



*Inspiring students*  
to become the *best* they can be.



Wetaskiwin  
Regional  
Public  
Schools

# Communication Plan 2015-2018



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## Background

The purpose of the Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools Communications Plan is to present a clear and concise framework for communicating with our school communities.

All communication strategies are directed at two types of school division audiences: INTERNAL stakeholders - students, teachers, staff, administration and EXTERNAL - parents, community members, elected officials, civic group's media, businesses and other members of the WRPS community.

Strengthening internal communications is one key objective of this divisional communication plan. In order to facilitate stronger internal communications, it is vital that staff support the overall Division Communication Plan: specifically WRPS trustees, teachers and central office staff are highly influential sources of information for the public. WRPS staff relates the messages of the school division back to their families and friends who in turn form opinions of our schools and division.

Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools communication strategies also target our external stakeholders by increasing parental involvement in education, increasing community engagement, and gathering input from external stakeholders on educational topics, and providing accessible information to the public.

Establishing effective and positive relationships will result in significant growth with internal and external stakeholders will facilitate open and transparent two-way communication. Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools communications activities support the following division's principles:

1. Our people will be committed to a learning community that values people, diversity, excellence and professional growth.
2. Our organization will be people centered by being principled, collaborative, accountable and effective.
3. Our community will share in the ownership and responsibility for the well-being and education of their children and youth.

These principles provide the foundation for supporting all of our communication strategies. Through the development and implementation of this comprehensive communication plan, Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools will strive to effectively communicate in a timely manner with all stakeholders, increase the involvement of parents, students and staff in decision making and foster an exchange of information to increase collaboration between Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools and the communities it serves.

## Planning and Preparation

In preparation of the 2015-2018 Communication Plan, the following sources of information were used and reviewed:

2014-2015 Board Meeting Highlights

Board initiatives

Alberta Education Accountability Pillar Results

Past Communication Plan

Consultations with the Superintendent

Annual Education Results Report (AERR) Three Year Education Plan

Review of existing print and web based materials and tools

## Technology Evolution

Communication practices and procedures in the division have evolved in the area of technology. This evolution has occurred due to the division's desire to embrace technology and engage its stakeholders through various platforms. The use of technology, social media and website utilization to communicate has proved to significantly increase and be relied upon as an effective tool in school and divisional based communication.



# AUDIENCES

## EXTERNAL AUDIENCES

Parents / Guardians  
Elected Officials  
School Councils  
Alberta Education  
Provincial/Municipal Governments & Advisory Committees  
Business Community  
Media  
Community Groups/Partners  
New Residents to the Division  
Prospective WRPS Residents  
Professional Organizations (ASBA, PSBAA)  
Educational Organizations  
School Divisions  
Senior Citizens  
Potential Employees

## INTERNAL AUDIENCES

WRPS Students  
WRPS Staff  
Trustees

# HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE?

## EXTERNAL

Media Coverage  
Board Meetings & Board Meeting Highlights  
News/Media Releases  
Back to School Publication  
Public Consultations  
On line engagement  
Websites/ E-Teacher/ Career Opportunities  
Website Stories  
Donor Recognition  
Social Media: *Facebook, Twitter*  
Plans & Reports (*Budget, Three Year Plan, AERR, Capital Plan*)  
Invitations to Events  
Partnerships with community organizations  
School Newsletters  
Parent / Teacher Interviews  
Celebration Excellence & Events  
School Council Meetings & COSC  
Maskwacis Education Council  
Division Wide Notification  
On Websites  
Partnerships with Community Organizations

## INTERNAL

Staff Connect  
Websites  
Google for Education  
Long Service Awards  
Division Office  
School Visits  
Staff Meetings  
School Calendar  
Maplewood/DocuShare/ SRB  
Staff Surveys  
Emails & Letters & Text Messages  
Website Stories  
Back to School Publication  
Planning and Reporting Documents  
Staff Recognition  
Board Highlights  
News/Media Releases

# Goal 1

## Enhance communication with schools throughout WRPS.

### Objective 1

Work with schools, central administration, trustees to provide Communication based support to Schools, Staff and Board of Trustees.

