

**Special Darien Board of Education
Communications Committee Meeting**

Thursday, June 1, 2023

8:30 a.m.

Darien Public Schools' Administrative Offices

35 Leroy Avenue

Board of Education Meeting Room

AGENDA

1. Review Communications Survey Results
2. Use of Communications Inventory Spreadsheet
3. Consideration of Communication Policies
4. Discuss Committee Recommendation(s) for 2023-2024 Board of Education Goals
5. Public Comment*
6. Adjournment

*** * The Board of Education meeting will be available to the public in person and via Zoom. Wearing of masks is optional and seating is limited by room capacity. Doors open at 8:15 a.m. for the 8:30 a.m. meeting.**

Those members of the community wishing to participate in public comment may join the meeting via Zoom:

<https://darienps.zoom.us/j/96115693567>

Those members of the community wishing to view only, should do so through the Darien Youtube link:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUnnvYKBfFrTWQRuoB6OZA>

In order to reduce audio interference, members of the community are requested not to simultaneously view by Youtube while participating on Zoom.

Memorandum

To: Darien Board of Education Communications Committee
From: Alan Addley, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools
Marjorie Cion, Director of Human Resources
RE: BOE Communications Committee
Date: May 31, 2023

Communications Committee

The purpose of the Communications Committee of the Darien Board of Education is to:

- A. Support the BOE's function as liaison between the district and the community,
- B. Promote efficient, effective and varied methods of communication among all stakeholders,
- C. Work to align all communications with the Board of Education's Roles & Responsibilities, District Strategic Plan, Vision of the Graduate, and District/Board Goals and other guiding documents.

The Communications Committee agenda for its meeting on Thursday, June 1 @ 8:30 a.m. includes:

Communications Survey Results:

The District received 404 responses from the community and 182 from the staff. The following is a high level summary of the themes from the community and staff surveys.

Areas of potential growth for the District are those categories where the combined responses of "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" are less than 50%. The narratives highlighted are those comments that are relevant to the District's communications and appear multiple times.

Community

- 1. Highlight student successes
- 2. Highlight staff successes
- 3. Satisfaction with the web site
- 4. Messages regularly catch the recipients' attention
- 5. Opportunities to engage with administration
- 6. Opportunities to engage with Board
- 7. Respect of dissenting opinions
- 8. Use of social media

Narratives

1. Eliminate links in email communications. Put text in body of email
2. Find an alternative to Aspen
3. Revamp the website
4. There should be opportunities for the community to interact with the Board and the administration

Staff

1. Highlight staff successes
2. Satisfaction with website
3. Messages regularly catch the recipients' attention
4. Opportunities to engage with administration
5. Opportunities to engage with Board
6. Respect of dissenting opinions
7. Communications are not open and transparent

Narratives

1. Revamp the website
2. Highlight staff accomplishments
3. More opportunities for communication between staff, Central Services and the Board
4. Recognize teacher voice in curriculum development and implementation

Draft Communications Plan:

The two communication plan templates have been populated by Board Members and District administrators. They captured the type and frequency of communications that are happening across the District. Upon the finalization of the template, it will be used as another data source in addition to the survey and findings from the focus groups.

The following are some of the Committee's observations, takeaways and next steps from the completed template:

1. There are many and varied District communications happening
2. Most communications are informative and one way.
2. Limited social media presence
3. Include some high level/regular athletic and club communications

Consideration of Communication Policies:

A selection of Communication policies from various districts are attached for the Committee's review and discussion in its efforts to assist the Policy Committee to identify policies and procedures to support and enhance District communications. The Committee will discuss the nature of these policies and the merits of referring the task of policy development on communications to the Policy Committee and/or full Board.

BOE Goals/Objectives

The Committee will consider whether or not to include a draft 2023-2024 communications goal for the full Board's consideration as part of the annual BOE goal review and development process. The following is the current BOE communication goal and the communications goal in the District Strategic Plan:

BOE Goal: Enhance Board and District communications

Strategic Work:

- Establish a BOE Communications Committee.
- Provide continuity of meetings and engagement with the community.
- Audit current communication systems.
- Survey stakeholders to identify preferred means of communication.
- Celebrate student and staff achievements.
- Provide communication on the Strategic Plan.
- Collaborate on shared communication with administration.

District Strategic Goal: Developing and enhancing systems to promote efficiency, coherence, and communication

Strategy: Establish effective and open lines of communication among all stakeholders

Actions:

- Invite stakeholder feedback regarding preferred forms of communication.
- Audit current communication systems (websites, social media, school messenger, student information systems, data management systems, newsletters).
- Develop a media package that includes logos, templates, and standards for District communications.

Strategy: Align District's guiding documents and communications with its mission, vision, and core values to foster coherence.

Actions:

- Identify core documents of District and plans for design and distribution. Invite feedback from stakeholders on guiding documents to help guide implementation of the mission, vision and core values.
- Analyze PreK - 12 student performance reports (progress reports, grades and grade reporting) for the purpose of aligning them to District guiding documents.
- Initiate District, School and Department Improvement Plans.
- Develop and revise policies in District Guiding Documents

Committee Work Timeline:

The following dates/actions represent the timeline for the work of the Committee:

- Research Surveys (by spring 2023)
 - Step 1: Establish Advisory Team
 - Step 2: Explore Panorama to conduct Communications Survey
 - Step 3: Discuss survey process format/questions with Committee
 - Step 4: Conduct Communications Survey
 - Step 5: Report on Survey Findings
- Inventory of Communications & Adoption of Board Goals (by summer 2023)
- Focus Groups & Findings (by fall 2023)
- Communications Plan (by fall 2023)

Communications Survey - Community

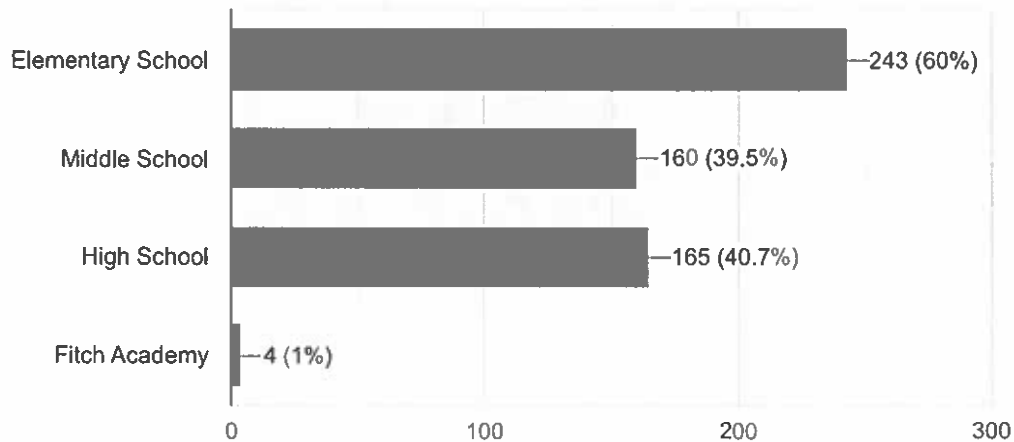
405 responses

Publish analytics

My children attend (Please select all that apply):

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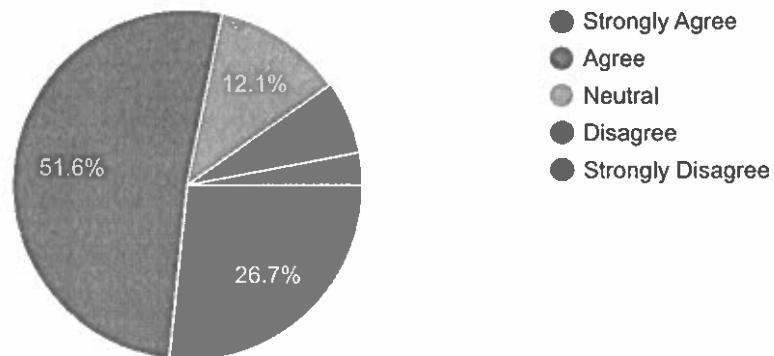
405 responses



The District communicates important information in a timely manner.

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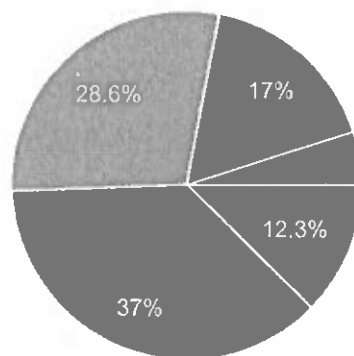
404 responses



The District regularly communicates student successes, including academic achievements, athletic results and visual/performing arts accomplishments.

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404 responses

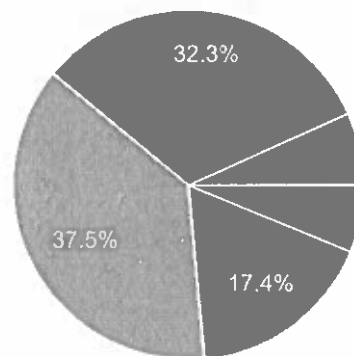


- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

The District regularly shares news about the successes and accomplishments of the staff.

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403 responses

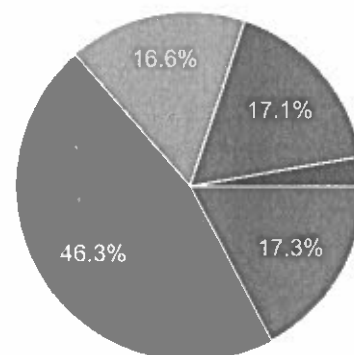


- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I receive messages from the District in a variety of ways - through my mobile device, print or computer.

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404 responses

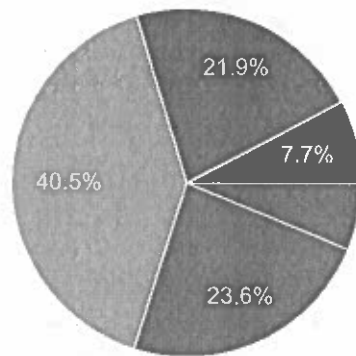


- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

The District's website is an engaging destination that provides relevant information that is readily accessible.



402 responses

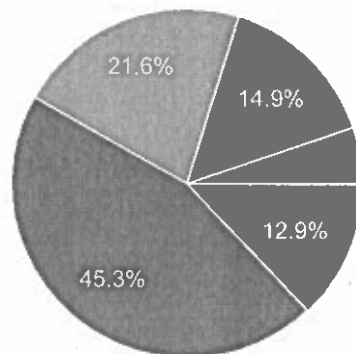


- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I am satisfied with the way I am currently receiving messages from the District.



402 responses

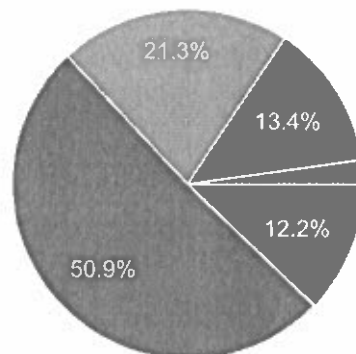


- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I am satisfied with the quantity of messages that I am currently receiving from the District.



403 responses



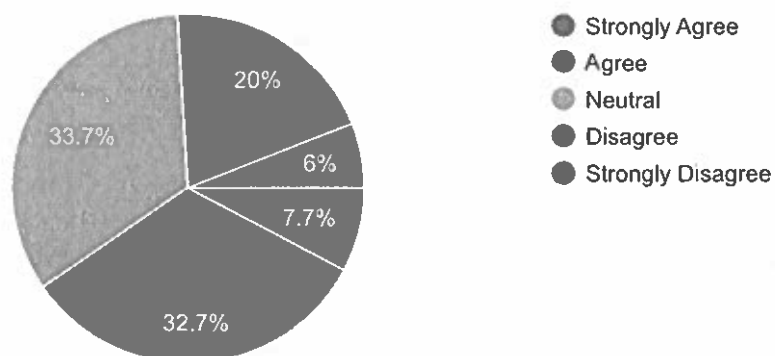
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree



The messages the District shares regularly catch my attention and stand out from other messages.

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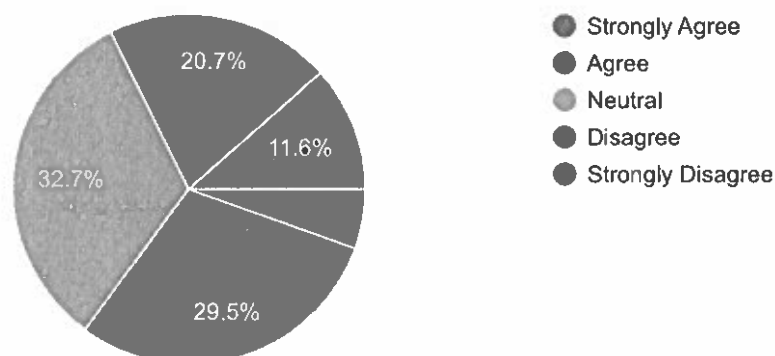
401 responses



The District provides opportunities for stakeholders to engage with the administration.

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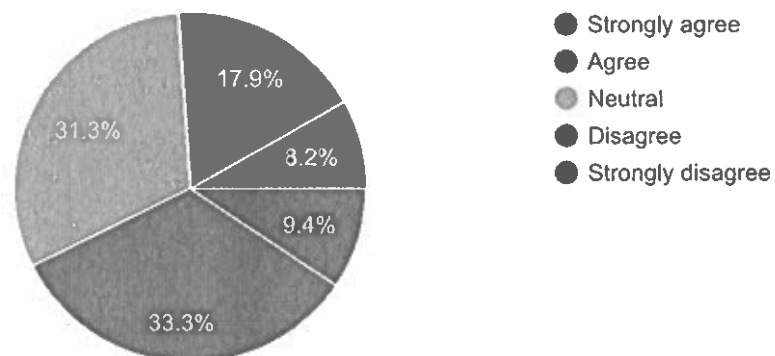
397 responses



The District provides opportunities for stakeholders to engage with the Board of Education.

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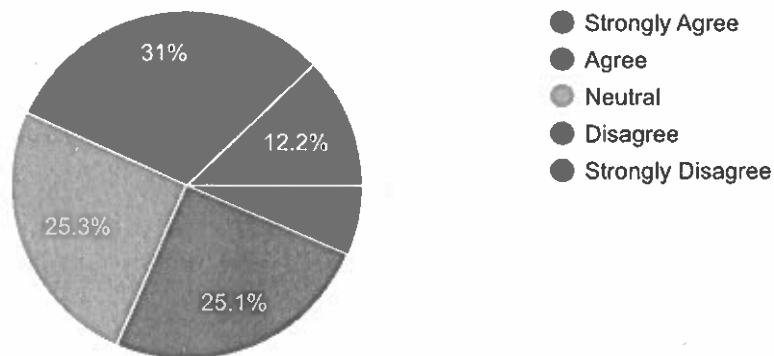
403 responses



I would interact with the District more often if it increased the use of social media (i.e., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)

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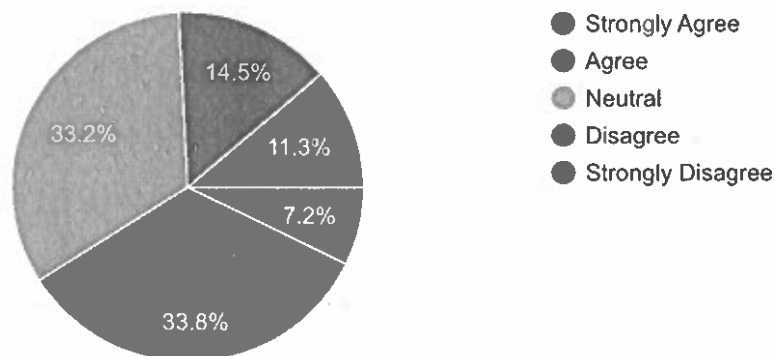
403 responses



The District respects and values dissenting opinions.

