JOSEPH SEARS
EST. 1899

2017-2018 Communications Plan

(One-page summary)

Priority District Communication Objectives for SY 17-18

Academic Advancement

- Hold two student assessment data presentations for families throughout the year.

Exceptional Organization

- Create brochures and flyers highlighting district offerings. These will be included in a folder given to prospective and touring families.
- Create a guiding document for parents on Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports
- Add and revise several pages on the District website.
- Issue the annual survey to faculty and families.

Operational Responsibility

- Create a video and printed materials to communicate the District's vision and other elements of the strategic plan.

Collaborative Learning Community

- Evaluate the Sears to Home newsletter.
- Create a social media plan to leverage Facebook and Twitter in order to better communicate with families, community members and alumni.
- Create a calendar of expected curriculum renewal milestones for families.
- Create diagrams explaining the administrative structure and the administrator responsibilities.

Community Engagement Analysis Summary

- The annual community forum is effective in bringing residents into the District.
- The annual report has steadily improved over the past few years.
- Social media will be utilized as the primary way to engage the community beginning in SY 18-19.
- District mailings and postcards have proven to be an effective way to inform the community about District events.
- Board and administrative email communications to families are effective.
- The website is an effective communication tool and will continue to improve.
- Second Cup of Coffees are effective and can be improved.
- The District will look to increase the use of video communications in SY 18-19.

KSD38 Comprehensive Communications Plan 2017-2018

A. Strategic Communication Initiatives

1. Academic Advancement and Personal Growth
    a. Hold Bi-Annual Student Assessment Data Presentation
2. Exceptional Organization
    a. Create Informational Materials for Prospective Families
    b. Create MTSS Guiding Document
    c. Complete Phase 2 of Website Design
    d. Solicit Feedback Through Faculty/Family Surveys
3. Operational Responsibility
    a. Communicate the Strategic Plan through Video and Printed Materials
4. Collaborative Learning Community
    a. Evaluate Effectiveness of Sears to Home Newsletter
    b. Establish District Presence on Social Media Platforms and Increase Digital Alumni Engagement
    c. Create Calendar of Expected Curriculum Milestones
    d. Create an Administrative Structure and Function Communication

Future Strategic Communication & Engagement Initiatives

- ➔ Video communication initiative
- ➔ Community-focused outreach events
- ➔ Local businesses entrepreneurship program
- ➔ New construction open house
- ➔ Parent back to school digital navigation workshop
- ➔ Communicate facilities projects and priorities
- ➔ Alumni and community digital/print publication

B. Communication Initiatives Analysis

Hold Bi-Annual Student Assessment Data Presentations

Objective: The Principal will present a review of student assessment data to District parents and community members twice during the 2017-2018 school year. Similar presentations will be made to District faculty and the Kenilworth Board of Education.

Deliverables:

- ✓ *Parent/Community Student Data Presentation (First)*
- ✓ *Parent/Community Student Data Presentation (Second)*

Target completion date: October 2017 (First) and March 2018 (Second)

Evaluate Effectiveness of Sears to Home Newsletter

Objective: The Principal, in collaboration with the Communication Coordinator, will evaluate the Sears to Home newsletter for content, format and publication frequency. The evaluation will be done through informal parent feedback, newsletter open/click rates and the annual parent survey.

Deliverables:

- ✓ *Revised Sears to Home newsletter for SY 18-19*

Target completion date: May 2018

Create Informational Materials for Prospective Families

Objective: A series of pamphlets and one-page flyers containing information about various district offerings and opportunities will be created for inclusion in an informational folder for prospective and touring families. This includes but is not limited to information on:

- *Sears traditions*
- *Athletics offerings*
- *Differentiation*
- *Curriculum and specials offerings*
- *Extracurricular offerings*
- *Music department offerings*
- *Multi-tiered system of supports*
- *Assessment*
- *Junior kindergarten*

Deliverables:

- ✓ *A registration folder that adequately showcases all district programs and offerings*
- ✓ *Multiple informational flyers and brochures*

Target completion date: April 2018

Create a Multi-Tiered System of Supports Guiding Document

Objective: The Director of Student Services will work with the MTSS faculty team members to publish a document that provides an overview on MTSS and how it is implemented at The Joseph Sears School.

