

Columbia Public Schools
Comprehensive Communications Plan
2010-2015



Columbia Public Schools
Board of Education
Communications Committee

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In accordance with the school district's Comprehensive School Improvement Plan, the Comprehensive Communications Plan is a five-year plan that will be evaluated annual by the Board of Education's Communications Committee. Major revisions will be approved by the Board of Education.

Board of Education School Visits

Purpose

Learn about the programs, activities and concerns of the faculty, staff, parents and students at individual school buildings.

Strategy

Each board member will visit assigned buildings during the school year to learn more about the school's mission, accomplishments, needs and concerns. Visits may be scheduled at the convenience of each school board member and the school personnel. It is recommended that board members contact the building principal or director prior to their visit.

Group 1: Hickman, Shepard, Benton, Gentry, Field

Group 2: Oakland, Blue Ridge, Grant, Mill Creek, CORE

Group 3: Fairview, Cedar Ridge, West Boulevard, West Junior, Alpha Hart Lewis

Group 4: Jefferson, Derby Ridge, New Haven, Gifted Center, Lange

Group 5: Rock Bridge High School, Lee, Parkade, Two Mile Prairie

Group 6: Douglass, Field, Rock Bridge Elementary, Smithton, Early Childhood Center

Group 7: Career Center, Russell, Ridgeway, Midway Heights, Paxton Keeley

In subsequent academic years, board members will rotate through the seven school groups – either advancing one number, or moving from Group 7 to Group 1. New board members will be inserted into the rotation.

This formalized scheme does not preclude visits to other schools.

Board members should report out on the activities and events they see at their assigned schools at Board of Education meetings.

District Committees/Advisory Groups

Purpose

Maintain the pool of volunteers who serve on committees that advise the Board of Education.

Strategy

District Committees

Make community members aware of committee vacancies and how to apply for them by making the committee volunteer information more prominent on the district external Web site as well posting opportunities in other media/community outlets as available. Post volunteer information for district employees on InsideCPS. Additionally, post existing committee information and minutes on the district external Web site. Provide a periodic update to the Board of Education on committee progress. District committees or task forces that meet as necessary include, but are not limited to:

District Committees

- Achievement Gap Task Force
- Calendar Committee
- Intermediate Steering Committee
 - * Core Program Design Subcommittee
 - * Electives Program Design Subcommittee
 - * ECA/Co-curricular Subcommittee
 - * Prevention and Support Subcommittee
 - * Parent Involvement/Communications Subcommittee
- High School Construction Committee/Ad Hoc Construction Committee
- High School Site Selection Committee
- Comprehensive School Improvement Planning Committees (CSIP)
- Employee Benefits Committee (Internal Only)
- Enrollment Planning Committees
- Long-range Facilities Planning Committee
- Safety Committee
- Stipend Committee (Internal Only)
- Support Staff Salary and Welfare Committee (Internal Only)
- Technology Committee
- Title IV Advisory Committee (Safe and Drug-free Schools Act)
- Wellness Committee

Advisory Committees

- Communications/Marketing Advisory Council
- Curriculum Advisory Committees (Part of the Curriculum Development and Review Process)
- Energy and Environmental Issues Advisory Committee

Board of Education Committees

- Finance Committee
- Policy Committee
- Student Performance Committee
- Communications Committee

- Facilities/Construction Ad Hoc Committee

** With the approval or at the direction of the Board, the president of the Board may appoint temporary ad hoc and/or special lay committees to assist the Board.*

Advisory Groups

Communications/Marketing Advisory Group – A communications/marketing advisory council will be established to provide input and suggestions on current and proposed communications strategies. The council will be made up of local advertising, marketing, public relations and communications representatives who express an interest in serving on this volunteer committee.

Employee Advisory Groups – Establish employee advisory groups to strengthen communications between district administration and employees. The superintendent will meet with the groups on a regular and on-going basis. Established groups include:

- Non-certificated staff advisory council
- Middle-management advisory council
- Elementary teachers' advisory council
- Secondary teachers' advisory council

Evaluation

The number of committee volunteer service forms received will determine the success of this strategy. Additionally, an effort should be made to evaluate the use and function of committees district-wide. Each committee member should complete an online survey, to be developed, to assess his or her experience and impressions. Notification of survey availability to committee members will be done by committee chairs and via the Web site. Survey results will be kept in the district-wide committee file located at the Administration Building. Building administrators will be urged to utilize the survey, or one similar, for receiving input on building-level committees.