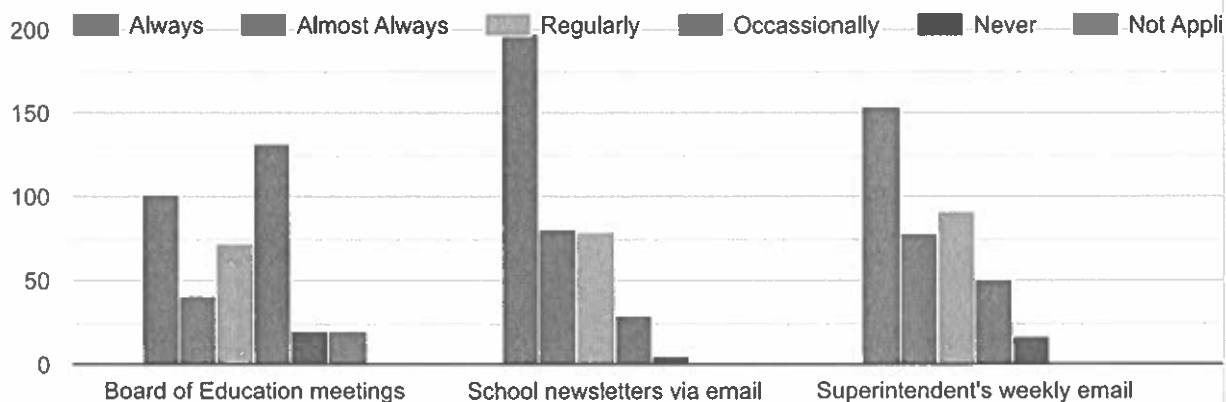
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400 responses



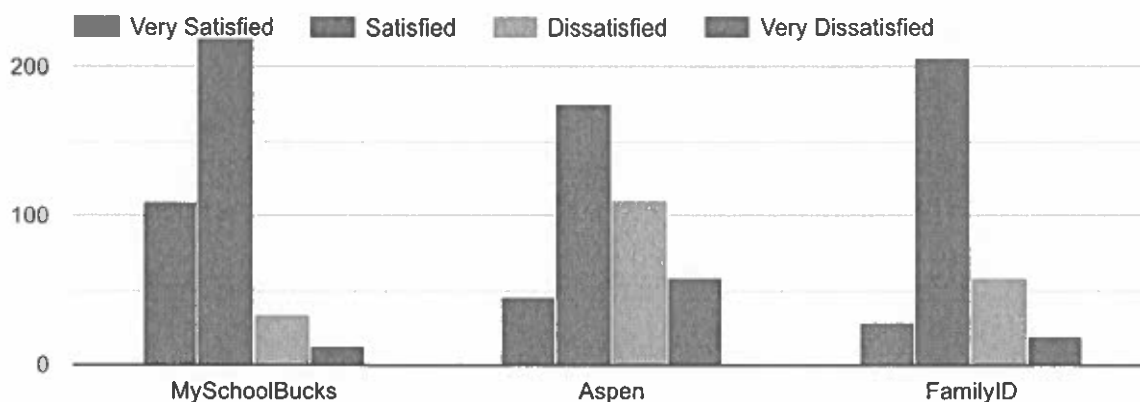
Please rank how much you value the following District communications:

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How satisfied are you with the following portals used by the District.

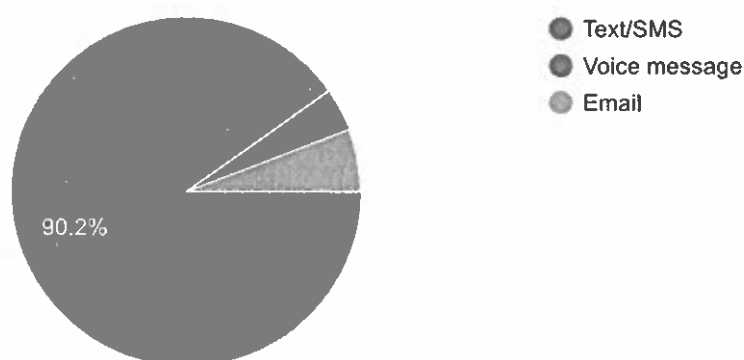
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What is your first preference for critical communications (closings, delays or urgent messages)?

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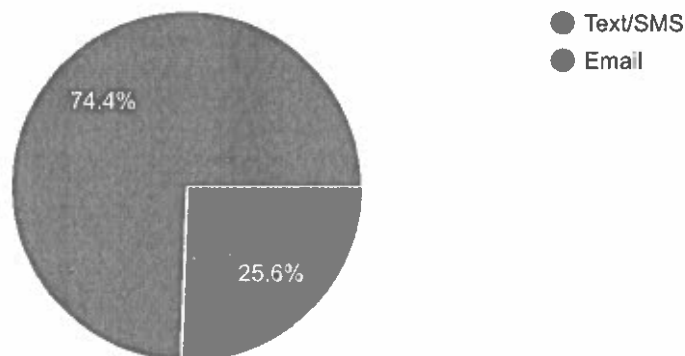
397 responses



What is your first preference for general information (announcements and reminders)?

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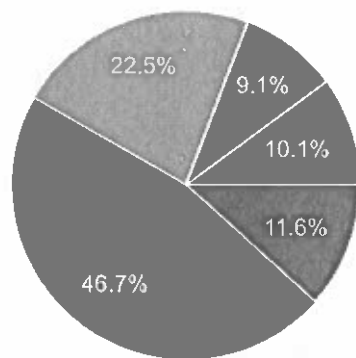
399 responses



The District is open and transparent in its communications.

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396 responses



- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree



What ideas, if any, do you have for ways to improve the District's communications?

You need to download the Superintendent's email first in order to read it. This extra step makes me delete without

Let people specify how they want to be contacted, then do that. I don't want snow day calls to my house and cell and husband's cell (three robo-calls at 4am-- really???) *plus two texts and *also emails.

Let's please get rid of repetitive emails. The Sunday individual school emails are fantastic. The Friday principal emails are unnecessary unless they improve and start including different information from what's in the newsletter.

Fewer emails

Stop including links in emails that I have to download to receive messages. If there isn't critical information, don't send an email. E.g., I don't care that Eleanor Roosevelt spoke before congress in 1953. Would rather just not get an email that week.

Update the website to have critical information, like the correct date of school dismissal. If that isn't finalized, then put on there the target date and communicate out when it will be finalized.

Set expectations and standards for teachers/schools to send progress back home. I don't get any communication/graded material back for my children until the the trimester ending report card when it feels too late to make meaningful progress/updates.

Keep up the great work! Thanks for all that you all do! I have been so very pleased with my 1st child's kindergarden year. We love living in the Darien Public School District.

Increase social media. It's a great way to provide info. The website is also not user friendly and can definitely use an upgrade to include photos and accomplishments of the district. Very plain for a community who can do better.

All district "general" emails should be on the Darienps.org website (in case someone missed the info). All sports/club announcements that are through the schools (mostly referring to DHS) should be posted (games/tryouts). There is too much confusion. There should be one hub to be used as a reference.

The only negative comment - and it's a major irritation - is when you have to download the district communication which is always slow and requires multiple steps to read the message. Just send me the email! Don't make me jump through 3 hoops to get to what you want to tell me!!

Make everything as short as possible. Send as few emails as possible. We don't need a weekly superintendent email it's just noise. Communicate when there is a reason only. Maybe a quarterly check in but not weekly.

Like PTO calendar, continuous updates/emails to not have to search history.

Town halls with superintendent and other administrators and board

Improve Aspen it's an uninspiring and clunky portal. Make announcements stand out. Better approach for sharing class pictures than OneDrive.

The websites across the district including parks and rec and sports look very outdated and hard to navigate. Very cluttered and janky. They should be redesigned to be more user friendly. Some don't work properly on mobile.

Have your weekly emails come out on a Friday so you have the weekend to get ready if needed, not on Sunday night's so you have to do a panicked rush to get your kids ready for whatever activity or event was just mentioned. And you important information on the bottom third of emails usually, which is just odd. They should be put together based on importance and notes on activities that require action by the parents.

Information sessions during working hours is not inclusive. CDSP should not represent parent opinions without data supporting they sought all opinions.

I believe more can be done on social media.

The website is difficult to navigate. It is hard to find what I am looking for. Aspen is not user friendly. The interface appears to be outdated and there is not much information available to parents. It is hard to remember how to access all the various systems for school cash, lunch, grades, busing, communicating absences, etc

Consistency and cohesion - current communication is disparate and often sent at unpredictable intervals (too many senders, not enough cues for when to watch for it)

Channels - there are way too many communications channels/apps/websites to keep up with in order to manage the school experience for multiple children especially.

Clarity and transparency - at times, communication is unnecessarily confusing or opaque. Takeaways could be much simpler and clearer.

Volume - without adding more communication touchpoints or channels, I'd like to see more communication vs. less in some cases. It often feels like issues or info are raised too late in the game when questions have already come to the surface among parents.

I'd love to see more about the student & teacher successes! I loved Moments from the Middle last year (my youngest is at DHS now.) Ms. Dunn has sent out something similar. I'd love to see more of them!

The district only values and highlights a select group of people, mainly athletes. It would be nice if all students and staff members felt represented and respected. Communications should emphasize their successes.

it's annoying to have to download the superintendent's pdf every week. note should be in the email directly without download. even worse if i happen to see the email on my phone.

I would prefer that all email communications are in the email itself. Often we get an email that we have to click on a link, wait til it downloads and then open the link in a separate window which is not efficient. It's jumping through extra hoops that are not necessary. If it's an email letter, then it should be presented as such.

It would be helpful if the subject line had a brief description on what's covered. For example MMS Updates- SBACs, FieldTrip Sign Ups, Late School bus.

PLEASE PLEASE find a replacement for Aspen. It's the most unintuitive and antiquated user interface I have seen in over 20 years. I honestly cannot believe we are still using it considering the technology we have in existence today. The fact that you have to include detailed instructions on how to use it is saying something in an of itself. Look at the labels on the different areas of Aspen. It looks as if it's still in beta phase and they are placeholders titles.

Lastly My School Bucks only works on a mobile device. For most of us that work from home, it would be helpful if their website worked as well.

Would love to hear more about our staff

The content is the issue we have. Communicate to parents that they need to hold their kids accountable and get off cell phones and social media and screens! Over and over. The mounting evidence of mental health issues among kids from these factors has to be communicated!

The district needs to do way more to engage with families on social media and promote the successes and activities in its schools, especially as local media coverage dies off. I am truly surprised it does not have a PR person on contract at minimum. The superintendent's letters are lovely but the bare minimum. I was a local newspaper writer and editor for 25 years so I know of what I speak.

Send more timely emails when there is an emergency at one of the schools, and tell parents what the emergency is.

Don't send the message in a .pdf I have to then download from and email in order to read it. I noticed the superintendent has been doing this less, so thank you.

Create Opt-in style email choice by categories. Set up different social media changes for sports, arts, teachers, student government, etc.

There is no forum I know of where the administration responds to questions from parents. We have 3 minutes at BOE meetings to voice our opinion and it is a monologue where our questions get no response. No dialogue, not open, not transparent, no accountability. I have sent a few emails to administration and have never received a single response. It's time for new leadership that cares what parents think.

Sending updates by email - right now they are all links so you can never search email for relevant info

I would prefer the communications to come in the body of the email rather than having to download the communication to read the weekly emails. The extra step is frustrating as I usually check email from my mobile

Board more open to public comment, including from students

Stop the pornography in our schools and let's choose an Administration that's aligned with our town's values

When someone asks a question at a BoE meeting during public comment, an answer should be given or a response provided at the following meeting (if not immediately). I understand there isn't time for full discussion at these meetings, but the current process of speaking at BoE members and getting no response or concrete answer is

Aspen mobile absence summary is incorrect. The detail absence by class you have to click on each to see absences by class. School absences are not marked as school absences- and should not count against the student. Excused absences should not count against the student

Please change the format of email communications so they are not in a downloadable format. It makes it impossible to search for them later.

It would be great if some of the meetings offered at school during business hours (coffee with the principal, etc) had zoom availability so those of us with two income households would have even a chance of attending and feeling like we are part of the school community. This district is very exclusionary towards working parents or families who don't have a full time caregiver at home.

As nicely as everything is written, I would prefer less words to read. But that might be just me.

Send emails using body of the email, rather than as pdf attachments that have to be downloaded

I respectfully emailed Dr. Addley four times over six months to appeal our lack of a bus (email is the way I told to appeal by his secretary) and he never emailed back, even to say he was denying our appeal. After four times we gave up, but surely you would agree that is very poor communication!

I think a monthly district newsletter would upcoming dates and stories across the schools and grades would be interesting. Just because I don't currently have a MMS or DHS student does not mean I am not interested in what is happening there. As a PTO member that attends monthly CDSP meetings, I am always interested in hearing about events and issues at other schools.

Share general teacher-to-parent feedback. Would be useful for us parents to understand, from teachers'/staff perspective, which behaviors, approaches to communication, methods of supporting childrens' education at home, etc are most helpful and why. Maybe a broad, anonymous survey of staff at each level (elem/middle/hs), designed to highlight what they would welcome more of based on anonymized anecdotes of parent interactions, could serve as positive reinforcement as well as examples to follow for parents (who may not realize that they could work with teachers in a more constructive manner). I feel this part of the feedback loop is currently missing.

Please please please don't require parents to access social media in order to see district communications.

Thank you for the survey.

Dhs Instagram that covers sports, theater performances, school events etc

I want to thank the District for all it does to communicate, and for being open to feedback for improvements. I do think social media could be helpful as it's simply a reality of the world we live in! Wondering whether a Communications specialist / officer / employee would be helpful? Thank you once again.

Nitpicky, but eliminate the emails with links to pdf's or similar static letters. Just put the content in the body of the email. Don't make people click through. These types of communications no doubt lose readers who can't be bothered. Besides that, the admin does a great job.

Replace the Superintendent! He's terrible and we're worried that he will hire another asst. who is perverted like District website could be cleaned up and made more user friendly. Aspen can be confusing.
To provide highlights from BoE meetings in a short bulletin.

We thankfully only have 1 child at DHS but if our children were smaller children I would be 100% home schooling them. The fact that our superintendent Dr Addley and his staff/admin chose to gaslight us about the Mermaid book being a lesson in love and acceptance vs the TRUTH that it's about gender identity, transitioning and LGBTQ+ is unacceptable. And that's just 1 fact I don't have time to list everything that has upset so many current and former DPS parents. I went to liberal schools - Greenwich Academy and Wellesley college and am an avid reader. However, I am HORRIFIED by the many sexual/pornographic books available at school libraries for our children. DPS need to focus on teaching the basics of education and stop your woke, sexual preference indoctrination. It is disgusting and I truly hope to see change in the near future.

It would be helpful and productive to have a forum we could engage with the BOE and administration (Addley, Curriculum heads etc) that was a conversation style instead of just public comment with no response. Every couple months making the Board and some Admin accessible to answer public questions would be a lot more transparent and informative to families.