Deliverables:

- ✓ *MTSS Guiding Document*

Target completion date: June 2018

Communicate the Strategic Plan through Video and Printed Materials

Objective: The strategic plan will be communicated to all parents, residents and faculty members through printed materials, a direct mailing and a promotional video. The Administration will communicate this information to faculty and a Second Cup of Coffee will be held to communicate the information to district residents and families.

Deliverables:

- ✓ *Draft of strategic plan elements (December)*
- ✓ *Draft of strategic plan deliverables (January)*
- ✓ *A bi-fold document showcasing the strategic plan (February)*
- ✓ *A community mailing to residents (March)*
- ✓ *Strategic plan promotional video (April)*

Target completion date: April 2018

Solicit Feedback Through Faculty/Family Surveys

Objective: The Administration, on behalf of the Kenilworth Board of Education, will collect feedback from District employees and families through annual surveys. The survey questions will remain exactly as presented to both groups during the 2016-2017 school year with the addition of no more than five questions relevant to topics of interest during the 2017-2018 school year.

Deliverables:

- ✓ *Faculty survey data*
- ✓ *Faculty survey data analysis*
- ✓ *Family survey data*
- ✓ *Family survey data analysis*

Target completion date: February 2018 (Faculty), May 2018 (Families)

Establish District Presence on Social Media Platforms and Increase Digital Alumni Engagement

Objective: A comprehensive district social media plan will be developed during the 2017-2018 school year for launch in SY 18-19. The social media plan will include community engagement guidelines for Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms. The plan will also cover district policy for staff on social media usage.

Deliverables:

- ✓ *District social media presence on multiple social platforms including Facebook and Twitter*
- ✓ *Two month social media pilot in spring 2018*
- ✓ *District social media plan and usage guidelines*

Target completion date: July 2018

Complete Phase 2 of Website Design

Objective: Several additional webpages will be created and enhanced to better showcase and highlight district offerings and initiatives.

Deliverables:

- ✓ *Revised communications/news page*
- ✓ *Revised student services department pages*
- ✓ *Revised outdoor classroom page*
- ✓ *Creation of fine arts page*
- ✓ *Creation of facilities project page*
- ✓ *Creation of specials and course offerings/progression pages*

Target completion date: Summer 2018

Create Calendar of Expected Curriculum Milestones

Objective: The Principal will create a calendar of expected curriculum milestones as it relates to the curriculum renewal cycle. The calendar and information will contain specific information for students of each grade level. This calendar will be distributed to District families.

Deliverables:

- ✓ *Calendar of expected curriculum milestones*

Target completion date: March 2018

Create an Administrative Structure and Function Communication

Objective: The Administration will create a communication piece outlining the administrative structure, administrative responsibilities and chain of command for problem solving. This will be shared with District families electronically and posted to the District website.

Deliverables:

- ✓ *Administrative structure, administrative responsibilities and chain of command graphic*
- ✓ *Administrative framework email to families*
- ✓ *Administrative framework information posted to the website*

Target completion date: November 2017

C. Communications Timeline

2017-2018 Communications Plan Timeline

	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June
Evaluate Sears to Home									
Prospective Family Folder									
MTSS Guiding Document									
Strategic Plan Materials									
Social Media Plan									
Website Phase 2									
Assessment Data Presentations									
Faculty & Family Surveys									
Curriculum Milestones Calendar									
Admin. Structure Communication									

1. Evaluate Sears to Home
    a. March: Analyze newsletter and write 2-3 questions for inclusion in annual parent survey
    b. April: Gather survey results and determine changes for SY 18-19
    c. May: Present findings to the Superintendent
2. Prospective Family Folder
    a. November: Planning folder content
    b. December: Draft and produce materials with faculty/staff
    c. January: Draft and produce materials with faculty/staff
    d. February: Draft and produce materials with faculty/staff
    e. March: Compile content, design materials and revise
    f. April: Finalize and publish folder content
3. MTSS Guiding Document
    a. June: Publish document
4. Strategic Plan Materials
    a. November: Compile all feedback and present a draft of mission/vision/values to the strategic plan task force
    b. December: Produce draft of strategic plan elements
    c. January: Design and revise deliverables, hire videographer
    d. February: Finalize deliverables, conceptualize video; begin filming
    e. March: Film and edit video