Additionally, in accordance with the CSIP goals the district will evaluate the following objectives:

- Board members will serve on two board committees annually.
- Board members will engage in a minimum of 10 hours of board development related to key school functions annually. Community committee members will be encouraged to attend board development functions.
- By January 2011, 20 percent of board and district committee members will be composed of registered voters with no ties to school governance or staff.

Forums/Public Hearings

Purpose

Facilitate informal meetings and chats between the district and patrons of the district. Provide opportunities for the patrons of the district to share concerns with the board and the district. Additionally, provide an opportunity for district employees to chat with the board in an informal setting.

Strategy

- Schedule strategically targeted community forums, including World Café forums inviting community members and school district employees to participate twice a year. The World Café will provide an opportunity for the community to dialogue about issues facing Columbia Public Schools in an interactive manner.
- Schedule forums as needed relating to the upcoming enrollment planning and construction processes for the new high school and any additional facility development plans.

Evaluation

The number of attendees will be used to evaluate the success of this strategy. Additionally, feedback from those attending will also be gathered and used to evaluate the strategy. Consider site location and topic choice when evaluating success of this strategy.

Interaction with Elected Officials

Purpose

Establish a dialogue with elected government representatives concerning issues related to education, schools and children.

Strategy

Invite city, county and state elected officials to meet with school board members and district administrators to discuss relevant topics of mutual interest. Hold annual meetings with the City of Columbia, Boone County Commission and emergency personnel from the city and the county.

- Legislative Breakfast
- County Commissioners Breakfast
- City Council and City Administrative Breakfast
- Monthly Meetings with City, County and School District staff members

Evaluation

Feedback from elected officials and the community regarding Columbia Public Schools' contact and involvement with government representatives will be used to evaluate this strategy.

Interaction with Special Groups

Purpose

Enhance awareness of programs and activities in the district or at a particular school and receive input from a variety of constituents regarding school issues.

Strategy

Arrange special occasions to meet with identified interest groups for discussion, tours or other appropriate activities. Respond to requests for meetings or interactions. A list of some of the key audiences is below.

Key Audiences	
<p style="text-align: center;">Internal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers Principals Administrators Library Media Specialists Counselors Food Service Employees Substitute Teachers Custodians Administrative Assistants English as a Second Language (ESL)/English Language Learners (ELL) Instructors Parents and Teachers Instructors Para-professionals Facilitators and Interpreters Mentors and Volunteers Special Education Specialists (Therapists, Psychological Examiners, etc.) Bus Drivers Students 	<p style="text-align: center;">External</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Leaders Chamber of Commerce and Businesses Government Officials (State and Local) Civic/Non-Profit Organizers Church/Clergy Interfaith Council Parochial, Private and Home-School Organizers and Institutions Higher Learning Institutions (colleges, technical schools, etc.) Home-School Parents Senior Citizens Parochial and Private School Parents Non-English Speaking Families Illiterate Members of the Community Real Estate and Development Representatives Medical Community Economically Disadvantaged Citizens Neighborhood Associations Media
<p>Parents and Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PTA/PTO Groups Highly Motivated Parents Parents of Special Needs Students Grandparents and Other Non-parent Relatives of Students Non-English Speaking Parents Economically Disadvantaged Parents and Students Parents of Preschool Students Prospective Parents Parent Volunteers Non-Reading Parents PAT Enrolled Families 	
<p><small>** This list is by no means inclusive of all groups the school district interacts with, it merely serves as a sampling of some of the audiences the district impacts.</small></p>	

Internet/Electronic Technology

Purpose

Make it possible for patrons of the district to receive and obtain information through a variety of mediums.

