility at the school level in this system; it needs to be entirely managed centrally. There is a need to investigate a different online forms system.

Strategic Goal #4: Develop

Develop and promote innovative and sustainable programs.

Communications objectives:

- Support Active and Safe Routes to School.
 - **Tactics:** back-to-school website item and website banner promotion, walk maps created for all schools and posted to the websites, support PACs with Active and Safe Routes to School initiatives.
 - **Evaluation:** This objective was partially achieved. There was good coverage of walk/roll initiatives on the school district website, blog and social channels. There were 3 website news posts, 3 blog posts, 1 community report item, and 1 news media story. Website banners were used several times throughout the year. There were also new videos added to the Active and Safe Routes to School website section and walk maps were added to school websites for 15 schools. The additional 17 schools still need walk maps created and uploaded to the websites.
 - **Lessons learned:** There is a need to work with the District of North Vancouver to enhance the Active and Safe Routes to School program in schools within the District of North Vancouver.
- Celebrate innovative teaching in relation to new curriculum, assessment, technology, learning in nature, sustainability, Aboriginal education, and supporting diverse learners.
 - **Tactics:** work with schools and staff to generate blog posts, social media sharing, website news articles, staff newsletter items, media outreach and 2018 Community Report articles highlighting new curriculum, assessment, technology, learning in nature, sustainability, Aboriginal education, and supporting diverse learners.
 - **Evaluation:** We did fairly well in terms of celebrating initiatives related to curriculum, assessment, technology, learning in nature, sustainability, Aboriginal education, and supporting diverse learners. However, we did better in some areas than others:
 - Curriculum: 1 website news post, four blog posts
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- Supporting diverse learners: 11 website news posts, 5 blog posts, 3 community report items, 9 news media stories
- **Lessons learned:** We need to continue sharing about these topics. We need to make an effort to share more about curriculum and assessment.

Strategic Goal #5: **Provide**

Provide leadership in environmental education and sustainability practices.

Communications objectives:

- Support Active and Safe Routes to School.
 - **Tactics:** back-to-school website item and website banner promotion, walk maps created for all schools and posted to the websites, support PACs with Active and Safe Routes to School initiatives.
 - **Evaluation:** This objective was partially achieved. There was good coverage of walk/roll initiatives on the school district website, blog and social channels. There were 3 website news posts, 3 blog posts, 1 community report item, and 1 news media story. Website banners were used several times throughout the year. There were also new videos added to the Active and Safe Routes to School website section and walk maps were added to school websites for 15 schools. The additional 17 schools still need walk maps created and uploaded to the websites.
 - **Lessons learned:** There is a need to work with the District of North Vancouver to enhance the Active and Safe Routes to School program in schools within the District of North Vancouver.
- Communicate the new Sustainability Strategy.
 - **Tactics:** post the new Sustainability Strategy to the website, share with staff and parents via email, social media, local media outreach regarding the new Sustainability Strategy, blog posts, website news articles, staff newsletter items, and media outreach related to the implementation of the new Sustainability Strategy.
 - **Evaluation:** This objective was achieved. The new Sustainability Strategy was posted to the website, shared with staff and parents via email, social media, news website posts, blog posts, and the staff newsletter.
 - **Lessons learned:** There is a need to consolidate communications related to sustainability so that staff know where to access information, and so that staff and parents are not confused about the various initiatives related to sustainability that are taking place.

Strategic Goal #6: Strengthen

Strengthen and expand reciprocal community relations.

Communications objectives:

- Improve communication with parents and the public via websites.
 - **Tactics:** Clean-up websites to increase usability and searchability, regular maintenance and monitoring of website content to ensure accuracy and ease of access, improve website analytics to strategically adapt the websites to user needs, strategic use of social media to connect with parents and the public.
 - **Evaluation:** This objective was partially achieved. Website analytics were properly set-up. A plan was started to create website standards, but the plan is not yet complete. Clean-up of the websites started, but is not yet complete. Several changes to website navigation have occurred, such as adding a 'parents' tab and a 'land management' section.
 - **Lessons learned:** This is a very big project that needs more time dedicated to it.
- Reaching out to parents to investigate their communication needs.
 - **Tactics:** investigate doing a parent communications survey.
 - **Evaluation:** This objective was partially achieved. A draft survey has been created, but it still needs to be reviewed and finalized by the Communications Committee and the NVSD Executive Committee.
 - **Lessons learned:** The survey will be created through the Communications Committee so that all partner groups are involved in the creation of the survey and in evaluating the results once it is conducted.