    f. April: Finalize video
5. Social Media Plan
    a. February: Preliminary meetings and research on social media
    b. March: Draft social media guidelines and documents
    c. April: Implement social media pilot
    d. May: Implement social media pilot
    e. June: Analyze and revise social media plan for SY 18-19
6. Website Phase 2
    a. January – June: Ongoing website development
7. Assessment Data Presentation
    a. October: Parent/community student data presentation
    b. March: Parent/community student data presentation
8. Faculty/Family Surveys
    a. February: Issue faculty/staff survey
    b. May: Issue family survey
9. Curriculum Calendar
    a. March: Release curriculum calendar
10. Administrative Structure Communication
    a. December: Present and communicate administrative structure graphic

Community Engagement Report

Community Forums

Year	Summary
2015-2016	Community forums were held on a topical basis during the 2015-2016 school year. Community members, particularly parents, engaged with the District primarily through Board attendance based upon specific concerns. The Board held a community roundtable to address the concerns of 6th grade parents regarding math placement.
2016-2017	The Board of Education and the Administration hosted an inaugural community forum in September to engage in open dialogue with residents and district families.
2017-2018	The Board held its second annual community forum in October.

Effectiveness: Now in its second year, the annual community forum has proven to be an effective means of welcoming families and residents to the District to dialogue with the Board on key school issues. Advanced notice in the form of postcard mailings contributed to the effectiveness of the community forums.

Conclusion: The community forum should continue in its current format moving forward. The Board and Administration should consider the benefits of adding a second community forum in the spring.

Annual Publications

Year	Summary
2015-2016	Due to various timing issues, the annual report was not published during the 2015-2016 school year.
2016-2017	An annual report was published in December 2016. The report included: an overview of the curriculum renewal cycle, PARCC data, an introduction of the Director of Student Services, financial analysis and the new logo/branding materials. The 2016-2017 annual report was published in full color under the guidance of the Communication Coordinator and a new graphic design firm.
2017-2018	An annual report was published in October 2017. The annual report included a theme (technology & innovation) and highlighted facilities, retirees, PARCC data, a school tradition and a financial analysis letter from the Superintendent/CSBO.

Effectiveness: The annual report has become a more effective vehicle for community engagement in recent years due to an emphasis on graphic design, photography and a more user-friendly approach to content. The effectiveness of an annual report content theme is still unclear, however initial feedback on the 2017-2018 annual report suggests a theme may be worth continuing in future years.

Conclusion: Annual report design and content has consistently improved over the past several years. The use of graphics, photography and user-friendly content will continue in future annual reports.

Print and Social Media

Year	Summary
2015-2016	The Winnetka Talk/Wilmette Life ran a story on The Joseph Sears School graduation tradition. Several press releases were distributed to local media outlets related to the District's hosting the annual Scripps Spelling Bee qualification round. There was no coordinated social media effort throughout the year.
2016-2017	Press releases on the new KEA contract were distributed to local media outlets. The Chicago Tribune ran a story with a photo gallery on the District's hosting of the Scripps Spelling Bee. Photos of school traditions (graduation, field day) were published in Kenilworth Life magazine. There was no coordinated social media effort throughout the year.
2017-2018	The District has not appeared in any print/digital media outlets as of November 2017. Several press releases, including a press releases showcasing a faculty accomplishment, are planned for the year. A social media plan will be developed with implementation targeted for 2018-2019.

Effectiveness: Print and social media has not been a focus of the District's communications plan over the past few years.

Conclusion: Traditional print media, specifically local newspapers, no longer has the same reach and importance as it had 10-15 years ago. School districts have increasingly relied upon social media to directly connect and engage with local residents, alumni and

prospective families. The District will look to leverage social media as the primary form of community engagement moving forward with print media as a secondary option.

Direct Mailings

Year	Summary
2015-2016	Two direct mailings were sent out to the Kenilworth residential community: one advertising the retirement celebration for Joyce Toan and another promoting winter music concerts. Both postcards were designed internally.
2016-2017	Three direct mailings were sent out to the Kenilworth residential community: one advertising the community forum, one advertising spring traditions and one advertising District retiree celebrations. Two of the postcards were professionally designed.
2017-2018	Two direct mailings have been sent out to the Kenilworth residential community through November 2017: one promoting winter music concerts and one advertising the Community Sing event. Both postcards were professionally designed. Several additional direct mailings are planned to promote spring traditions, the finalization of the strategic plan and the community retiree celebration.