For example, the Board, Addley and Curriculum heads could hold a town meeting to address the pornographic books that have made their way in to our libraries. I would like to hear from the district how books with pictures of boys sucking each others penises does not fall under pornography, which is of course illegal. I understand there is public comment at Board meetings but the board is shielded from addressing the issue so this is where I feel like the district isn't transparent at all.

It also seems that the vast majority of employees hired by the district and/or superintendent are extremely progressive. I draw this conclusion by my interactions with district employees and the comments and choices made by the curriculum heads, and our superintendent himself. In a town where the last 2 BOE elections cycles have overwhelming selected conservative school board leaders, shouldn't there be more balance in hiring district

I am never able to open links from the MMS emails. I constantly get an error on the server they use. I then can't find the same information on the school or PA website. This could be improved.

Tell us more about student achievements. How have SAT scores evolved? How do aggregate SBAC scores look? What areas is the administration focused on in education? How are students doing in writing and grammar?
Allow for more dialogue between teachers/staff and BOE/main office/parents groups

There are too many emails and blasts coming from different sources via emails. It is very hard to keep track of all of the messages. Messages for middle school and high school should be coming via a one stop source unless it is an emergency text or email. Within the one stop website / source, it should be divided by academics, sports, etc., etc. There should also be one part of correspondence that has dates in chronological order for all school activities that contain links with additional / ancillary information. Also, it is very cumbersome to review the superintendent's weekly email message. It contains a link and it is not user friendly. Also, the website should be made configurable where parents can filter between different activities, classes and dates. Also the district could probably save a lot of money by eliminating redundant websites and spam. Again, think one stop shop!

Sometimes (most times) my only access to emails during the day is on my phone. Any messages that have links OR I open a message to have to follow a link to a drive that makes me download a doc on my phone is cumbersome.

Better and user friendly website

Quit being so condescending. Do a much better job informing both parents on Important info.

More proactive

Very minor point - DHS Athletic instagram posts tend to broadcast successes and go silent when the team loses. Spring season has been better but in general if I don't see an update on a team it's usually because they lost. Good to share news regardless of wins/losses. As I said, not really relevant to the big picture but something I've noticed

Superintendent's message is tedious to retrieve via the two-step process, it is too long, too wordy and I rarely open it now. Make it a short concise email with only relevant information. Skip the formalities and niceties about enjoying the weather and so on.

Reduce the number of Communications

To be transparent with their agenda prior to implementing- to be forthcoming

There is plenty of communication about the wonderful achievements of our students. We are clearly an achievement driven community. It would be nice to highlight other things occasionally. The message of achievement is loud and clear what about being a good citizen or community service projects? It would also be nice to get regular communication on the curriculum and changes that are being made when new programs or curriculum resources are being used or purchased by the district. This information can be difficult to find.

Better administrators

It is good but it needs some improvements

Hiring someone to handle full-time

Make them more fun to read/ more engaging. The weekly email from the superintendent is not engaging/fun to read. It seems a formality to check the box and not an update on how our schools and kids are doing. Make it more human, more approachable

Superintendent emails are good and the current length is good

Appreciate the school pto newsletters

I think it could be a great addition to list the top 5-10 achievements of the week

And highlight top 5-10 opportunities that are being pursued.

We are all very good about proclaiming successes.

I think we as a community, including the leadership, spoke more often and more publicly about failures and opportunities to improve it could be transformative for our kids. They believe only successes should be publicized and consequently failures have more shame. If we openly discuss our failures, it takes away the shame and teaches more resilience and problem solving.

I appreciate that it would be atypical to promote and proclaim shortcomings, but. I think it could encourage more empowerment of our students to share the voice in solving for more successful outcomes. It would also demonstrate the value and benefits of failure.

More use of text, I don't think I get any.

I feel that the District picks and chooses the information they want disseminated instead of sharing everything. There should be a commitment to measurement and accountability/reporting on any and all decisions that the District makes, and an annual review of all decisions that is public.

Please don't send pdfs that we have to download. Just say what you are going to say in the body of the email.

Keep doing what you are doing. I appreciate that I can watch the board meetings at my convenience. It has increased my ability to engage with the content since it is posted for the public. I would like to see this continue even though I understand it comes at a cost to the district. For several years, in order for me to attend the meetings, I had to pay a babysitter. My kids are older now, but this is MUCH better!

Centralize apps down to 1. Upgrade aspen.

This administration is pushing a politized agenda that is not aligned with the prevailing values of this town and our family. Those in charge are catering to trends that promote their careers and ego over the value and quality of our children's education. The over-emphasis on non-academic ideology (in terms of time, money and resources) is detrimental to our children's education. The forums available to parents to speak up are contrived to give the impression of an open exchange but it's very clear that dissenting views and probing questions are consistently dismissed/ ignored. Forums are generally one-directional, limited (e.g., max of 3 mins to speak at a BOE meeting) and lack accountability (e.g., the Board is not required to provide a response). Further, Dr. Addley is not transparent about decisions and actions. It's disingenuous, disrespectful and arrogant. We deserve better. We deserve an administration that is committed to providing a quality education to our children above all else and preserving to the (greatest degree possible) a childhood unburdened from politicized pseudo-science masquerading as truth. I hope you asked for this feedback with earnest intentions and won't shy away from listening if it isn't what you expected to I think the district tries. I don't think the board or the administration actually care about hearing dissenting voices. I do not believe either have an open mind to change - sorry. Maybe there is an open mind to your political party but above and beyond that the district has become incredibly CLOSED minded and the communication has followed suit.

Aspen is not user friendly and should be replaced or improved.

would prefer simpler email comms. We receive newsletters from the district, the school, and the PTO all with separate formatting (but frequently with similar information).

High School information is not shared by the school, it is shared by the parents association. The district (not parents) should be responsible for sending out regular communication that includes any disruption to the school schedule - PLC days, SAT testing, finals, field trips, etc. That communication needs to be distributed at least 2 weeks in advance. The communication should also include an array of successes by students at the school, whether it's a club, a performer, or a sport, as well as staff accomplishments. Teachers and coaches should be responsible for distributing pertinent information, not parents - including last-minute changes.

Additionally, district meetings should also be offered in the evening. It seems as though the district is still operating as if there is one parent who is available at all times, whether that is to attend a coffee (during regular work hours) or have the flexibility to pick up their child at any time of the day (frequently during work hours).

We need a complete overhaul of this administration. They are about being held accountable for their lack of transparency and their dishonesty. We also need to get rid of all the pornographic material in our school libraries. Let's also stop devoting so much time to SEL and RULER and get back to the basics of our core subjects.

Remove the click-through PDFs and put content directly in email body.

Recognize that some students are not athletes, and decrease the ableism and racism that permeate all aspects of education in this town. The former directly affects one of my kids and indirectly affects the other, and the reverse is true of the latter.

In-person or virtual events at times that are convenient for working parents

I think the district is doing a good job in communications - the issue is that there is so much information that things can get lost. Allowing people to maybe opt-in for updates on specific areas of interest (e.g. "Curriculum" "Events" "Meetings" etc.) might be a way for people to do that. I also think I am more in the know because I take the time and make the effort to participate in the process. Once you start volunteering your time as a parent, then you get called on for things like focus groups, etc. There may be a lot of people who - because they work full time and can't commit to the PTO, or have other obligations - would like to get involved in things like focus groups but don't know where to start.

Finally, in your question above about our satisfaction with the portals - I don't even know what FamilyID is, so I marked "Dissatisfied". Your survey should have an option for "Don't use" to properly reflect this. Generally with the portals, it's very hard to remember everything (especially since I have children that also attend schools out of district). It would be great if there could be one landing page to access all the portals and some indication of what you use

Text messages need to be sent in a timely manner. There needs to be an easier way to communicate with school for student absences and tardiness. Students need to be contacted if he/she are recorded as late.

Calendar and important material should be easier to locate, the website needs to be updated.

Don't send an email with a link to a letter. Just type the letter right out in the email body.

The Aspen website is not exactly user friendly, could use an overhaul/upgrade.

Optimize for mobile devices. Most of the text in the emails you send is way too small for my tired old eyes, which forces me to wait until I'm in front of my computer to read it.

Aspen is absolutely horrible. Find a better system that is more user friendly. One system for everything would be awesome. Thanks for all you do for our kids!!

It would be great to not receive links from Dr Addley, rather, please put the text of your message into your email. Also, Aspen is beyond horrible - Westport uses a MUCH more user-friendly program - ask them!! My School Bucks is a complete gouge and infuriates me to no end that I am compelled to pay an exorbitant fee every time I need to fund and the maximum amount is miniscule and covers maybe 2 weeks worth of meals - I absolutely hate it. And, thank

The communication should be in the body of the email instead of a link to a separate attachment. Superintendent's emails overlap at times with the principal's email. It would be best if there was only one email coming from the principal (in the body of the email not as a separate attachment) with a section specific for the Superintendent. That way the email traffic would be reduced and a great deal of information would be included in one weekly communication.

I don't like Aspen but I don't know if there are better platforms.

The district website includes very limited information. There should be links in there so that people can join board meetings via zoom easily and without scrambling to find the zoom link for the particular meeting. I don't know if the minutes of the meetings are posted but if they are they should be readily available. Ein information should also be readily available on the website as currently, I have to call and speak with someone to get that info. I have been on the district websites a few times but each time I had to place a call as the information I was looking for was not there
More balance and transparency

It is helpful when we do not have to click on links to access emails. It would be easier if the emails were just in the inbox, (as many of the recent Superintendent's emails have been). I also wish the District would consider school policy on regular communication to parents around sending home student work, (math tests, Foundations tests, etc.) so we could have a better idea about how our children are performing. It is frustrating to only receive this communication through report cards and conferences, as I would love to be able to address difficulties and misunderstandings as they come up. Even my children do not seem to be able to see how they did on tests, so they are not often given the opportunity to learn from mistakes. Thank you.

Aspen needs to be upgraded 100%

I think that there should be a more organized system other than Aspen, which is not user-friendly at all. I wish that information was posted more clearly on the district website regarding events, etc. so I don't have to search through the endless emails that we all get. I also really wish the school would make a point of not just celebrating all of the lacrosse and football and field hockey teams, but do a better job of recognizing the other teams as well as find opportunities to engage with students who might not be on any team or who aren't doing anything super special. I'm really not sure how that would be done. It just seems to me that there is a very big Pool of students that could feel more seen in this district and town. There are also so many activities that students do outside of Darien high school for example, rowing or water polo and it seems that the school could honor these kids even though they're not on a

One idea would be start with a mandate that staff must reply to an email within a certain amount of reasonable time. The weekly superintendent emails should be broken down by school ie. one for elementary one for MMS and one for DHS. If he goes with one email there should be a breakdown of what applies to each school so parents can scroll down to the section that applies to their student. They're also just so broad/surface level.

The DHS staff/leaders rarely communicate and when they do it's always a different person, it's confusing, all emails should come from Ellen Dunn not the various VPs sometimes guidance etc.. They should also communicate dates/information well ahead of time. Parents should have important dates for September by June before summer break, everything is very last minute. I have more thoughts to share. Would love to join a committee!

CDSP does a great job informing parents of what is happening in the district on a timely and neutral basis. I do not believe the BOE could do a better job and the BOE might try to "spin" their decisions since the BOE is political by nature. My only suggestion is a monthly newsletter could be helpful to synthesize what has happened, but whatever form the information distribution takes, the district should hire a third-party communications specialist/ company to ensure a factual review of events.

The district does a fine job of communicating relevant information. I think the administration can do better responding to community/parent concerns and being transparent about policy and procedures (or lack there of when it is Emails from DPS should state as such in the sender field...such as the Superintendent communication

Prioritize mobile for critical and time sensitive info (text, then voice). Send notifications for events to attend and info/documentation relating to PPTs etc, sufficiently ahead of time so that parents can arrange work schedules etc.

Don't require email recipient to open a file within an email to access content.

The emails where I need to click and download another document are annoying and I feel a security risk. I also have missed things because when I search my email they do not turn up. Straight regular email is preferred.

I think the district is doing a great job. We love the regularity and frequency of the superintendent emails and look forward to reading them in a weekly basis.

Streamline methods and format of communications and make things more accessible for working parents.

I do not like how certain communications, such as the superintendent's communication, comes in an email that "has to be downloaded" before viewing. I think all email communication should be in line text in the email, not something that has to be downloaded from another source. This is just an added delay and also does not allow for searching of past email communication messages within the email system.

I am not in support of Open Choice whatsoever. I do not believe the district should have the right to spend my money to generously support charitable endeavors. I feel that this was not discussed openly until it came to a decision point. Clarify content of curriculum! Not transparent.

I disagree with the new emphasis on SEL

I feel that the district has zero transparency in certain areas including the inclusion of HIGHLY sexual book content in the school libraries. After telling dozens of parents these books exist they did not believe me and said they had no idea and are absolutely opposed to these books and are shocked the district has not alerted parents to these books. The district also has very little transparency in highly sensitive topics being introduced to elementary level students including topics about sexuality. The district also has little transparency regarding issues such as open choice. When discussing this topic with dozens of friends, they repeatedly have said they had no idea this program was even being considered and they are disappointed the town has not sent communication outlining the program. Very disappointed in the direction the district is moving.

We have grown increasingly concerned around the priorities of the administration and the disingenuous nature of their communication. In particular as it relates to SEL curriculum matters and age inappropriate materials for our kids in elementary school. There has been outright lies and subversion and I don't see how things will improve under this current administration when they continue to blatantly disregard policy and parents concerns to continue to push non-academic, time consuming nonsense down our youngest children's throats under the guise of 'the district's goals'.

Be transparent regardless of the topic/issue, after DEI was brought in quietly through the back door within our district, I have lost trust with our administration and BOE in believing that the academics are the main priority for our school children. The focus on academics has been replaced with DEI without any discussion.

Allow for the BOE meetings to go back to the town hall auditorium so that anyone can attend to listen and engage if desired. Keeping the BOE meetings in the small conference room gives off the impression and desire to not be transparent, or hear from concerned parents on any issue. Limiting the seating area for those who would like to attend is disingenuous for those of us who pay administrative salaries. You all work for us who live here in Darien, actions and behaviors speak much louder than words to placate. Thank you.

Be transparent and respond to parents who inquire about the disturbing content our children are being exposed to. Respond to emails written not in generic form letters. Stand up and explain to parents the reasoning behind the acceleration of SEL curriculum and the decline of academic performance. Provide an in depth curriculum content overview that includes SEL materials so that parents can see the graphic books that are available to our children. The District and Dr Addley are failing our children and are implementing an agenda that oversteps their bounds. They Hire a new superintendent who cares about all of our kids education. That is what they go to school for. Get rid of SEL & the pornographic books in the library. Stop the indoctrination. No Gay pride Month. It can be a day or week like every other Holiday. Great all of the children equally.

I am so angry that inappropriate books regarding sex and gender identity were not removed from our school libraries in spite of many parents complaining. If a group of parents disagrees with these books being in schools, that should be enough reason to remove them. Those who wish to have their kids read these extremely disappointing books, can buy them for their kids. Books such as Gender Queer and Famer. Kids should go to school to learn about academic subjects and leave anything regarding sexual identity and orientation to parents. What is next religion!?