Strategy

- **District External Web Site** – The district will continue implementation of Web site enhancements to improve the functionality of the site. Additionally, the district will begin maintaining a district-wide electronic calendar of activities maintainable by each building to post on the Web site for parents. Surveys of public and employee opinion will also be conducted to gather additional input on site features and layout for future planning of a site redesign.
- **District Internal Web Site** – The district's internal information network, *InsideCPS*, will continue to be used and promoted to district staff. The site is user id and password protected. It is designed to eliminate the degrees of separation between Columbia Public Schools employees and the information they need and want. Additionally, a survey will be conducted to determine additional needs and usage by employees.
- **Key Communicator E-News** – The district's e-news e-mail/newsletter, *Key News*, will be used to distribute information about the district monthly or more often if necessary to individuals in the community who register to receive the information via e-mail. Influential individuals in the community who are good communicators will be encouraged to register for *Key News*. Registration will be available on the district's external Web site. Individuals receiving the communications can then forward the information or share the information with constituents. Conversely, key communicators will also be asked to share information back with the district. Strategies such as promotion at Back-to-School nights and back-pack mail will be used to increase the number of subscribers to the newsletter. Additionally, an invitation to sign up will be sent to all parent/guardians with e-mail addresses at the beginning of each school year. Additionally, the district will explore the option of making a similar paperless newsletter option available to individual school buildings.
- **CPSAlert** – Utilize the text messaging capabilities provided by Boone County National Bank to share immediate news, cancellations etc. with parents who subscribe to the service. Messaging can be building/activity specific. Additionally, the district will work to increase the number of subscribers by marketing the service to parents via Back-to-School and Meet the Teacher nights among other strategies. The district will also explore options for expanding the service to include voice and e-mail capabilities.
- **Web Casting/Pod Casting** – Provide the ability to download or access multimedia files via the district's Web site including CPS-TV programs and pod casts produced by broadcast journalism students, the superintendent and other related sources. The district will continue to explore the possibility of providing Web streaming video to its patrons.

Evaluation

The number of Web site hits and visits will be used to evaluate the Web site strategies. The number of subscribers will be used to evaluate the Key News and CPSAlert strategies. Additionally, information gathered from the online surveys will provide additional evaluation of the strategies' success.

Meeting with Students

Purpose

Hear directly the concerns and ideas of students.

Strategy

- **Contact Student Government Representatives** – Contact secondary student government representatives and emphasize the willingness of Board members to meet with groups of students and encourage groups of students to initiate meetings with Board members.
- **Board Meetings** - Ask building administrators to remind students they are welcome to attend Board meetings and comment on agenda items.
- **Student Advisory Councils** – Establish a high school and a junior high school student advisory council that will meet three to four times a year over lunch with the Superintendent and members of the Board of Education to discuss a chosen topic. The councils will be made up of six representatives from the high schools and six representatives from the junior high schools. Each secondary school should provide at least one male and one female and should be representative of the school population. Meetings will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Junior High School Advisory Council
September
December
High School Advisory Council
February
April/May

Evaluation

Student feedback about the council will be used to determine the success of this strategy. Additionally, the number of meetings scheduled between Board members and students will also be used in evaluation.

Newspaper

Purpose

Disseminate information about Columbia Public Schools and actions taken by the Board of Education.

Strategy

- **Opinion Editorials** - Submit opinion editorials from board members regarding hot topic issues within Columbia Public Schools on as needed basis. Abbreviated versions of the editorials can be provided to school and PTA newsletters for distribution to parents.
- **Opinion Column** – The superintendent will submit a regular monthly column to the *Columbia Business Times*.
- **Advertising** - Submit advertising as needed to promote activities such as community forums, board meetings, volunteer opportunities, CPS-TV programming etc.
- **Special Sections** - Continue to take advantage of special section advertising for Back-to-School, Volunteer Appreciation, Partners in Education and Teacher Appreciation.

Evaluation

Community response via Letters to the Editor, word of mouth and follow-up articles in the newspaper can be used to evaluate the success of this strategy.

Opinion Surveys

Purpose

Obtain opinions and feedback from parents, staff and other community members for use by the Board of Education, staff and administration.