Effectiveness: Through faculty, staff and resident feedback, direct mailings have proven to be the most effective means of communicating with the Kenilworth community. The focus on design in accordance with the District's visual identity and color palate has created consistent communications in line with the community's expectations of the District.

Conclusion: The District has significantly increased the quantity and quality of direct mailings over the past few years. Direct mailings will continue to be a primary focus of the District's communications plan moving forward.

Email Communications

Year	Summary
2015-2016	The District began using Constant Contact email software in 2015. This software enhanced the appearance of District emails and allowed the District to gather analytical data on emails to targeted groups of stakeholders. The Sears to Home newsletter was reformatted this year. All administrative emails to District parents population were reviewed by the Communication Coordinator. Additionally, the publishing time for Board Briefs was reduced to within 48 hours of board meetings.
2016-2017	Several new administrative communications were added during SY16-17, including: a revised back to school packet for parents and a new faculty introductory email from the Superintendent. A District administrative email template was adopted in connection with the District's new visual identity. Sears to Home was refined once more to be compatible with mobile phones and tablet devices.
2017-2018	The parent email communications initiatives which began during SY16-17

	continued into the 2017-2018 school year. Information on school events continues to be proactively communicated to the parent community by the Board and the Administration.

Effectiveness: As evident by comments and data from the 2016-2017 parent survey, District email communications to District parents have steadily increased in quality over the past several years.

Conclusion: The District continues to communicate effectively with families through email. Sears to Home, the District's e-newsletter, will continue to be monitored and evaluated to better meet the needs of District families. The District is lacking in email communications specific to alumni and Kenilworth residents. Future considerations will be given to methods of gathering data and communicating with those groups in SY 18-19.

Website and Digital Presence

Year	Summary
2015-2016	Faculty, parent and staff survey feedback on the District website prompted a website redesign initiative during SY15-16. The website was updated to include a user-friendly layout, a faculty/staff directory, a sortable calendar system integrated with Google Calendars, an integrated forms manager, an updated media player and improved website content layout and organization.
2016-2017	The District launched the new website during SY 16-17. A variety of website needs and modifications were identified during the launch year.
2017-2018	A plan to address the District's remaining website needs will be reviewed and implemented during SY 17-18. A parent outreach event on website navigation is tentatively scheduled to take place at the beginning of SY 18-19.

Effectiveness: The redesigned website has the capability to be an effective method for engaging the District community.

Conclusion: The website has not been fully utilized to its capabilities as a vehicle for community engagement and promotion of the District's strategic offerings. The website will be refined during SY 17-18 with additional considerations made for content management and publication frequency.

Parent Educational Opportunities

Year	Summary
2015-2016	The Administration held several topical information sessions for parents throughout the year. Parents also sporadically attended Board committee meetings to listen to presentations on a variety of topics.
2016-2017	The Second Cup of Coffee parent informational series was introduced

	during SY 16-17. The Board, Administration and faculty hosted nine Second Cup of Coffee events throughout the year. Second Cup of Coffee events were scheduled on an as-needed basis.
2017-2018	The Administration has held one Second Cup of Coffee as of November 2017. Second Cup of Coffee events continue to be scheduled on an as-needed basis.

Effectiveness: Through informal verbal feedback, parent attendees have indicated that Second Cup of Coffee events are helpful and informative. Second Cup of Coffee events have been held primarily in the morning, which has limited their effectiveness with respect to the entire parent population.

Conclusion: Second Cup of Coffee parent seminars will continue to be utilized moving forward. Consideration will be given to the timing and advanced notice of the sessions.

Video

Year	Summary
2015-2016	The District did not use videos in community engagement communications.
2016-2017	The District did not use videos in community engagement communications.
2017-2018	A strategic plan promotional video is planned for Spring 2018.

Effectiveness: Video has not been effectively leveraged as a tool for District communications.

Conclusion: The District has not used videos effectively as a tool for community engagement. Video production, opportunities and usage will be reviewed in the future and discussed during SY 18-19.