- The district should respect parents and clearly communicate the curriculum.
- teachers should at a minimum send a weekly update to parents sharing the material taught and resources used
- If there are sensitive subjects included parents should be made aware and have the ability to opt out.
- Gender ideology, sexual content and political ideology should not be injected into the learning environment.
- SEL is being used as a distraction and a vehicle for the administration to funnel inappropriate material to our students.
- there should be more transparency on the SEL agenda
- the administration should be held accountable for the harm being done to our students by exposing them to graphic sexual material

There are way too many emails coming from way too many people. There should be 1 communications page/tab for the whole district and it should be broken out by school. So that parents can go to the school for their children and have all communications in one place (and keep them historically!!). Include the person who sent it and the topic so people can easily find what they're looking for. This would help to avoid messages going to spam/junk etc.

There should be other options and tools for parents to voice their thoughts and concerns. The district needs to be more transparent on how they are quietly introducing controversial subjects, all in the name of "DEI", that many parents are opposed to. Please spend more time on academics and less time on SEL and DEI. Please give parents a voice in our children's education.

Curriculum seems to be the hot topic so a big focus on that anytime there are changes/alterations/proposals around that content, especially in areas related to SEL or DEI. Also a summary email each month that recaps the agenda and outcome of the BOE meeting items would be smart and helpful - for those seeking more specific or detailed information beyond that top line recap, you could include the a link to the actual meeting through Channel 79.

Have transparency with regard to all decisions including: background of potential hires, curriculum changes and anything else that will directly affect my children including Open Choice. Transparency is not the forte of the current administration. We pay for the teachers and Administrators and the town's citizens should be aware of and if possible have a choice in the decision process. In the past, Darien has been focused on strength of family, excellent education and a moral and value system that was present with the first founders of our country. Decisions to detract from any of these issues are not acceptable. Sexually explicit anything has no place in the school system. Focus on Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. It's time to stop catering to a small minority.

Be more transparent BEFORE voting on hot-button/controversial issues.

Parents need to be presented information on controversial topics before they are pushed through at the Board's discretion.

A bullet point on a lengthy agenda does not count as transparency. A short concise email outlining both sides of an issue would be greatly appreciated. Many times, parents are first learning about Board decisions (e.g. controversial books) from their local on-line newspapers AFTER the vote.

ALL in person meetings need to be streamlined. Currently, meetings run on and on for hours with nothing being accomplished. Parents with families do not have the time to attend these marathon meetings.

Political leanings and personal views need to stay out the decision-making process.

Too many members of the Board have a political agenda they need to satisfy rather what is best for ALL the students

I believe the administration is deliberately secretive and not open about the inclusion of sexually explicit material in school libraries. Teachers and administration members should either (i) share listings of such books before populating our schools with sexually explicit material or (ii) stop the process entirely and have parents do their job in teaching children about these topics. We do not pay our teachers or administrators to teach out children about such concepts. Teachers and administration should refocus on test results and addressing the very real issue of declining test results in our district and why that is happening. People move to our town for the academic experience and at the moment our teachers and administration are failing our children and taxpayers by delivering an education experience that continues to decline year after year. The school district should focus 100% on academics and when our teachers feel they need to deviate from teaching the core academic skills, the community should be made aware and decisions should be made as to whether our district is the right place for such teachers.

Stop communicating important information with parents when they are heading into a break week or when you know they are clearly not paying attention (ie. When pandemics break out). This is clearly an underhanded attempt to get controversial subject matter through in the "dark of night."

Listen to what all parents are saying not just those that feel "unsafe" or those that are always complaining that we aren't "inclusive" enough.

Stop giving privileges to students in school that claim to be "different". The same rules and consequences should apply to ALL students.

Do not push an agenda on our children. Let parents be parents and raise their children as they see fit.

Let all voices be heard at BOE meetings and don't cut off or correct just the voices you don't agree with.

On a school level, specifically Tokeneke, I am happy with the weekly email school newsletter, and it is a great tool, along with the school Instagram page. On a district level, I find that the superintendent's weekly email doesn't address any hot topics that are brought up during BOE Meetings, and feel like these concerns are swept under the rug, specifically regarding curriculum content. I am not happy with Dr. Addley's communication, as he does not provide clear answers regarding curriculum content, and Julie Droller has also not provided any clear answers regarding curriculum content. Simply avoiding answering questions is not a communication style that will work in this district and I'm very disappointed by their lack of transparency.

I've never received a response from emails I've sent to Dr Addley or MMS principal Dahlstrom. The mass emails I receive feel like they're going through the motions. There's little innovation. Please get on top of the technology piece- we don't have published policies like other schools. There's no channel for bringing up what's working/not working.

The district could improve by leveraging text messages which offer "sound bites" of important matters at hand. If people want more information, an html link could be provided for further details.

Communication tends to drop off as students get older. I would appreciate more specific information from the high school regarding my freshman and the curricular content, special events, athletics, schedule changes, etc. Some sort of weekly, or bi-weekly update would be helpful. One PTO blast is not enough and there are not many communications from admin, with the exception of the guidance department.

District wide weekly newsletter

Frequent disclosure of planned topics during any meetings and allow ample time to research and interact with the administration.

Fix all the communication issues within the school. A committee should be established to review all these various forms of communication and what is working and what isn't and present to the BOE for recommendations. I think best conducted by parents in district but maybe with the assistance of the Harvard Group or a consultant like that!!!!

Stop promoting SEL/DEI and have academics be the focus again.

All sexually explicit materials should be removed from school libraries. It's unacceptable to have pornography available to our children.

I don't have any specific suggestions but appreciate that the District is soliciting input. Thank you for all of your hard work in educating and taking care of our children.

I think the District could share more about Staff, highlighting them so that they feel more valued. Also I would highlight various achievements more including drama, art, etc. as well as sports. I also think more talks and events for parents to meet staff / faculty would be useful.

More people able to get info besides 2 email addresses. Since middle school we have had difficulty getting 3 email addresses total added to the system. We deal with it (only 2) but every year we try to add a third.

The district, and especially the superintendent, love to push their ideology in the dark of night. Hiring Ken Shelton, DEI, SEL, CRT, "Gender Identity", LGBTQ+ issues and the like all suddenly appeared while everyone's focus was on COVID. This admin simply refuses to allow "kitchen table" issues to be handled in the home where they belong. Adley clearly thinks it is the job of the school - and therefore the state - to have a hand in raising our children in a manner that THEY see fit - as opposed to the preferences of US, the parents. The recent uproar over nonsense "literature" like Gender Queer is just a microcosm of the leftist, woke garbage that our children are being fed. Go back to teaching what you're supposed to be teaching... reading, writing, arithmetic, science, history, etc... Stop trying to force your leftist crap down the throats of our children thereby creating a generation of America hating, race baiting, safe space needing, weak minded, resilience lacking "adults". The results are already on full display. Time to reverse

I don't need a weekly superintendent email to start with (rarely says anything important) nor do I then need a weekly principal email shortly following it saying the exact same thing. I have email fatigue from the district

I was not happy with the communication regarding the preschool program. I tried to apply and never got a confirmation about my application. After leaving multiple messages with the director I finally got a response they did not receive my application. I applied again online and never got a response.

The website is hard to navigate so I would work on that. All school emails should have a searchable term to start in the subject line and preferably come from a title not just a name — crowded email inboxes are so hard to keep up with and search. General announcements should all be available and updated in the website or somewhere separate so you don't have to piece together email with sometimes conflicting/updated information. More updates from teachers would be valued at the high school level — there is essentially none. Aspen is terrible!

The district's use of the SchoolMessenger system completely ignores how the community processes and uses messages. The traditional way of sending information in an email allowed parents to later SEARCH their email and retrieve the message quickly when it was relevant. With SchoolMessenger, the parent can see it once, but if they ever want to come back to it again, there's no easy way to search for it among the dozens of PDFs. Does the district expect us to memorize every detail of everything we read? I give up. I bristle at every schoolmessenger link I receive. I make a conscious effort to NOT to click the link because whatever I read is going to be lost and just cause me headaches if I ever need it again. If it is important I figure the district better get me the information some other way. PLEASE STOP USING SCHOOLMESSENGER TO COMMUNICATE; RETURN TO TRADITIONAL EMAIL.

I wish that emails would not have attachments to read the newsletter. Just put the announcement in the actual email. Usually I am on my iphone and when I click on the link to the attachment, it is too hard to read. Please put all communication in the body of the email.

Dr Addley should not have his employment contract renewed. He has had 2 beautiful young children take their lives on his watch. The poor state of the mental health in Darien Schools falls squarely on his shoulders. He's too busy, along with all of his progressive hires (in a conservative town as evidenced by school board elections) pushing ideology that confuses and depresses students instead of educate and inspire. The town should be educating children not indoctrinating and confusing them. All of this is because of Dr. Addley and because of that he should be excused from his position. The 2 suicides alone should have resulted in AT THE VERY LEAST his removal, if not

Coffees morning meeting really cater to parents who do not work full time. It would be nice to have more of a mixture of times for these events.

We've found information can come close to the date it's needed. We often try to get ahead of the game and make an early plan. Sometimes then this can be for naught.

Include links when you reference a document, site, etc.

It seems to me that there is a better system than aspen. It's difficult to navigate and access.

Establish a website to review schools and performance

They could use better the Superintendent Friday notes. It should highlight changes in the curriculum and additional reading materials implemented to the students.

Your communication skills are not the problem. Too much woke ideology for me and my family values.

Make aspen more user friendly. Almost everything is very difficult to find in Aspen.

Communications are like a one way street and need to be more open for parents to provide input. Many times, parents receive information about inappropriate things happening in school from our kids; when we reach out to the administration and faculty, we get canned highly politicized answers. This is totally unacceptable.

Separately, the district is lacking in policy around required communications to parents related to sensitive topics like curriculum and child health issues (social / emotional or other). Faculty and administration is creating division between themselves and parents and between parents and their own children by "keeping secrets" from parents. This is also totally unacceptable.

Finally, it seems that the breakdown in communication even amongst the faculty and administration is poor and has resulted in a lack of accountability for rogue decisions made that have not been approved by the board of education.

ASPEN could be more user friendly

None

Even within this survey, there are blurred lines between administration and the PTOs. Relying on the PTOs to communicate on administrative information can be confusing for parents. The website continues to be problematic for contact information. Chain of communication needs to be better communicated so escalation can be appropriate and efficient. The BOE rarely communicates formally on the business or processes of the board. Without this, unfortunately, they are in a reactive instead of proactive stance.

I think it would be helpful to better publicize agenda items before there are important votes. People here are over scheduled and very busy. So much that goes on politically is "if you know you know." The district can do a better job making sure issues that affect the school community are more widely known in advance of the critical votes. It means nothing to provide the fora for commentary if people don't know there is an important issue on the table. Whether it's social media, local papers, through the wires: key agenda items should be communicated more widely in my opinion. Thank you for organizing the survey and seeking input on this issue - I appreciate it!

It would be great if the District screens the books are students are reading and gave parents the opportunity to opt out of our students reading certain ones. Why are students able to access books in school that have sex acts in them but no book with a mention of God is allowed in? It's no wonder we have the mental health and other issues plaguing our town/nation. Can we please allow in the complete opposite type of book like the one written by Kirk Cameron?

More consideration should be provided to parents who both work as many coffees, meetings, etc are during work hours - limiting tremendously even the possibility of some parents to attend any of these at all, which naturally decreases their voice, making the voices of those in attendance more prominent.

Continue to provide chances for the community to engage and participate instead of just informing, I've really appreciated that this year!

The last day of school (change from

Previously agreed upon date) is never communicated. I fact I called the superintendents office to find how how I could receive that information and never heard back.

I would love to have more coffee mornings with the superintendent, principals, Etc.

I would love to hear what deliverables/changes/improvements have been made directly because of parent feedback. (vs only hearing updates but not knowing the origin of the request.)

Much clearer communication on curriculum and controversial topics.

DHS should make public the annual student awards ceremony. As it is now, students who receive academic awards are invited to attend in an evening, but the winners are not posted or published for the community to appreciate and celebrate their accomplishments. Nor are they publicly acknowledged within the school. We've had two graduate already and I would have loved to have congratulated their classmates who won. But since we weren't invited to the ceremony, we didn't know. We celebrate our award winning athletes but not our scholars and volunteers.

Superintendent and principal weekly emails not all to go out on Friday/the same day.

Parents need to receive information about staff departures, changes in support hours, teachers being out for illness, etc. before or right at the first day building administration is aware. When this happens, parents need to know the plan going forward. The District and all school websites need a complete overhaul. I find our PTO sites to provide more information, are more user friendly and visually welcoming. There needs to be more content on our District pages.

More student grade specific information

We do not believe that this administration has been transparent with:

Addressing parental concerns on sexually explicit material in school libraries.

Discussing the full impact of their continued push for Open Choice and the opening of our schools to Norwalk students, a first step towards regionalization.

Identifying the reasons why Darien test scores have declined under their leadership.

Promoting SEL -- rather than academics -- when Darien test scores have declined.

Aligning their agenda to reflect the values of the community and parents.

Page of instagram have everything by details of every day what's going on and reminding parents of.

Simplify the e-mail system so that e-mailed letters can be accessed with a single click. The BoE should listen to parents more and the state less.

I feel like the district communicates timely. It is the school specific info that is not communicated timely or effectively.

For example, the SBACS or such a big focus but we never hear about the scores are where our individual school

A monthly district wide newsletter on happenings across the district and schools to foster a greater sense of community across schools.

Too much attention are given to sports. Achievements in other areas such as music (All state, Western Regional...), quiz bowl do not get mentioned at all at the district and sometimes not even at the school level.

I am not aware of a social media account specific to the District. I follow Theatre 308, DHS 2023 Graduates and other specific accounts, but would follow a broader district account if I knew of one (if there is one, perhaps it needs to be better publicized).

It is generally assumed by the district and the individual schools that families are familiar with the way things are done at the schools and in the district. It is incredibly difficult for new families to the district or to an individual school to know what they need to do when. This includes families who have lived here for some time but have their eldest child going through the school system. My eldest started in the Darien school district as a kindergartner and is now a senior in high school, and all throughout her years in the district, I have had to rely almost entirely on the experience of friends and neighbors whose children are a few years ahead of her in school to tell me what I need to know about how things work within the district and at each school. Instead, the district and the individual schools should assume that every family at every grade level is new to town and to the district. That way, perhaps families will have more information about what they need to do or should do when for their children.

Please stop using the links to a PDF file that need to be downloaded. It is an unnecessary, time consuming process. Body of message can be included in an e-mail communication, there is no need to require the downloading of files to read a simple communication.

I dislike when I have to click a link to view the Superintendent's letter; on my phone I need to go find my download folder and then click on it and to be honest I don't always do it. It's so much better when the copy is in the actual email. I've noticed that more recently and would love it if it continued this way.

Want to be able to view messages on my iPhone without opening links or attachments--doing so often precludes me from reading them or makes it overly complicated.

Provide regular communication emails. Most communication comes through the PTO newsletters not the actual The district is not transparent on the goals of SEL and the use of that curriculum to teach about sensitive issues surrounding gender and sexuality; the district could do a better job of providing rigorous material for children in elementary and middle school that are tracking ahead of grade level benchmarks. We need to shift our focus back to academics and better balance the SEL curriculum with the core, academic curriculum. The middle school communications are very limited and very high level. The principal does not engage enough with parents, teachers or students. Teachers do not communicate enough with parents. In all the years that I have had a child at MMS, I have only had 1 teacher that has regularly sent emails to parents regarding the lesson plans and updating us on progress. We need to be able to have some insight into what our children are learning. Parents are regularly referred back to the DPS website to find information when asked questions about curriculum. The website is not easy to navigate and you often have to click through several layers to find some of the information you are looking for. It almost feels as if they are trying to make it difficult for parents, while at the same time, able to say the material is "there" somewhere.