Strategy

- **Communications Survey** – Provide an annual opportunity for the community and district staff to evaluate the effectiveness of Columbia Public Schools' communications strategies, determine brand perceptions and identify a perceptual map of patron opinion. The data will help inform decision-making and future communications planning.
- **Construction and Planning Process** – Provide opportunities for district patrons to provide input via online surveys in the construction and planning process for the new high school and the transition to the intermediate school structure.
- **MSIP** – The district provides an opportunity for teachers, community members, parents and students to complete surveys evaluating Columbia Public Schools as part of the Missouri School Improvement Program process. These surveys are developed by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and are administered by Columbia Public Schools.
- **Staff Development** – The district's School Improvement Department continuously evaluates and collects opinions on staff development opportunities throughout the district.
- **Human Resources** – The district's Human Resources Department continuously collects surveys on employee performance. This includes the 360 degree evaluation conducted on central administrators twice per year (November and May).
- **Substance Abuse Survey** – The district surveys 9-12 grade students as part of the Safe and Drug Free Schools Act. Results will be used to determine areas of concern as well as to develop substance abuse prevention marketing and communications strategies. Additional surveys related to student social norming may also be added. The survey will be conducted in the 2009-10 school year. (Every two years).

Evaluation

Response rate as well as survey responses will determine strategy success. Additionally, in accordance with the CSIP goals the district will evaluate the following objectives:

- By 2013, eighty percent of respondents to a stakeholder survey will rate the district as an "B" or above on effective communication with the public.
- By 2013, eighty percent of respondents to a stakeholder survey will rate the district as an "B" or above on effective communication with CPS teachers and staff.

Publications/Marketing Materials

Purpose

Make it possible for patrons of the district to receive and obtain information through a variety of mediums. To promote Columbia Public Schools to patrons and prospective patrons.

Strategy

- **Quarterly Report** -- Design, print and distribute a quarterly newsletter on district events and activities to the Columbia community. Newsletter is distributed via mail to all households in Columbia.
- **Yearbook** – Design, print and distribute an annual district report on district statistics, events and activities to the Columbia community. Yearbook is distributed via mail to all households in Columbia.
- **District Video** – Distribute the district's video promoting Columbia Public Schools. The video will be used to recruit teachers and staff, promote the district to potential Columbia residents and to celebrate district successes with current employees and patrons. The district video will air on CPS-TV. A new video will be produced every other year.
- **District Brochure** – Design, print and distribute a color district brochure. The brochure will feature statistics and programmatic information related to Columbia Public Schools. The brochure will be disseminated to a variety of community audiences including the Chamber of Commerce, Board of Realtors, Visitors Bureau, Columbia Public Library and interested patrons. The brochure will also be used as a recruiting tool for teachers and staff. The brochure will be developed once the Comprehensive School Improvement Planning process is completed for the 2009-10 school year.
- **Facts & Figures Quick Reference** – Design, print and distribute a fingertip-size facts and figures reference guide that contains district statistics and contact information. The quick reference can be distributed to district patrons, media and other community outlets such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Board of Realtors.

Evaluation

The number of copies distributed and the number of requests for additional copies will be used to evaluate the success of the strategy. In addition, feedback received from patrons will also be used to gauge success.

Radio

Purpose

Disseminate information about the actions taken by the Columbia Board of Education at its regular meeting sessions.

Strategy

Rotate board members through post-meeting live audio segments on various radio stations. Currently, board members are invited to appear on the *Daybreak* program on KFRU each Tuesday following regular Board of Education meetings. *Daybreak* runs from 8:40 a.m. to approximately 9:00 a.m. Board members have an opportunity to discuss the previous evening's board action and answer questions from the show's hosts, as well as answer questions from callers.

Similar opportunities at other radio stations reaching the Columbia community will be explored in order to increase radio exposure.

KFRU Appearance Schedule	
Board Meeting	Board Member Appearing
May 10, 2010	James Whitt Tuesday, May 11 – 8:30 a.m.
June 14, 2010	Christine King Tuesday, June 15 – 8:30 a.m.
July 2010 (TBA)	TBA July – 8:30 a.m.
September 13, 2010	Michelle Pruitt Tuesday, September 14 – 8:30 a.m.
October 11, 2010	Jonathan Sessions Tuesday, October 12 – 8:30 a.m.
November 8, 2010	Jan Mees Tuesday, November 9 – 8:30 a.m.
December 13, 2010	Tom Rose Tuesday, December 14 – 8:30 a.m.
January 10, 2011	Ines Segert Tuesday, January 11 - 8:30 a.m.
February 14, 2010	James Whitt Tuesday, February 15 – 8:30 a.m.
March 14, 2010	Christine King Tuesday, March 15 – 8:30 a.m.
April 11, 2010	Michelle Pruitt Tuesday, April 12 – 8:30 a.m.