#### Strategies

1. Assist in drafting media releases, letters, notices if required
2. Coordinate media interviews with appropriate spokesperson
3. Promote events (via Social Media and Website)
4. Develop key messages
5. Assist with Focus group / public consultation coordination
6. Assist with survey development and implementation
7. Enhance print and web communication
8. Assist in planning divisional events (Board Recognition, School Openings)
9. Assist with information decimation through the appropriate mode, media, website, social media
10. Monitor school websites to ensure consistency and accuracy

### Objective 2

Provide a School Based Strategic Communication Focus to schools undergoing the school review process.

#### Strategies

1. Support schools that are participating in the *School Review* process by enhancing school communication practices through data driven and strategic communication planning.
2. Develop school specific strategic communication schedule/plan for each school participating in the school review process.
3. Meet with School Review administrators and staff responsible for communication that include: reviewing and analysing Accountability Pillar Results Report, online input and all other relevant data, address areas of concern, develop key messages, communication strategies and schedules, set measurable targets and review current communication practices and processes.

2015-2018	Who	Timeline	Cost
School Review 15-16 Griffiths-Scott Middle School CB McMurdo School	School Review Team; Communications Coordinator, School Communicators	Ongoing	n/a
School Review 16-17 École Queen Elisabeth Alder Flats Elementary	School Review Team; Communications Coordinator, School Communicators	On going	n/a

# Goal 2

## Support and enhance School Council Communication

### Objective 1

Communicate regularly and consistently with School Council Groups

### Strategies

1. Create and maintain a divisional email group and list to ensure all school councils are kept informed and are receiving pertinent information.
2. Foster consistent and relevant communication with parent groups through the Council of School Councils
3. Forward divisional and school based communication to School Council groups.
4. Assist in the coordination and dissemination of information for Council of School Council Meetings in the 2015-2016 school year.

2015-2018	Who	Timeline	Cost
Create contact and email distribution list for COSC and School Councils.	Communications Coordinator	September 30, 2016	n/a
Communicate COSC meeting information including agendas & minutes	Communications Coordinator	4 X per year October, January, March and May	n/a
Assist Schools in Web page development representing School Council information	Communications Coordinator / School Communicator / Parent Council Reps	Ongoing	n/a





# Goal 3

## Improve communications with Internal and External Stakeholders

### Objective

Release divisional communication in a timely and transparent manner to all external stakeholders to ensure school communities are informed (external stakeholders listed on page 5 of this document). The Communication Coordinator will work with the media to facilitate interviews, provide information, connect with schools and keep the media informed of divisional matters.

### Strategies

1. Maintain positive working relationships with external stakeholders.
2. Work with advertising organizations to ensure WRPS is represented in local newspapers
3. Work with various organizations when required to distribute information and/or provide or receive assistance (Including but not limited to: Alberta School Boards Association, Public School Board Association of Alberta, Council of School Councils, other school divisions, Alberta Government, Local Town and Village offices and MLA's and ATA Local).
4. Develop Key Messages for issues / event in order to provide consistent messaging
5. Develop external Communication publications
6. Ensure website includes current information including Media Releases, Board Meeting Highlights etc.
7. Use Social Media to communicate with external stakeholders (Goal 4 Objective 2)
8. Continue to promote website features, Staff Connect, E-Teachers etc., PD Calendar, Google Surveys etc.
9. Promote Board, Trusteeship and elections
10. Story of the week posts to the website; encourage principals to submit a good news story about a student, staff member or community event. Each school to provide stories based on yearly schedule.
11. Kindergarten Registration Packages (Advertising)
12. Strategic advertising
13. Recognize Donors in August Publication and on the website
14. Implement the use of ConnectEd email notification for parents
15. PD Calendar in Staff Connect

# Goal 3 (continued)

## Improve communications with Internal and External Stakeholders

2015-2018	Who	Timeline	Cost
Circulate Board Highlights in a timely manner to media and external stakeholders	Communications Coordinator	After every Board Meeting	n/a
Ensure Board Meeting, and stakeholder information is posted on the Division Website and when required School Websites.	Communications Coordinator	Daily, weekly, monthly as information becomes available	n/a
Development of Key Messages	Communication Coordinator/ Trustees / CAT members	As needed	n/a
Coordinate the Development of Back to School Newspaper	Communications Coordinator & Writer- Laurette Woodward	Mid-August – Back to School Edition	\$10,000.00 Total Per Year
Story of the Week	Principals, Communication Cor.	Weekly as per schedule starting in October of each year	n/a
Kindergarten Registration	Communication Cor.	January	\$ 600.00 Advertising/ year
Donor Recognition	August Publication & Update to Website	August Each year	Included in Publication costs
Update Calendars Website, PD Calendar	Communications Coordinator/ PD Organizers	Ongoing	n/a
ConnectEd Implementation Email to Parents	Technology Department/ School Communicators/ Communication Coordinator	Ongoing	n/a