It would be great if the district was not reactionary. When there are questions or issues to swiftly communicate what the problem and what is happening to solve it. DHS has been doing a much better job with this, this year.

1. Ensure teachers and administrators email BOTH mom and dad when a specific issue arises. Far too often they only email mom.
2. Combine weekly emails from both principal and superintendent.
3. Always include the date, time and location in any email blast that mentions an upcoming event.

Communications Survey - Staff

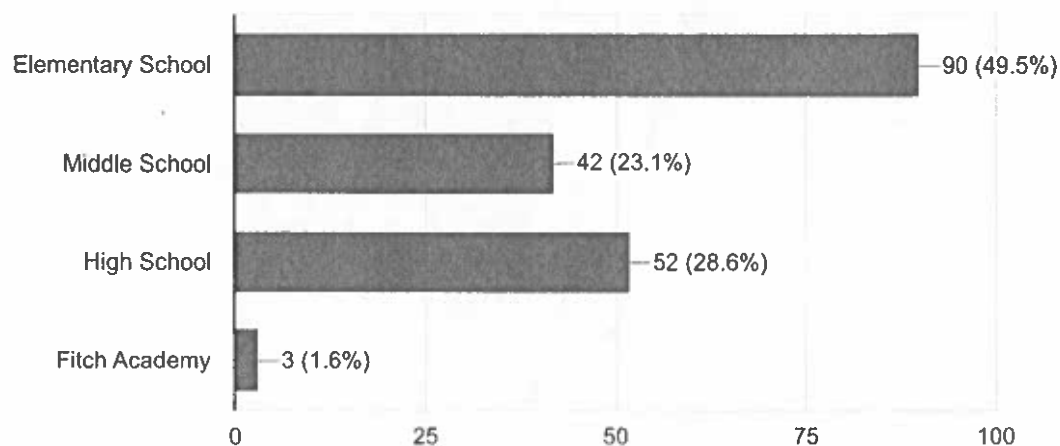
183 responses

[Publish analytics](#)

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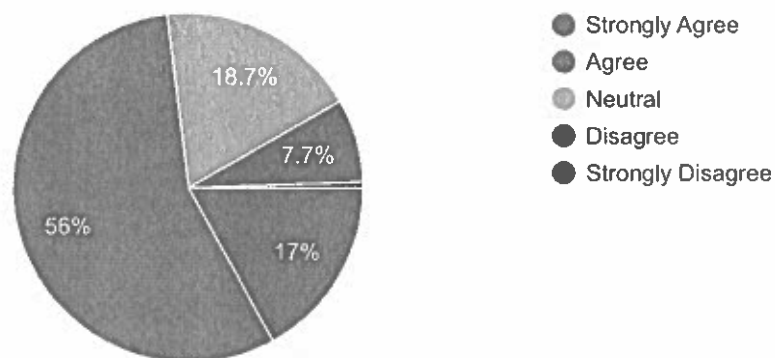
182 responses



The District communicates important information in a timely manner.

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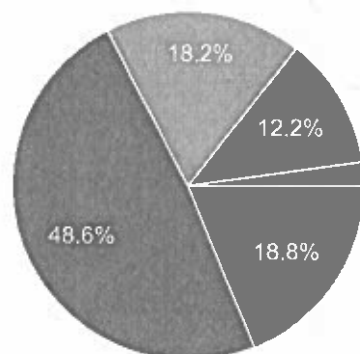
182 responses



The District regularly communicates student successes, including academic achievements, athletic results and visual/performing arts accomplishments.

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181 responses

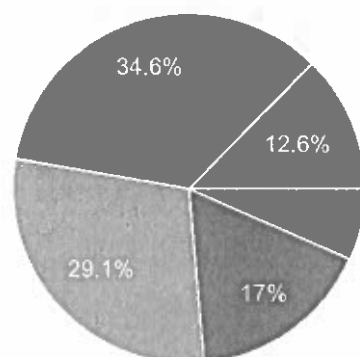


● Strongly Agree
● Agree
● Neutral
● Disagree
● Strongly Disagree

The District regularly shares news about the successes and accomplishments of the staff.

 Copy

182 responses

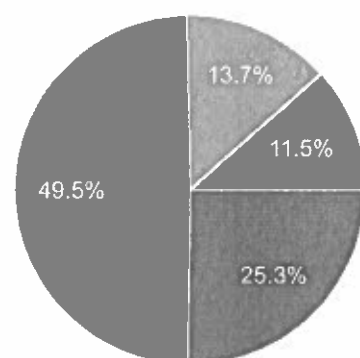


● Strongly Agree
● Agree
● Neutral
● Disagree
● Strongly Disagree

I receive messages from the District in a variety of ways - through my mobile device, print or computer.

 Copy

182 responses

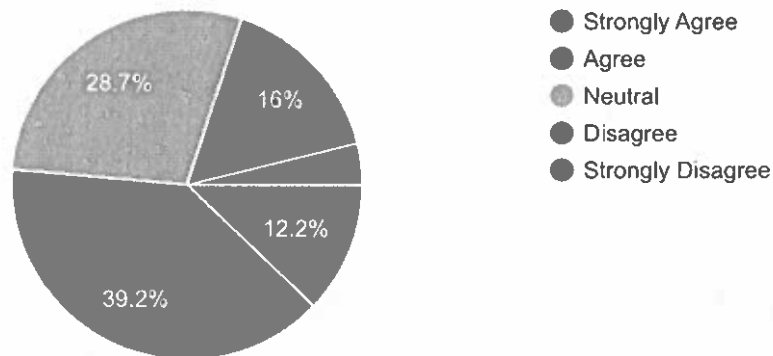


● Strongly Agree
● Agree
● Neutral
● Disagree
● Strongly Disagree

The District's website is an engaging destination that provides relevant information that is readily accessible.

 Copy

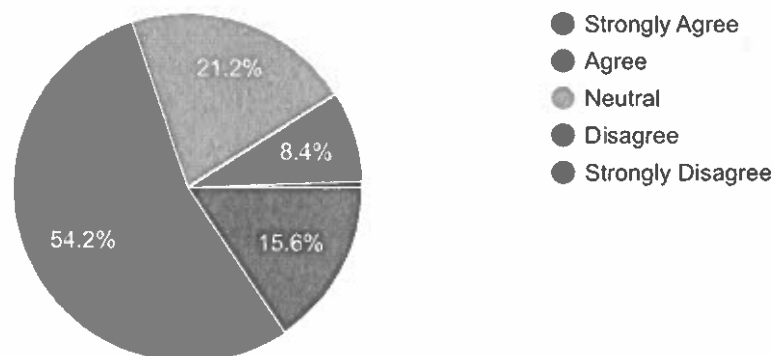
181 responses



I am satisfied with the way I am currently receiving messages from the District.

 Copy

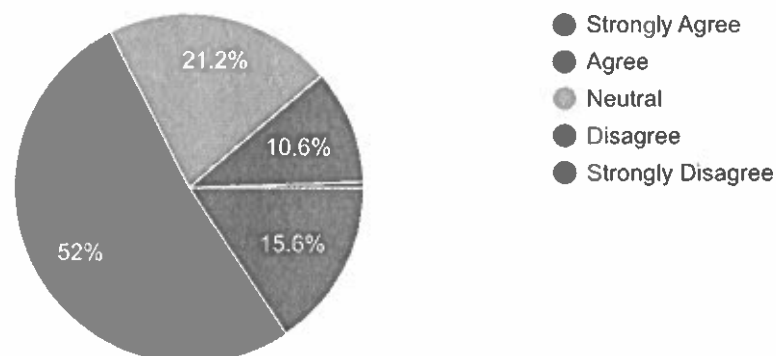
179 responses



I am satisfied with the quantity of messages that I am currently receiving from the District.

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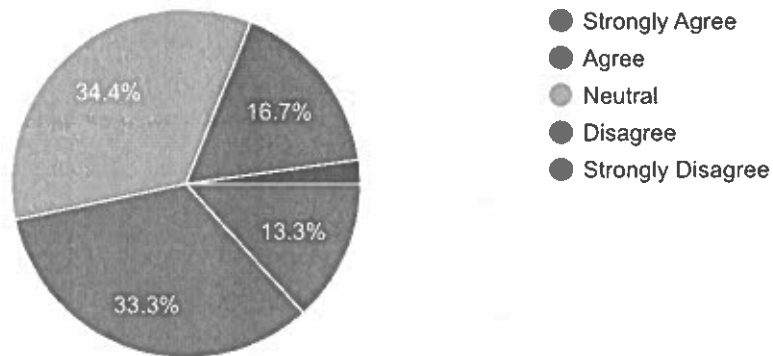
179 responses



The messages the District shares regularly catch my attention and stand out from other messages. They are clear and concise.

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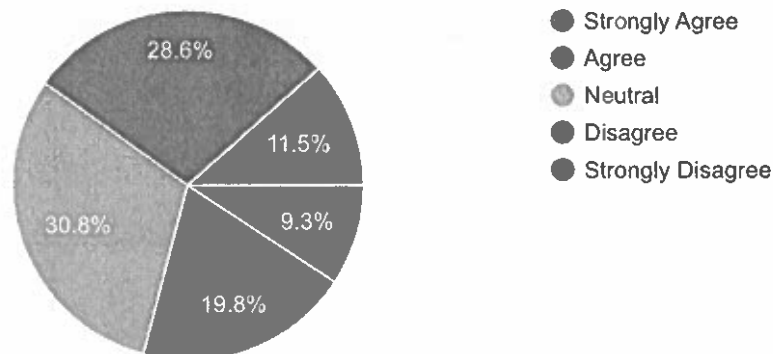
180 responses



The District provides opportunities for staff to engage with the administration.

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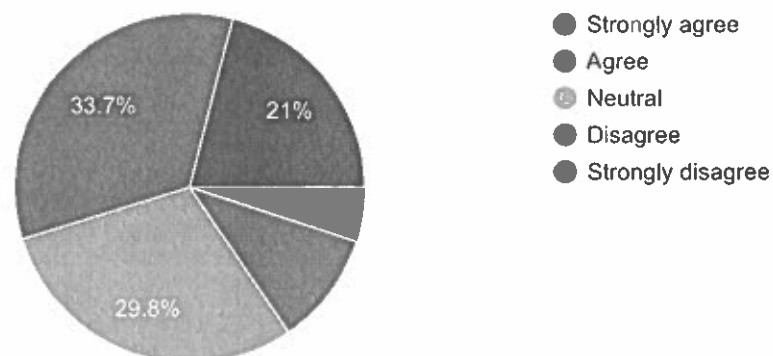
182 responses



The District provides opportunities for staff to engage with the Board of Education.

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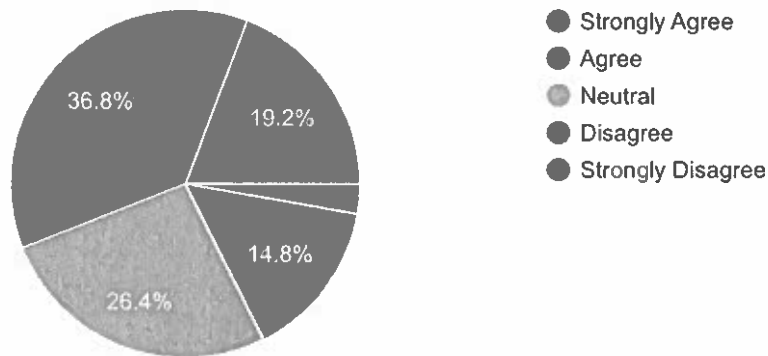
181 responses



I would interact with the District more often if it increased the use of social media (i.e., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)

 Copy

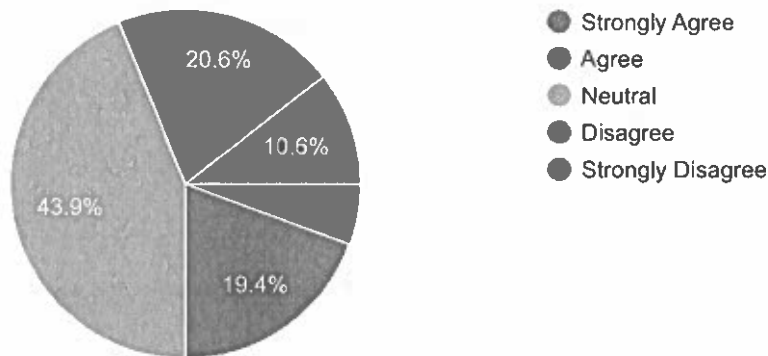
182 responses



The District respects and values dissenting opinions.

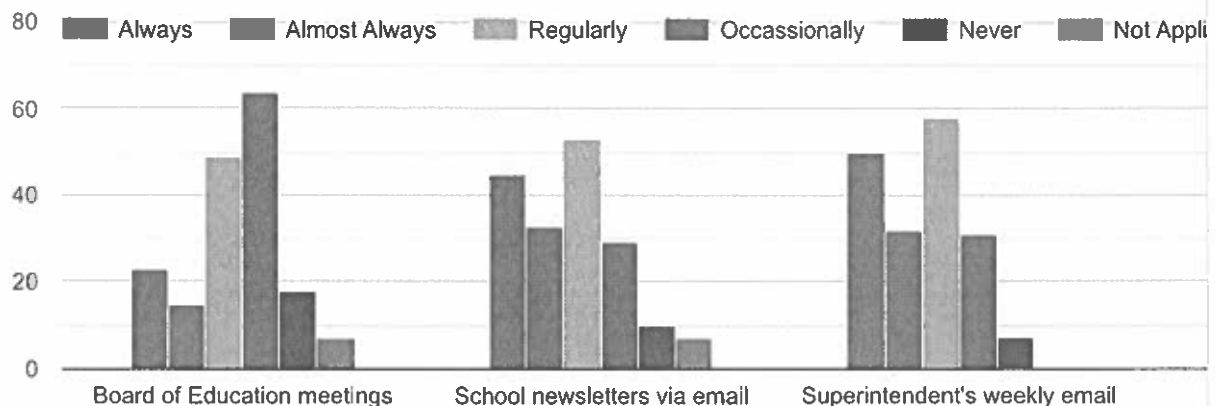
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180 responses



Please rank how much you value the following District communications:

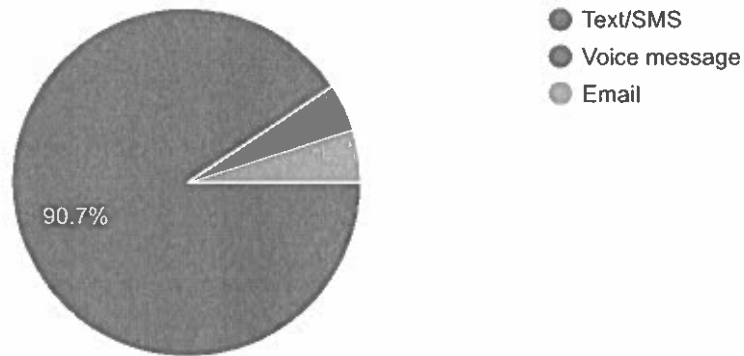
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What is your first preference for critical communications (closings, delays or urgent messages)?