The superintendent will also make regular appearances on various radio station programs including those airing on KFRU, KBIA, 93.9 The Eagle among others.

Evaluation

Feedback from listeners and the ratings information supplied by KFRU can be used to evaluate the success of this strategy. Additionally, information regarding preferred media outlets gathered from communications/public opinion surveys will be used to evaluate this strategy.

Recognitions

Purpose

To recognize and celebrate Columbia Public Schools employees and students as well as businesses and community organizations for the distinguished service they provide to the district and the community.

Strategy

- **Board Recognitions** – Recognize outstanding accomplishments by students and employees at the monthly Board of Education meetings. These recognitions will take place during the special recognitions portion of the board meeting and will be limited to state and national awards for employees and students.
- **Columbia Fund for Academic Excellence** – This award was established by the late Ray Lewis and recognizes educator excellence through a nomination process by parents, colleagues and students. Award categories include: Outstanding Elementary Educator Grades Pre-K-2; Outstanding Elementary Educator, Grades 3-5; Outstanding Middle /Junior High Educator; Outstanding First Year Teacher; Outstanding Senior High Educator; Outstanding Educator in a Specialized Area; Outstanding Administrator.
- **Teacher of the Year Nomination** – Recognize Columbia Public Schools' nominee for Missouri Teacher of the Year. The nominee will typically be selected from the winners of the Columbia Fund for Academic Excellence award.
- **CPS-TV** – Recognize Columbia Public Schools' retiring educators with a special slide show of photos to air on CPS-TV.
- **InsideCPS** - Employees and schools or programs that receive awards or recognitions throughout the year will be listed under the Bravos section of *InsideCPS*.
- **District Web Site** – Employees and schools or programs that receive awards or recognitions throughout the year will be recognized under the News You Can Use section of the district's Web site.
- **Key News Electronic Newsletter** – Employees and schools or programs that receive awards or recognitions throughout the year will be highlighted in the district's electronic newsletter, *Key News*.
- **Print Publications** - Employees and schools or programs that receive awards or recognitions throughout the year will be highlighted in the district's quarterly print newsletter, *Quarterly Report* and the district's annual report, *The Yearbook*.
- **Red Carpet Service Award** – Throughout the course of the year, "secret shoppers" will make note of outstanding service practices by employees and/or volunteers across the district. Employees who meet the set criteria will be honored with a Red Carpet Service Award. Secret shoppers can be parents, volunteers, employees or community members.

Evaluation

Feedback from district employees and the number of nominations received for the various recognition awards will be used to evaluate the success of these strategies. Additionally, communications surveying will determine if additional recognition or awards programs need to be established in future years.

Speakers Bureau

Purpose

To establish content specific speakers bureaus to represent Columbia Public Schools in a variety of public forums as well as to civic and community groups. Bureaus can also be used to address district employees and parents on certain district-wide issues.

Strategy

- **Superintendent** – The district superintendent will visit various civic and community organizations to share the good news about Columbia Public Schools and provide an update on school district activities.
- **Bond/Tax Levy Elections** – Members of the district administrative staff and members of the citizens committees operating election campaigns related to bond or tax levy elections will serve as speakers to communicate information regarding bond proposals or tax levy implications. Speakers will be provided with presentation materials. Additionally, district administrative staff will serve as speakers to update civic groups, parents, district staff and other community audiences on the progress of bond fund expenditures if bond funds are approved by voters.

Evaluation

The number of completed presentations, as well as the number of scheduled presentations will serve as the evaluation of this strategy. Additionally, feedback from presentation recipients will serve as means to evaluate the success of messages being communicated in the various speaking engagements.

Television

Purpose

Disseminate information about Columbia Public Schools.

Strategy

Enhance the use of CPS-TV.