# Goal 4

## Enhance communication through Technology

### Objective 1

Ensure the Division Website and School Websites are reviewed and enhancements are provided to keep the websites current.

#### Strategies

1. Review School Websites to ensure consistency (Goal 1 Objective10.)
2. Provide Support and Training for site website administrators
3. Update Photos on Website and ensure FOIP compliance
4. Staff Contact in Staff Connect is populated and maintained
5. Staff Connect I Phone app is implemented
6. Transportation I Phone & Android Apps are available to the public
7. Liaise with Box Clever on website improvements
8. ConnectEd email implementation for schools

### Objective 2

Increase Social Media Presence: To Highlight the Division, School and Education through the use of Social Media by increasing communications with parents and community members who rely on internet for information and social contacts.

#### Strategies

1. Ensure news is posted to the WRPS Facebook and Twitter Accounts regularly
2. Use social media and email to inform and drive the public to our website for information
3. Promote the schools/division social media presence by including Twitter and Facebook icons on advertising and internal/external communication.

2015-2018	Who	Timeline	Cost
School Website Review and Training/ Support	Communication Coordinator	Ongoing	n/a
APPS for Busses Running Staff Connect Contacts	Communication Coordinator Box Clever	Ongoing	
Social Media Updates	Communications Coordinator	Ongoing	n/a
Update Website Photos	Communication Coordinator	September 2015	\$600.00 (Photographer & Mileage)



# Goal 5

## Community/Student Engagement: Gather Input from Internal and External Stakeholders Educational Topics as determined by the Board of Trustees

### Objective 1

Focus on building strong relationships, by providing opportunities for parent, students, staff and community stakeholders to share ideas and concerns openly and honestly. Information gathered can be used by the Board when developing the Strategic Facilities Plan.

### Strategies

- Provide opportunity for online or public engagement as per Board direction.
- Provide opportunity for student engagement forum.
- Work with Alberta Culture and Community Spirit to develop discussion topics and review/analyze input
- Support the board of trustees' Community Consultation and Engagement process
- Assist the Board in determining a purpose and/or questions to be answered for engagement
- Utilize on-line technology for implementation if required
- Promote the campaign
- Analyze the data
- Report findings

2015-2018	Who	Timeline	Cost
Trustee(s) determine purpose of consultation and what outcome they wish to achieve.	Alberta Culture and Community Spirit Facilitator Communications Coordinator	TBD	Release time, mileage, meal costs
Board to determine Purpose and Develop questions for online engagement	Committee	TBD	Same as above
Consult with School Divisions who have successfully implemented on line engagement	Communication Coordinator & Trustee Representation	TBD	Same as above
Advertising	Advertise and Publicize Online Engagement	TBD	\$1000.00
Implement On line Engagement tool	Communication Coordinator	TBD	TBD
Student Engagement (forum undetermined)	Board determines	TBD	TBD

# Accountability

## How will the success of this plan be measured?

### **Feedback**

- Board / School Administrators/ Central Administration

### **Accountability Pillar Results**

- have results improved in the areas of focus as determined through school communication planning work with administrators?

### **Surveys or Consultation results**

- what is our audience saying?

### **Media coverage (newspaper & attendance to events)**

- are we connecting and getting our messages out timely, consistently and effectively?

### **Website traffic**

- are websites being visited – how often?

### **Social Media**

- does WRPS have an active social media presence? Is communication vetted through social media consistently and regularly?

### **Tracking schools under review - newsletters and websites for improvement**

- Are School Strategic Communications being implemented
- Are key messages visible and strategic

### **Evaluate Consultation / Public Engagement for effectiveness**

- Board Determines

### **Review Completion of Projects Outlined in this Plan**

- review if goals and objectives have been achieved