 Copy

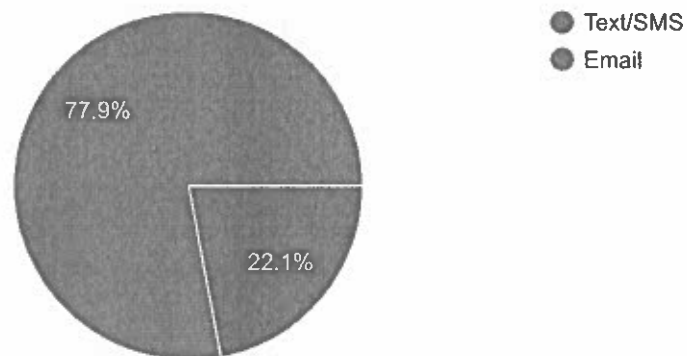
182 responses



What is your first preference for general information (announcements and reminders)?

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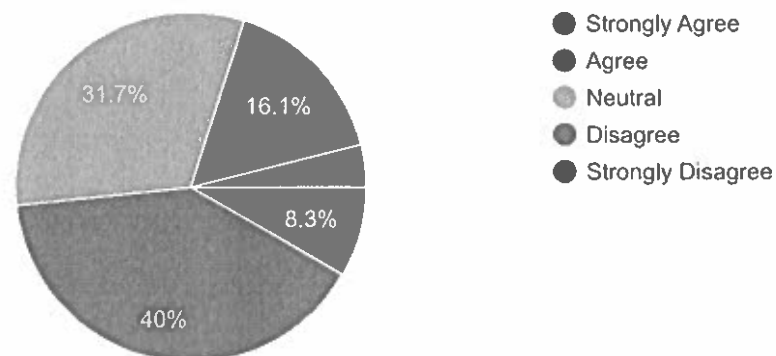
181 responses



The District is open and transparent in its communications.

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180 responses



What ideas, if any, do you have for ways to improve the District's communications?

61 responses

I said agree a lot in my answers but I don't know what I don't know, it seems great but I wouldn't know about things that you don't share.

Teachers want to know what is going on. However, between the overwhelming amount of work and our own children's districts, we do not always have the time to go to the BOE meetings or find out information about other things. It is NOT that we are disinterested. We just do not always have the extra time.

Increased social media presence, website is difficult to navigate, difficult to find a district wide calendar that is regularly updated. Outlook is not user friendly. We should use Google for everything, especially email. There are too many systems to navigate - website, tepl, Aspen, munis, school cash, my school bucks, frontline, Classroom. Can we streamline?

When texting, it is most helpful to include DPS or Darien Public Schools. My children attend school in Norwalk and when I get weather alerts (delays/closings) it is sometimes unclear which district is sending out information - both come through the same phone number.

I am skeptical that these broad survey questions can get you actionable data. I hope you do follow up interviews with people or get a professional survey design firm to get better data in the future.

None.

The website is, and has been, a very difficult site to navigate. The app through the phone is laughable. The website has numerous links with outdated and/or inaccurate information. The easiest example is this year's school calendar. In the past, after an April BOE meeting they would approve the calendar and update all staff, students and families with the new date that would change due to school cancellations. As of 5/18 it hadn't been...

As far as social media goes...you have to be kidding to think staff should participate in that realm with the sharks. Staff already deals with parents who research their kids teachers and use it against them.

I think if you were to have more round table discussions with staff at all levels with BOE members, admin, etc you may get a better idea of what's working and what needs to be improved to help the students/teachers in Darien.

You do a good job. Having administrators of all levels in the buildings for informal chats with staff would be useful.

Improve the timeliness of communications from CS to teachers
Specifically, when feedback is asked, keep in mind the PLC schedule and not ask teachers to suddenly call a meeting at their grade level to answer questions from CS with less than one week notice.



The District does an excellent and commendable job in communicating with everyone in the community. Congratulations are in order.

There seems to be way too many ways to receive communications these days. I prefer crucial communications to remain simple and centralized.

I really appreciate Dr. Addley's weekly letters home. During the pandemic, they were crucial to keeping us all informed about how things were progressing. Now, they are a nice way to end the week and see what has happened and what we are looking forward to.

The district prides itself on leading curriculum, but is behind on management system techniques including candid communication with all levels, having more of a "flat" management system rather than hierarchical, and using data and inspection to improve operations. As a retired strategy and operations executive, we could do much better with the resources we have if managed differently. I am a resident of Darien as well, and would love to be part of the solution if we go in this direction.

Unfortunately, I have not additional ideas at this time, but I appreciate that you are seeking input from staff.

What about small coffees with teachers and parents at the school level? We currently do large group/grade level coffees, but perhaps 10 parents and 10 teachers/administrators could get together and discuss successes and areas of concern in the building community.

give us information in a timely manner~

Communication of building events and initiatives is often lacking - we don't always get adequate time to adjust our lesson plans when assemblies and other grade level/building events happen. If there is going to be a schedule change or a class dropped, we need time to adjust. Often, teachers plan units during PLC weeks in advance, and changing things last minute puts a big monkey wrench in everything, especially at the end of the year when we are trying to finish up curriculum.

Continue what is working well!

NA

the Board of Education needs to find a way to regularly receive input and information from the FACULTY and STAFF. There should be a Faculty and Staff liaison on the board of Ed just like there are student liaisons on the Board of Education. This could ensure that the Board is getting ACCURATE information about school happenings.

Improve DHS Website

The website needs to provide access to daily needed information like what's the exam schedule?

If there was a way to differentiate the more important news from everything else. I.e. a lot of the district emails on a Friday go unread, so putting important information elsewhere. The best

way, in my opinion, to directly get to staff and community, is texts , but reserve those for very important info. Also, would love to have more of a communication between staff and admin.

This was a hard survey to answer, in that there are different layers of communication and communicators, and different forms of communication. Dr. Addley and Dr. Tranberg are excellent in their communication skills, platforms used, frequency and transparency. Though I would recommend that the Superintendents more frequently highlight the work of teachers so that parents, BOE Members and members of the community can see transparently all the great experiences that are being had with students in classrooms.

I also think that BOE Members should be required (or at least encouraged) to make a minimum of one school visit per month. Visiting schools and having face-to-face communication with staff members during these visits would go a long way toward BOE members seeing and hearing firsthand what is really transpiring in DPS buildings.

At the elementary level, we are VERY frustrated with the lack of communication and progress around curriculum, both coming down to us and going up from us. We are frequently asked to give feedback on units and curricular programs, yet time and time again none of our feedback comes to fruition. Teachers feel unheard and quite frustrated after taking the time to give thoughtful recommendations, only to have them ignored going forward. Administrators at that level seem "dug in" to particular pedagogy and programs, and the communication around curriculum feels disengenuous to us.

A more effective method of communicating around elementary curriculum would be to establish stipended positions for teacher-led Subject Area Committees (SACs) for Language Arts, Math, Social Studies and Science (and special areas too?). One teacher per subject area per school (5 teachers total per subject) would meet regularly with administration and their own school staffs to help develop effective curriculum solutions, share ideas, projects, successes, challenges, etc. This would establish more effective Inter- and intra- school communications than the current team leader model alone currently does.

In addition, some meetings, presentations, coffees, etc. are quite helpful and engaging, while others are absolutely not (see above), so that question was hard. I guess it depends on the focus area of the meeting and the communicator...

Finally, our District website feels somewhat corporate and cold, and information can sometimes be hard to find. From an elementary perspective, it can be livened up a bit to feel more engaging, while also streamlined to make things easier to access. Sometimes less is more...

Stop patronizing us.

Better implementation of communication (including promotion of events and celebration of successes) at the building-based level. Too often it seems that responsibility is relegated to district newsletters, blogs, etc., which leads to a lack of cohesive community feeling within the building.

I am advisor of a large club at the high school that manages membership fees and expenses of the club (over \$50,000 a year). I would like to see policies to be written and the advisors be

informed of changes. An example is that the BoE decided clubs could not purchase gift certificates. As an advisor, I was never notified of this change, bought 10 five dollar gift certificates to be given out as prizes at my club of 100+ students. I was never notified of this change in writing or verbally and never reimbursed for my \$50 purchase. I feel there should be a written document of policies and if you want all purchases to be approved by administration, then create a policy and a form for it.

The Board of Education should hear directly from teachers. The information they hear at board meetings is an administrative spin on what is actually happening at schools and what teachers/staff actually need.

more information, regularly given, about proposals and questions before the Board of Ed, and decisions made by it

I'm not a huge social media contributor. I, personally and thankfully, haven't had any issues communicating with the district, when I needed to. I understand that all personalities under one umbrella will have conflict, and that is human, as in any work family. It's nice to want to always paint beautiful pictures. Yet, it's also okay to acknowledge imperfections working towards social emotional my growth and a greater and happier compromise for all involved.

The Board of Ed should listen to the concerns of teachers and coaches

We need a centralized calendar with everything on it that is easy to access (school level and/or district). Website photos are stale and need updating.

Less emails

The Website is not user friendly. It's hard to find information and to search. I also find that what I'm looking for is not always on the front page. We used to have an unattractive home page--but it was useful because everything you needed to know was right there with one click.

As a staff member, I don't want to use social media at school to find out about what's going on in school and after school. (I'm not on my phone during the school day) Could the information that is sent via athletic dept (the instagram page) also be shared via email or on the website somewhere. If I had a quick place to click, I could then acknowledge my student athletes or artists directly for a game or performance.

It would be nice if the district did a spotlight feature on a teacher from any of the schools on a regular basis. (Perhaps nominated by another teacher?) Teachers need to feel like they scored a touchdown every once in awhile.

The district is exceptional at communicating school news. Thank you!

More frequent, shorter messages. Emails are lengthy and time consuming to read. Would be better if we had more two-way communication methods (i.e. instant messaging on computers or something like it) so that we receive information as soon as possible, frequently, and briefly. The opportunity to respond/interact would be nice so that we feel our voices are valuable.

Reduce the frequency of the superintendent's weekly email to monthly. Improve the layout of the district website. It would be more helpful to have a Parent view, teacher view and a student

view. We all need different things from the website so it is hard to find needed information in a timely manner.

I would like to find out about school closings from an email/text message instead of seeing it first on TV or News website.

Communications in the form of a newsletter (short articles/pictures) might be nice.

I think the district needs to communicate ALL student successes and happenings in a timely basis. I think the lack of communication, other than in the Darien Times, about an alumna's gift and master class was unacceptable considering the of emphasis and money that the district is now putting on mental health. It was a perfect event to share with the district and in the Superintendents weekly email as well as in the new Director of Mental Health's first communication. I was further disappointed that BOE members, nor (more) administrative staff did not attend this master class. I was disappointed that a BOE member was able to communicate in the paper such a crass and rude comment regarding the attention given to mental health and in particular suicides/deaths in town. I sincerely hope this will be addressed.

Administrative communications should be sent out during working hours

More transparency regarding sensitive matters.

Important decisions directly affecting particular district programs, departments, and buildings at board of education meetings are not effectively communicated. There is no opportunity for dialogue unless we all regularly attend board of education meetings, which is not feasible. The model is from the top down, and we seem to be handed decisions that have already been made without having been able to provide any input.

Communicating information with staff members before sending to parents. Celebrating staff achievements through newsletters and announcements could also boost staff morale.

In all seriousness, do you think you are good communicators? If so, then go back to the drawing board - forget everything you think you know about good communication and start over.

I don't trust anything that comes from administration as genuine. I don't believe you are interested in feedback- only the appearance that you interested. And I don't believe things will change any time soon.

I think communication about curriculum based information needs to improve. For example, changes/updates to curriculum, assessments, instructional resources, etc.

Provide a safe forum for teachers to voice concerns. Engage teachers in problem-solving. Acknowledge and validate what teachers say. Be open and honest with parents.

District communication is notoriously confusing. One person says the color is red and it trickles down like telephone and by the time it reaches the staff it is the color blue. This causes confusion at the very least. It would be awesome if elementary level schools. had something like the high schools do with their athletics profiles and social media, or even just highlighting the great things that kids and STAFF are doing. I think that most staff would love to be communicated with in a timely fashion- if we are required to reply to emails from families

within 24 hours, I think staff deserves to receive a reply from administrators within the same time frame. There are no opportunities for teachers to interact with upper level administration and the BOE unless they are hand picked for a selective committee. I think that teachers would love to see admin more present in our buildings for personal communications, but it would also be wonderful to see BOE members in our schools and classrooms to witness the amazing work we're doing every day for the children of this district.

Listen to your staff/faculty.

Keep the websites up to date and user friendly

As a new teacher this year, I was never prompted to sign up for district communications. I did not receive any automated voicemails/phone calls about the snow day this year. When I asked in my school's office, no one knew how to add me to communications, and some people thought I should have been added automatically (but I wasn't). Making sure new teachers are signed up for district communications (outside of just school emails) should be a priority.

By "District," do you mean only Central Services? Or this term meant to includes building level and departmental level communications?

Earlier communication regarding information and offerings for professional development days.

Website can be challenging to navigate. Consider multiple ways to search for and access information.

Please send important emails during work hours. Many Friday emails from admin are sent after the end of the school day.

This question was confusing. "Please rank how much you value the following District communications". It was hard to tell if you're asking if we value it in general or if we value the content of the current communications. (Not sure your answers will be valid.)

It would be nice to have a comprehensive online calendar of all events at all schools on the main website. (Ridgefield has that, and each school is color-coded so it's easy to find what's happening and where.)

Many times in my years here, I feel like the 'last to know' about certain things. It would be nice to have a clearer communication between admin/BOE and the staff.

HR communications (retirement, open enrollment) are always SUPER CLEAR! Tech communications are not usually clear (from Joan or from I.T.). Building communications are wonderful.

Having a building school calendar for staff that's accessible at the middle school would be helpful this ties into the commutation piece a little easier.

Staff should be given the following on a regular basis:

- 1) A copy of the minutes from all BOE meetings and committees (these are on the district website which is in no way user friendly)
- 2) A monthly update from each building/department on staff happenings/accomplishments...not student...staff.



3) The BOE should hold monthly office hours for staff to have an audience with them to better put faces to names and to discuss concerns/accomplishments within the district. There is currently no meaningful communication between the BOE and the teachers and staff of this district. They sit on high making decisions which directly impact our classrooms but have no clue what it means to be a teacher/staff member in this district.

I am satisfied with the District's communications.

The point on dissenting opinions is key, there used to be more opportunity for this - and it often feels like a dissenting opinions were taken into consideration more seriously than it is now, and most committees feel like rubber stamps/places where the decisions were made already -- not opportunity to make or affect policy, particularly in building policy. It does not seem there is often teacher influence on district policy - or it is only the teachers who might 'go along' on the committees. For example - the block schedule committee seems to have had a particular agenda and outcome from the onset (or at the very least it's intriguing the outcome is quite similar to the initial ideas - and without clear identifications of what the schedule is attempting to accomplish).

Aside from notice to not come to work for a cancellation (which is best done before 5:30), other communications are best through email. Opportunities to engage with the board may be productive for working conditions and boosting morale. In answering some of these questions, I answered in regards to the 'district' not necessarily the 'buidling'. This survey focuses only on District/board communication not necessarily the timliness or clairty of communication from building administration or department heads.

A place that would be helpful to provide feedback is on administrators for the purpose of professional growth and encouraging and staff morale.

Please stop sending information that requires a download to read, which is often the case with the weekly emails from the Superintendent. People do not want to download a weekly message onto their computer. You should be able to open an email and read the message.

Thank you for completing this survey.