1. Define mission and goal.

The district should determine the mission and goals of CPS-TV in order to better maximize resources and streamline programming and video development responsibilities.

2. Evaluate the effectiveness of CPS-TV as a communication vehicle.

The district should determine the number of constituents who have access to the channel. Focus groups and programming surveys should be conducted of those groups who have access to the channel. Information obtained from community surveys can also be used.

3. Produce additional programming.

If focus groups and surveying determines interest in certain types of programming or additional programming production assistance should be provided to help develop the programming via interns, high school students or part-time help. CPS-TV will also develop programming specifically for district staff including the school year convocation and mid-year morale booster.

4. Communication of CPS-TV availability.

The district must be more effective in communicating when programs will run, remembering that people do not read everything they receive. The district will work toward making the channel available to Charter Communications subscribers as well as satellite dish subscribers. Strategies to consider include:

- Announcing the next show through Key News Updates;
- Posting a programming schedule on the district's Web site and *InsideCPS*;
- Including the schedule in school newsletters and asking PTAs to promote the program schedule in their communications;
- Placing announcements of upcoming programming in senior citizens centers, public libraries and other public places;
- Announcing upcoming programming at Board of Education meetings and civic organizations;
- Including the program schedule in advertisement in the *Columbia Daily Tribune* and *Missourian* publications;
- Initiating Web casting, Web streaming and Pod Casting of programs;
- Providing programming Web downloads of Board of Education meetings, the district's student-produced news magazine show and graduation or sporting events for parents.

5. Programming input from district employees and community.

Provide a means for CPS-TV viewers to provide feedback and request programming. District staff can contribute comments via *InsideCPS*.

6. Share CPS-TV successes.

Provide information on the station to real estate agents, civic organizations, parents, Chamber of

Commerce, Visitors and Convention Center, etc.

7. Utilize Additional Television Resources in the Community

The district will use opportunities to appear on community television programs such as KOMU Cares, Mediacom Newsleaders, CAT-TV's Making a Difference among others to share information about school district events and activities.

Training

Purpose

Provide district staff and administrators opportunities to participate in media and communications training. Provide training opportunities on the basics of school finance, school district governance and an overview of district operations for school district patrons.

Strategy

Hold training sessions at various times of the year in order to reach key administrators such as principals and building secretaries who deal frequently with media and communications issues including newsletter publication, Web site development and communicating to parents. The sessions can also serve as a refresher on communications law pertaining to education and release of student information.

Hold annual informational sessions on school finance, school district governance and an overview of district operations.

Evaluation

The number of sessions held and the number of attendees will be used to evaluate this strategy. A post-session survey can also be used to evaluate the success of the session and serve to improve future sessions.

Crisis Communications

Purpose

Communication is a critical part of crisis management. Staff, students, parents, community members and media representatives expect accurate information promptly during a crisis. The district will institute a crisis communication plan as well as a crisis communications chain of command as part of its effort to prepare and plan for crisis situation.

Strategy

- **Communications Chain of Command and Command Center** – In the event of a crisis a Communications Command Center will be established and will follow the chain of command structure to include the following (see organizational chart located on page 23):
 - Crisis Communications Team Leader/Director
 - Spokesperson(s)
 - Communications Command Center Coordinator
 - Internal/External Communications Officer(s)
 - Media Manager
 - Research & Media Monitoring
 - Webmaster
 - Crisis & Special Events Liaison
 - Volunteers – including student newspaper reporters and fellow school public relations employees from neighboring school districts.

- **CPSAlert** - Utilize the text messaging capabilities provided by Boone County National Bank to share immediate crisis news and updates with parents who subscribe to the service. Explore expanding the service to include additional voice and e-mail capabilities.

- **Statewide Alert System** – Utilize the statewide alert system established by the Missouri School Boards Association to monitor any crisis or emergency situations statewide.

- **Web Site** – The district's Web site will be utilized to communicate information in a crisis situation. The site has a scroll bar to post emergency or immediate news in addition to a Hot Topics and News You can Use Section. Additionally, a "dark" Web site will be developed, which will only be used in the event of a district-wide emergency or crisis.