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Google Forms



Darien Public Schools Communication Plan - Board of Education

| Source (Location) | Message Source (Owner) | Message Type (What) | Audience (Who) | Delivery Method (How) | Schedule (When) | Status (Current/In Progress/Add/Discontinue) |
|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--|--|
| Board of Education | Chair | Legislative | Legislators | Email/in person | Legislative Session as needed | In Progress |
| Board of Education | Board of Education | Budget | Community | Website & Meetings | Annually - Fall-Spring | In Progress |
| Board of Education | Board of Education | Public Comment | Community | In person & Zoom | At scheduled Board of Education meetings | Current |
| Board of Education | Board of Education | Public Hearings | Community | In person & Zoom | Annually - spring and as needed | Current |
| Board of Education | Chair | Operations Planning Committee | Town Leadership | In Person & TV79 | Monthly | Current |
| Board of Education | Chair | State of the Town | Community | In Person & TV79 | Annually - December | Current |
| Board of Education | Board of Education | Regular and Committee Meetings | Community | In person & Zoom | Monthly and as posted | Current |
| Board of Education | Chair | Graduation Speech | DHS Community | In person & DAF Media | Annually, Graduation | Current |
| Board of Education | Board of Education | Facilities Tour | Elected officials | In-person | Annually Spring | Current |
| Board of Education | Board of Education | Website | Community | Internet | Always | Current |
| Board of Education | Unknown/Unclaimed | LinkedIn | Community | Internet | Always | Current |
| Board of Ed | Board of Ed | OpEd | Newspaper audience | Media | Rare (ever?) | Current |
| Board of Education | Board members | Quotes | Newspaper audience | Darien Times, Patch, etc | As quoted | Current |
| Board of Education | Chair | Other district Chair Email Chain | District Chairpeople | email | Unscheduled | Current |
| Board of Education | Chair, Superintendent | Joint Communication | School District | email | As needed | Current |
| Board of Education | Chair | Clarification of board action | Community | various media | As needed | Current |
| Town Leadership | Chair and/or whole BoE | Joint Communication | Town of Darien | email | As needed | Current |

Draft Darien Public Schools Communication Plan

| Source (Location) | Message Source (Owner) | Message Type (What) | Audience (Who) | Delivery Method (How) | Schedule (When) | Status (Current/In Progress/Add/Discontinue) |
|-------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Central Services | Superintendent | Superintendent's Communication | All DPS | Email | Weekly | Current |
| Central Services | Director of Nursing Services | Nursing Update | DPS Families | Email | As Needed | Current |
| Central Services | Superintendent | Emergency/Weather | All DPS | Email, Text, Phone, Television | As Needed | Current |
| Central Services | Superintendent | Budget | BOE & Community | BOE Meeting | Annually | Current |
| Central Services | Director Elem Education | Elementary Curriculum Updates | BOE Curriculum Committee | BOE Meeting | As scheduled | Current |
| Central Services | Director Elem Education | Elementary Curriculum | K-5 Families | In-person and/or virtual) | Approx. 3x/year | Current |
| Central Services | Testing Coordinator | Standardized Testing Results | 3-8 Families | Presentation (virtual) | Annually - Fall | Current |
| Central Services | Business Office | Legal Notices | Vendors | Newspaper, Website | As Needed | Current |
| Central Services | Business Office | Budget Process | Administrators | Email | October | Current |
| Central Services | Business Office | Closing the Year | MUNIS Users | Email | June/July | Current |
| Central Services | Director of Security | SSO Announcements | Parents/Staff/Professional colleagues | Email/Press Release | As Needed | Current |
| Central Services | Director of Security | CALEA Accreditation | Parents/Staff/Professional colleagues | Email/Press Release | As Needed | Current |
| Central Services | Human Resources | Job Postings | District Staff | Email | As Needed | Current |
| Central Services | Human Resources | Personnel Report | All DPS | Board Agenda | As Needed | Current |
| Central Services | SESS | Parent Coffees | ELP-12+ | In-person and/or virtual) | Approx. 5x/year | Current |
| Central Services | SESS | Parent Communication | CDSP | Virtual Meetings | Monthly | Current |
| Central Services | SESS | Board Communication | All DPS/Community | Board Presentation/Memo | As Needed | Current |
| Central Services | IT | System Status Updates | All DPS | Email | As Needed | |
| Central Services | Director of Inst. Tech | Weekly Tech Tips | All DPS | Email | Weekly | Current |
| Central Services | Director of Inst. Tech | District Library Newsletter | Community | Email | Once in Fall & once in Spring | Current |
| Central Services | Director of Inst. Tech | Biannual Parent Techh 101 Newsletter | Community | Email | Once in Fall & once in Spring | Current |
| Central Services | Director of Inst. Tech | Robotics Club Invites | Community (K-8) | Email | As needed | Current |
| Central Services | Director of Inst. Tech | Tech Wave Site | K-12 Teachers (PD resources on all our instructional software) | Website | Continually updated and linked to weekly tech tips | Current |
| Central Services | Curriculum Leaders | Department Updates | Community | Board Presentation | Approx. 5x/year | Current |

| Central Services | Curriculum Leaders | Curriculum and Departmental Info | Community | DPS Website | Updated as Needed | Current |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|---------|
| All K-12 schools | Director of Music | DPS Music News and Events | Community | Twitter | Regular Updates | Current |
| DHS | Principal | Parent Coffees | All Schools | In-Person or Zoom | Four times per year | Current |
| DHS | Admin Team | Extracurricular Meetings | DHS Students and Families | Auditorium | Annually | Current |
| DHS | Leadership Team | DHS Happenings | DHS Families, Students, Staff | Email | 5 X per year | Current |
| DHS | DHS Athletics | Darien H.S. Athletics | Community | Twitter | Regular Updates | Current |
| DHS | DHS Athletics | Darien HS Athletics | Parents | Family ID | Regular Updates | |
| DHS | Dept Chair | Ninth Grade Curriculum Night | Incoming Families | In-person | Annually - Winter | Current |
| DHS | Dept Chair | Honors Placement Letter | Students / Families | Email | Spring Semester | Current |
| DHS/MMS | Dept Chair | Department Updates | Dept Members (staff) | Agendas for Dept Meetings / Emails | Monthly / As Needed | Current |
| DHS | Dept Chair | Summer Reading | DHS Families | Email/Website | Spring | Current |
| DHS | Dept Chair/Honor Society Advisor | Department Honor Society Application Process | | | | |
| DHS | Dept Chair | Electives/Course Choices | Students/Families | Email/Newsletter | Fall/Winter | Current |
| DHS | Dept Chair | Parent Info | Parents | Auditorium | Spring | Current |
| DHS | Dept Chair | Sessions/International Trips | Families | Email/Zoom | As Needed | Current |
| MMS | Principal | MMS Thursday Notes | Staff | Email | Weekly | Current |
| MMS | Principal | MMS Friday Notes | MMS Families | Email | Weekly | Current |
| MMS | MMS Staff | MMS "Moments from the Middle" | MMS Families & Staff | Email | Monthly | Current |
| MMS | Admin Team | Parent Coffees | All Schools | In-Person or Zoom | Four times per year | Current |
| MMS | Admin Team | MPA Meetings | MMS Families | In-Person | Monthly | Current |
| MMS | Leadership Team | MMS Orientation | Incoming Families | In-Person (virtual) | Annually - Winter | Current |
| MMS | Dept Chair | Placement Letter | Incoming Families | Email | Annually - Spring | Current |
| MMS | Dept Chair | Degrees of Reading | MMS Families | Email | | |
| MMS | Dept Chair | Power Explanation | MMS Families | Email | Fall/Winter | Current |
| MMS | Dept Chair | Waiver Process | MMS Families | Phone/Email | Spring | Current |
| MMS | Dept Chair | Summer Reading | Gr. 5/MMS Families | Email/Website | Spring | Current |
| MMS | Dept Chair | Scripps Spelling Bee | MMS Families | Email | Winter | Current |
| MMS | Dept Chair | Summer Reading Ambassadors Program | MMS Families | Email/Phone | Winter/Spring | Current |
| Hindley | Principal | Hindley Headlines | Elementary Families | Email | Weekly | Current |
| Hindley | Principal & Director-Ed | Kindergarten Orientation | Incoming Families | Presentation (virtual or in-person) | Annually - Spring | Current |
| Hindley | Principal | Parent Coffees | All Schools | In-Person or Zoom | Three times per year | Current |

| | | | | | | |
|----------|-------------------------|---|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Hindley | Principal | PTO Co-Chair Meetings Safety and security emails | PTO leadership | In-Person | Weekly | Current |
| Hindley | Principal | | Families | Email | As needed | |
| Hindley | Principal | PTO meetings | Families | In-Person | Monthly | Current |
| Holmes | Principal | Principal Communication | Holmes School Families | Email | Weekly/As Needed | Current |
| Holmes | Principal & Director-Ed | Kindergarten Orientation | Incoming K Families | Presentation (virtual or in-person) | Annually - Spring | Current |
| Holmes | Principal/AP's | Parent Coffees | Holmes School Families | In-Person or Zoom | Minimum 4x/year | Current |
| Holmes | Assistant Principal | PTO Special Ed Reps | PTO Special Ed Reps | In-Person | Monthly | Current |
| Holmes | Principal | PTO meetings | Holmes School Families | In-Person | Minimum 3x/year | Current |
| Holmes | Principal's Secretary | Staff Daily Newsletter | Staff | Email | Daily | Current |
| Holmes | Principal | PTO Co-Chair Meetings | PTO leadership | In-Person | Weekly | Current |
| Holmes | Principal | Safety/security emails | Holmes School Families | Email | As needed | Current |
| Royle | Principal | Principal Communication | Elementary Families | Email | Weekly | Current |
| Royle | Principal & Director-Ed | Kindergarten Orientation | Incoming Families | Presentation (virtual or in-person) | Annually - Spring | Current |
| Royle | Principal | Parent Coffees | Royle Families | In-Person or Zoom | Four times per year | Current |
| Royle | Principal | PTO Co-Chair Meetings | PTO leadership | In-Person | Weekly | Current |
| Royle | Principal | PTO meetings | Royle Families | In-Person | Four times per year | Current |
| Royle | Principal | Safety and security emails | Royle Families | Email | As needed | Current |
| Royle | Assistant Principal | PTO Special Ed Reps | Royle PTO Special Education Reps | In-Person | Four times per year | Current |
| Royle | Assistant Principal | Parent Coffee Presentations | Parents of students with IEPs and 504s | In-Person, recording shared following | Two times per year | Current |
| Ox Ridge | Principal | Principal Communication | Elementary Families | Email | Weekly | In Progress |
| Ox Ridge | Principal & Director-Ed | Kindergarten Orientation | Incoming Families | Presentation (virtual or in-person) | Annually - Spring | Current |
| Ox Ridge | Principal | Parent Coffees | All Schools | In-Person or Zoom | Four times per year | Current |
| Ox Ridge | Principal | PTO Executive Committee Meetings | Families | In-Person | Monthly | |
| Ox Ridge | Principal | PTO Co-Chair Meetings | PTO leadership | In-Person | Weekly | |
| Ox Ridge | Principal | Safety and security emails | Families | Email | As needed | |

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|-------------|
| Ox Ridge | Assistant Principal & Principal | PTO Special Education Representative Meetings | PTO Special Education reps | In-Person | | Fourth times per year | |
| Tokeneke | Principal | Principal Communication Kindergarten Orientation | Tokeneke Families | Email | | Weekly | In Progress |
| Tokeneke | Principal & Director-Ed | Kindergarten Orientation | Incoming Families | Presentation (virtual or in-person) | | Annually - Spring | Current |
| Tokeneke | Principal | Parent Coffees | Tokeneke Families | In-Person or Zoom | | Four times per year | Current |
| Tokeneke | Principal | PTO Executive Committee | PTO leadership | In-Person | | Monthly | Current |
| Tokeneke | Assistant Principal | CDS&P Special Education Reps | PTO Special Education Reps | In-Person | | Monthly | Current |
| Tokeneke | Principal | Safety and security emails | Tokeneke Families | Email | | As needed | |
| Teachers | Class trips/events | Info & permission forms | Class parents | email | | As needed | Current |
| Teachers/Admin | Individual teachers/admin | News & dates | Parents/Staff/Professional colleagues | Social Media (FB, Twitter, Insta) | | Sporadic | |
| Board of Ed | Board of Ed | OpEd | Newspaper audience | Media | | Rare (ever?) | Current |
| Board of Education | Board members | Quotes | Newspaper audience | Darien Times, Patch, etc | | As quoted | Current |
| SESS Department | ELP Program Director | Presentations/ OPEN HOUSE | ELP Parents | In-person and Zoom | | December | Current |
| SESS Department | ELP Program Director | Parent Coffees | Incoming and Current families | In-person and Zoom | | 3x per year | Current |
| SESS Department | ELP Program Director | Program Information | ELP Parents | ASPEN/ EMAIL | | As needed | Current |
| SESS Department | ELP Program Director | Articulation from PK to K | Parents of students with IEPs | Zoom- Recording | | 1x per year | Current |
| SESS Department | ELP Program Director | ELP Lottery | Perspective ELP parents | Email blast PTO, ASPEN, Darien | | 2X per year | Current |
| SESS Department | ELP Classroom Teachers | Classroom/curriculum update | ELP Parents | email | | daily and monthly | Current |
| SESS Department | ELP Classroom Teachers | Student progress meeting | Family Team meetings | In-person and Zoom | | 1x per month as per IEP | Current |
| SESS Department | ELP Program Director | Information about ELP | Parents | Website | | As needed | Current |
| SESS Department | ELP Classroom Teachers | Classroom/curriculum update | ELP Parents | email | | daily and monthly | Current |
| 6-12 Science department | Department chair | Weekly schedule | 6-12 Science teachers | Google Classroom | | Weekly | Current |
| 6-12 Science Department | Department chair | Meeting Agendas | 6-12 Science teachers | Google Classroom/Email | | As needed | Current |
| SESS Department | ELP Classroom Teachers | Classroom/curriculum update | ELP Parents | email | | daily and monthly | Current |

(Optional bylaw to consider. It may help clarify roles/responsibilities of Board members.)

Bylaws of the Board

Commitment to Democratic Principles in Relation to Community, Staff, Students

Board-Staff Communications

The _____ Board of Education recognizes the need to maintain open communication between itself and the staff. Essentially, communications with staff deal with three general areas -- administration, policy and philosophy. While the Board recognizes the necessity for Board-staff communications, it also recognizes that administrative matters must be dealt with through its chief administrator. Hence, the basic line of communication for administrative matters shall be through the Superintendent.

1. Staff Communications to the Board

All formal reports to the Board or any Board committee from administrators, supervisors, teachers or other staff members shall be submitted through the Superintendent. This necessary procedure shall not be construed as denying the right of any employee to appeal to the Board from administrative decisions on important matters, provided that the Superintendent shall have been notified of the forthcoming appeal and that it is processed in accordance with the Board's policy on complaints and grievances. (cf. 4135.4 and 4235.4 re Complaints/Grievances)

Staff members are also reminded that Board meetings are public meetings. As such, they provide an excellent opportunity to observe and participate first hand the Board's deliberations on problems of staff concern.

2. Board Communication to Staff

All official communications, policies and directives of staff interest and concern will be communicated to staff members through the Superintendent, and the Superintendent will employ all such media as are appropriate to keep staff fully informed of the Board's problems, concerns and actions. (cf. 9020 - Public Statements)

3. Visits to Schools

Individual Board members interested in visiting schools or classrooms will make arrangements for visitations through the administrators of the various schools. Such visits shall be regarded as informal expressions of interest in school affairs and not as "inspections" or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes. Official visits by Board members will be conducted only under Board authorization and with the full knowledge of staff, including the Superintendent, building administrators and other supervisors.