- **Dark Web Site** – In the event of a district-wide crisis, a dark Web site will be activated. The dark site, a scaled down version of the district's Web site, will be tailored specifically to meet the needs of constituents including staff, parents and community members who need immediate news regarding a crisis situation.

- **InsideCPS** – The district's internal Web site, *InsideCPS*, will be used to communicate crisis information directly to district staff.

- **InsideCPS Crisis Information Site for Administrators** – An informational site specifically for building administrators is available via *InsideCPS*. The discussion group will allow the Communications Director or Crisis Manager to share information with building administrators regarding a crisis situation. It also has the ability to allow building administrators to post questions or provide additional information. This site is secure and protected. Only building administrators will have access to the site.

- **Key News Electronic Newsletter** – Crisis information and alerts will be sent out using the district's electronic newsletter to parents and community members who have subscribed to the service.
- **CPS-TV** – When necessary, utilize CPS-TV to disseminate crisis information to parents and the community.
- **Telephone Notification** – The district will utilize existing building telephone call systems (where available) to provide crisis information directly to parents. This can also be used to provide parent pick-up and/or meeting locations if necessary. The district will continue to research possibilities for the addition of a district-wide rapid call/alert system.
- **Media Notification (Press Releases/Press Conferences)** – The Crisis Communication Command Center will handle all media notifications. The center will provide press releases and stage press conferences if necessary. Daily briefings for crisis events that last multiple days will also be conducted. The command center may also enact a press pool in the event of district-wide or catastrophic crisis. The Crisis Communications Command Center will also be responsible for providing guidelines for media access to students and staff.
- **Columbia Daily Tribune Web Site** – Columbia Public Schools has been given access to post school closings and cancellation information directly on the Columbia Daily Tribune's Web site. The 2009-10 school year will be the first year this strategy is piloted.
- **Building Level Crisis Kits** – Crisis communication kits containing sample parent letters, the communication command structure and other relevant materials will be provided to the crisis coordinator and principals in each building.
- **Training** – All teachers will complete Homeland Security's National Incident Management System (NIMS) training process for crisis management.

If a crisis situation warrants additional strategies the following strategies may be enacted:

- **Parent Meeting(s)** – The Crisis Communication Command Center will stage a parent meeting within 72 hours of catastrophic or district-wide crisis event. The purpose will be to communicate any information parents may need to know such as the district's plans for handling the crisis, resources available and allow parents to ask questions.
- **Crisis Hotline** – A crisis hotline number will be established. The number will be made available to parents in the event of a crisis. The hotline will either provide a recording of pertinent information or will be manned by support staff and volunteers to help answer questions. This decision will depend on the type of crisis.

Evaluation

Feedback during and after a crisis situation will clearly define the effectiveness of the crisis communications strategies. Additionally, it will be necessary to test the strategies during training situations to ensure that strategies are not developed in isolation and additional options or changes in strategies can be accommodated.

Crisis Communication Command Center

**Communications Director
(Strategist/Counselor & Spokesperson)**

Spokesperson(s)

Command Center Coordinator

Media Manager

**External
Communications
Officer**

**Internal
Communications
Officer**

Research & Media Monitoring

Media Support Staff

**Crisis/Special Events
Coordinator**

Volunteers

Other Support Staff

Substance Abuse Prevention

Purpose

Use communications strategies to help combat the use and misinformation regarding substance abuse in Columbia Public Schools.

Strategy

- **Evaluation** – Identify current practices and implementation timelines in each school and program regarding substance abuse prevention to determine effectiveness and opportunities for maximizing resources. Based on results of the evaluation process additional/complementary strategies will be developed for the following audiences:
 - **District Employees**
 - **Parents**
 - **Students (Pre-K – 12)**
 - **Community-at-large**
- **Publications/Posters** – Develop audience and age appropriate informational publications for parents, students and community members. Additionally, develop an age appropriate poster campaign to display in school buildings and classrooms across the district.
- **Television** – Utilize CPS-TV and the community public access television channel to broadcast programming related to substance abuse prevention for various audiences. Make video/DVD resources also available to parents to take home.
- **Promotional Items** – Develop a variety of promotional items for students and parents to promote substance abuse prevention and drug-free awareness. Items will be age and audience appropriate.
- **Student Incentive Program** – Develop a student incentive program to encourage students of all ages to remain drug-free throughout the school year. Invite local businesses and organizations to support the student incentive program.
- **Community Outreach** – Provide information to the community about the district's substance abuse prevention programs and opportunities to support the prevention campaign. Additionally, utilize community partnerships such as Youth Community Coalition to reach identified target audiences. Target audiences at community events for information distribution and awareness campaigning.
- **Web Site** – Develop a Substance Abuse Prevention Web site that includes information and resources for the identified target audiences.
- **Pod Casting/Web casting** – Provide the ability to download or access multimedia files regarding substance abuse prevention via the district's substance abuse Web site including CPS-TV programs and pod casts.
- **Newsletters** – Utilize the district's *Quarterly Report* newsletter as well as the district's electronic newsletter to provide information regarding substance abuse prevention.

- **Informational Speakers/Programs** – Provide opportunities for target audiences to hear from informational speakers/programs regarding substance abuse prevention.
- **Training** – Conduct substance abuse prevention training as well as training on the recognition of the signs and symptoms of substance abuse to employees and parents.

Evaluation

Comparison data from the district's Safe and Drug Free School Survey can be used to evaluate the success of these strategies. Additionally, feedback from target audiences will also be utilized.

Election Campaigns

Purpose

To provide information on bond or tax levy ballot measures proposed by the Board of Education.

Strategy

Situation Assessment

- Conduct a situation analysis or research-based evaluation to determine the election climate and community perceptions regarding the school district and the ballot measure(s)
- Evaluate past election results by precinct
- Hold a pre-campaign meeting with all district administrators to review campaign issues, guidelines and strategic plan

Voter Registration

- Provide voter registration cards and information to all buildings within the district. These are to be provided to all parents and staff who may not already be registered.
- Gather a list of students eligible to vote and encourage them to register to vote.
- Provide information on the voter registration processes – deadlines, voting absentee etc. This can be done through the following outlets:
 - *Quarterly Report*
 - CPS-TV
 - Web site
 - *Key News*
 - Q&A One-sheets
 - Presentations conducted by the election speakers bureau
 - School building newsletters

Publications & Electronic Media

- Provide information on the proposed ballot measure via the following publications and electronic media outlets:
 - *Quarterly Report*
 - *Key News*
 - CPS-TV (develop a program explaining the ballot measure)
 - CAT-TV
 - Web site
 - School Newsletters (articles and inserts of the Q&A One-sheets)
 - Q&A One-sheets
 - Media coverage (Radio, television and print)
 - Editorial column in *Columbia Business Times*
 - E-mail list serves such as Partners In Education, Neighborhood Associations etc.

Speakers Bureau

- Develop a presentation to be used by the superintendent and administration staff members
- Schedule presentation at civic, school staff, community, business and parent groups. The district maintains a list of organizations and schedules time for the bureau to speak to each group. In past elections, there have been more than 200 presentations conducted to various community groups.
- Tape the superintendent conducting the presentation to air on CPS-TV and CAT-TV

Citizens for Continued Excellence in Columbia Public Schools

- Reconvene the committee to develop the persuasive campaign
- Committee will be responsible for developing and implementing any and all vote-yes strategies, including:
 - Letters to the Editor
 - Paid Letters to the Editor
 - Paid print advertising
 - Yard signs and any additional signage deemed appropriate by the committee
 - Mailings and promotional material printings including, postcards that are sent to all parents in the school district, buttons, stickers or bumper stickers
 - Participate in speakers bureau
 - Distribute materials at parent pick-ups outside of schools
 - Distribute materials at community events such as Chamber of Commerce Breakfasts etc.

Evaluation

Gather post election results, media coverage and documentation on campaign successes and failures to determine any strategy revisions for future campaigns. Additionally, in accordance with the CSIP goals the district will evaluate the following objectives:

- Over the next five years, from a baseline, the percent of registered voters voting on school ballot issues will increase by 20 percent in the five precincts with the lowest percentage of registered voters voting.
- Over the next five years, from a baseline, the percent of registered voters voting on school ballot issues will increase by 10 percent.