Bylaws of the Board

Commitment to Democratic Principles in Relation to Community, Staff, Students (continued)

4. Social Interaction

Staff and Board members share an interest in the schools and in education generally, and it is to be expected that when they meet at social affairs and other functions, they will informally discuss such matters as educational trends, issues, and innovations and general school district problems. Individual Board members have no special authority except when they are convened at a legal meeting of the Board or vested with special authority by Board action. Board of Education members are expected to avoid discussion of:

- A. Matters that are, or have the potential of becoming, the subject of an executive session;
- B. Information and data contained in personnel records protected by the privacy act;
- C. Contested issues that may require final resolution by the Board.

(cf. 2220 - Representative and Deliberative Groups re staff involvement in decision making)

(cf. 5145 - Civil and Legal Rights & Responsibilities)

(cf. 9133 - Special/Advisory Committee re: staff advisory committee and student advisory committee)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-220 Duties of boards of education.

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

Sample Communications Policies

Appendix E: Sample General Communication Policy

CABE: [z3 Browser by CTS \(cabe.org\)](http://cabe.org)

Community Relations

Communications with the Public

Distribution of Printed Material

The Board of Education believes it is important to inform the public about school curriculum, programs, and activities so citizens can participate in these programs. Concurrently, the school staff administration, and Board of Education should be aware of the community's goals and concerns for its children so they may be given consideration in curriculum, program, and activity revisions.

The Board encourages public input into the decision making process. To this end, the Board supports and encourages various means such as publications, press releases, open houses, websites and public events to disseminate school district information and to hear from the community.

Community members are encouraged to visit the District's website for information about the district including Board of Education and staff e-mail addresses. This will also provide an opportunity for citizens to offer input into District activities or plans.

The community relations program shall be a concurrent responsibility of the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent of Schools shall work with members of the Board of Education to conduct an active and comprehensive informational program throughout the school district.

Staff members shall be kept informed of community relations efforts, and their support and participation in such efforts shall be sought.

The Board of Education believes in the widest possible dissemination of news concerning the schools and shall cooperate fully with the press, radio, and television to assure that news coverage is complete, balanced, and accurate.

The Board of Education will place on its agenda any properly signed written communication from a citizen or organization. Appropriate action will then be taken.

Board minutes shall be available in unapproved form, within 7 days of a Board meeting excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays; a written record of Board votes shall be available for public inspection in the Superintendent office within 48 hours of a Board meeting

excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays. (In determining the time herein, any day on which the Board office is closed shall also be excluded.)

It should be made clear to anyone wishing to review minutes that they are unofficial until approved by the Board of Education.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

1-200 – 1-241 Public records and meeting

10-220 Duties of boards of education

Policy adopted:

Appendix F: Sample Public Statement By-law

Bylaws of the Board

Public Statements

The Board of Education recognizes that communication is a continuous two-way process. The Board believes that it is important to keep the public informed about educational programs, and, in turn, that the community should have the opportunity to provide input.

Communication will be a concurrent responsibility of the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent of Schools will work with the members of the Board of Education to conduct an active and comprehensive program throughout the school district and community for the prompt dissemination of information about decisions made at all Board meetings. Releases to the press and brief summaries of Board meeting actions prepared for distribution to staff members and parent/guardians are regarded as appropriate media of information for meeting the requirements of this Bylaw. Press releases relative to Board of Education action shall be released only by the Board Chairperson or the delegated agent of the Board.

(cf. 1112 - News Media Relationships)

(cf. 1120 - Public Participation at Board of Education Meetings)

Appendix G: Sample Email By-laws

CABE Email Policy: [z3 Browser by CTS \(cabe.org\)](#)

Bylaws of the Board

Meetings

Electronic Mail Communications

The Board of Education believes that Board members electronically connected to other Board members is an efficient and convenient way to communicate. The main goal of electronic mail (e-mail) is to expedite the passage of information. E-mail gives Board members quick access to one another. Communication among Board members via e-mail should conform to the same standards as other forms of communication. (i.e., committee meetings, etc.) as directed by the Freedom of Information Act. When used properly, e-mail is an effective communications tool and can provide a formal record.

All Board members are encouraged to access e-mail. It will be the responsibility of individual Board members who use e-mail to provide hardware, hook-up and pay all consumable expenses associated with e-mail usage.

Guidelines for Board E-Mail Usage

The Freedom of Information Act mandates that all meetings of public bodies such as school Boards be open to the public. It is the policy of the Board of Education that E-mail shall not be used in such a manner as to deprive the public of the rights given to it under the Freedom of Information Act. For this purpose, this bylaw sets forth guidelines for the uses intended to be made of E-mail by Board members when communicating with other Board members.

1. E-mail, like other written forms of communication relating to the conduct of the public business is subject to the Freedom of Information Act and subject to disclosure.
2. Board members shall not use e-mail as a substitute for deliberations at public Board meetings, and/or shall not discuss policy matters or vote informally on any issues.
3. E-mail should be used to pass along factual information.
4. Security of e-mail communication cannot be assured. Board members shall not reveal their passwords to others in the network or to anyone outside of it. If any Board member has reason to believe a password has been lost or stolen, or that e-mail is being accessed by someone without authorization, he/she shall notify the Superintendent, who will notify the district's technology specialist.
5. Personnel issues and other sensitive subjects should never be discussed on-line. The confidentiality of employee data, student data, and other sensitive subjects must always be maintained.

Any usage contrary to the aforementioned shall be reported immediately to the Superintendent and may result in the suspension and/or revocation of system access.

Accessing E-Mail

In an effort to encourage all Board members to access E-mail, while maintaining public fiscal responsibility, the Board of Education will loan to any Board member needing access, a modem, computer (when surplus is available), and other hardware peripherals to be returned to the Board office upon leaving office. It will be the individual Board member's responsibility to provide the hook-up and pay all consumable expenses associated with E-mail usage. In the event a Board member elects not to access E-mail, a hard copy of all E-mail directed to "Board" will be placed in the Board packet delivered via courier, and will also be accessible in the Board of Education Office.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

The Freedom of Information Act.

1-200 Definitions.

1-210 Access to public records. Exempt records.

1-211 Disclosure of computer-stored public records.

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

Stamford, 1100: [1000_policies_1.pdf \(stamfordpublicschools.org\)](#)

Community Relations Communications with the Public Within the bounds of its legal and ethical responsibilities, the Board of Education (Board) will endeavor to inform the community about the operations of the school system by establishing two-way communication with the community and involving citizens in the work of the schools.

To facilitate productive communication: ·

· Individual Board members who receive significant written communications from students, parents and other citizens, staff members, and organizations will give the communication to the Superintendent for dissemination to the entire Board.

· The Superintendent will send copies of any communication addressed to the Board as a whole to each Board member.

· The Board will not recognize anonymous written communications to any individual Board member or to the Board as a whole.

· Individual Board members may acknowledge written or oral communications requesting Board action or stating a point of view. However, no individual Board member can commit the Board to any course of action or position.

- Individual Board members can express a personal opinion to a citizen but must clearly identify the opinion as their own and not necessarily that of the entire Board.

- All actions of the Board affecting students, parents or teachers shall be communicated through the Superintendent of Schools.

Legal Reference: · Connecticut General Statutes · 1-13 Making of reproductions · 1-14 “Certified copy” defined. Evidence. · 1-16 Reproductions · 1-17 Reproductions to serve purposes of originals · 1-212 Copies of public records, fees. · 1-225 Meetings of government agencies to be public. Recording of votes. Schedule and agenda of meetings to be filed. Notice of special meetings. Executive sessions. · 10-220 Duties of boards of education.

Maercker School District [Date \(maercker.org\)](http://maercker.org)

School Board Communications To and From the Board

The School Board welcomes communications from staff members, parents/guardians, students, and community members. Individuals may submit questions or communications for the School Board’s consideration to the Superintendent or may use the electronic link to the Board’s email address(es) posted on the District’s website. The Superintendent or designee shall: 1. Ensure that the home page for the District’s website contains an active electronic link to the email address(es) for the School Board, and 2. Respond to all communications submitted to the Board’s email address and ensure the Board is copied on the response. If contacted individually, Board members will refer the person to the appropriate level of authority, except in unusual situations. Board members’ questions or communications to staff or about programs will be channeled through the Superintendent’s office. Board members will not take individual action that might compromise the Board or District. There is no expectation of privacy for any communication sent to the Board or its members, whether sent by letter, email, or other means. Board Member Use of Electronic Communications For purposes of this section, electronic communications include, without limitation, electronic mail, electronic chat, instant messaging, texting, and any form of social networking. Electronic communications among a majority or more of a Board-quorum shall not be used for the purpose of discussing District business. Electronic communications among Board members shall be limited to: (1) disseminating information, and (2) messages not involving deliberation, debate, or decision-making. The following list contains examples of permissible electronic communications: • Agenda item suggestions • Reminders regarding meeting times, dates, and places • Board meeting agendas or information concerning agenda items • Individual emails to community members, subject to the other limitations in this policy In accordance with the Open Meetings Act and the Oath of Office taken by Board members, individual Board members will not (a) reply to an email on behalf of the entire Board, or (b) engage in the discussion of District business through electronic communications with a majority of a Board-quorum. LEGAL REF.: 5 ILCS 120/, Open Meetings Act. 50 ILCS 205/20, Local Records Act. CROSS REF.: 2:220 (School Board Meeting Procedure), 3:30 (Chain of Command), 8:110 (Public Suggestions and Concerns) Adopted: Board of Education Maercker School District #60 February 20, 2001 Revised: November 21, 2006 February 25, 2014 February 17, 2015 August 20, 2019

Appendix H: Sample Social Media Policies

CABE: [z3 Browser by CTS \(cabe.org\)](http://cabe.org)

Bylaws of the Board

Meetings

Board Member Use of Internet Social Networks

The Board of Education (Board) recognizes that reliance on social media as a means of communication is rapidly becoming the norm for school districts. Many school board members are active users of social media, including, but not limited to, such online platforms as Facebook and Twitter, as well as other media such as blogs and personal websites. The Board understands that social media can be a positive tool for fostering community engagement with the school district. However, Board members need to operate with appropriate guidelines when they are communicating online about school district business.

While social networking sites can be an effective and efficient means of communication, Board members need to be aware of the obligations and requirements that arise when using this form of communication. Board members' personal use of social networking sites may be limited or prohibited because of the need to comply with Connecticut statutes pertaining to public records and open meetings as described in the Freedom of Information Act.

Compliance with Public Records Law

Any recorded data or information relating to the conduct of public's business prepared, owned, received, or retained by the Board or the school district, whether handwritten, typed, tape-recorded, printed, photo-stated, photographed or recorded by any other method is by definition a "public record" and access thereto during normal hours of business shall be granted to any citizen. This includes communication that school board members and district employees send or receive relating to the affairs of the school district and the official acts of school officials and employees. Electronically stored information generally constitutes a "record" within the meaning of the public records law provided such recorded information is created or kept in connection with school business. The substance of the information, not the format, controls whether it is a public record. As an elected official, a school board member's information contained on a social networking site or a blog, that is created or kept by the Board member regarding the affairs of the district is likely to be considered a public record.

Compliance with the Freedom of Information Act

Board members must be mindful of the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) when using social networking sites. The FOIA defines a "meeting" as any hearing or other proceeding of a public agency, any convening or assembly of a quorum of a multimember public agency, and

any communication by or to a quorum of a multimember public agency, whether in person or by means of electronic equipment, to discuss or act upon a matter over which the public agency has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power (C.G.S. 1-200(2)).

Board member use of a social networking site may be susceptible to violations of the FOIA due to the ease with which Board members can discuss school business in a manner that may determine the Board's course of action. An online discussion by Board members can result in agreement, tacitly or explicitly to act in a certain manner in number sufficient to reach a quorum.

OR

Board members using social networking sites may inadvertently violate the FOIA if they are not vigilant about the content and subject matter posted on the site and aware of the users of the site. Online posting by Board members can result in a meeting of the Board if the postings discuss school district business and a sufficient number of school board members are involved on the site to determine the course of action that will be taken by the Board.

Board members will not have online conversations that violate or to seek to circumvent the FOIA. Board members may not use online websites to communicate with one another about official Board business.

Social Networking Websites

Board members need to periodically review the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the online digital world as well as in person. This review is to give special emphasis to Board member use of Facebook, Twitter and other social media.

Code of Ethics

Use of social media sites by Board members shall be consistent with the Board's Code of Ethics (Bylaw #9270).

Board members will refrain from inappropriate conduct in making public statements on Facebook and other social networking sites, and will refrain from any disparagement of fellow Board members or others on a personal, social, racial, or religious basis. Board members shall not send messages that contain material that may be defined by a reasonable person as profane or obscene; messages that are racist, sexist or promote illicit, illegal or unethical activity.

Board members will recognize that authority rests with the Board of Education and will make no personal promises on social media sites nor take any private action which may compromise the Board.

Maintaining Confidentiality

Board members will exercise care not to divulge confidential information about students, school employees, or Board business on social media sites. Board members who have access to student

information, like District employees, are prohibited from disclosing that information without the consent of the adult student or parent/guardian of a minor. In general, all records related to the individual student maintained by a school constitute confidential student records.

Board members are not to expect that their online conversations will remain private. Discussion of investigations into school issues will not be conducted online. Extreme care must be taken not to disclose confidential information related to students or employees while interacting online.

Social Media Guidelines for Board Members

The following guidelines are for Board members to consider when using social media in their role as public officials. In using social media to communicate about school district activities, a Board member shall:

1. Clarify that the communication is as an individual member of the Board and not in the role of an official District spokesperson.
2. Avoid deliberating school district business with a quorum of the Board.
3. Direct complaints or concerns presented online from other individuals to the appropriate administrator.
4. Avoid posting content that indicated the reaching of an opinion on pending matters.
5. Ask for community input through appropriate channels, but will not allow the social network site to direct decisions as a Board member.
6. Post only content that the District has already released to the public.
7. Clarify, when attempting to restate what happened at a previous Board meeting, that the posting on the social media site is not an official record of such meeting. Share information only from the open portions of the meeting.
8. Conduct himself/herself online in a manner that reflects well on the District; avoid posting information that has not been verified and made public by the District; and never post anonymously about school business.
9. Report immediately harassing or defamatory communications to the Superintendent if they involve school officials, staff, students or District business.
10. Retain electronic records, including the Board member's own posts and content others post to the Board members account, when required to do so by the District's retention policy.
11. Report immediately to the District any potential security breaches if the Board member loses control or possession of a District-issued or personal electronic device on which confidential District records could be accessed.

12. Comply with the District's acceptable use policy when using District-issued devices or technology resources, including District Internet access on a personal device.

(cf. 1100 - Communications with the Public)

(cf. 1114 - District-Sponsored Social Media)

(cf. 3543.31 - Electronic Communication Use and Retention)

(cf. 4118.5/4218.5 - Staff Acceptable Computer Use)

(cf. 4118.51/4218.51 - Social Networking)

(cf. 5125 - Student Records)

(cf. 6141.321 - Acceptable Computer Use)

(cf. 6141.324 - Posting of Student Work/Photographs)

(cf. 6141.326 - Online Social Networking)

(cf. 9271 - Board Code of Ethics)

(cf. 9327 - Electronic Mail Communications)

(cf. 9330 - Board/School District Records)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

The Freedom of Information Act.

1-200 Definitions.

10-209 Records not to be public.

1-210 Access to public records. Exempt records.

Public Law 94-553, The Copyright Act of 1976, 17 U.S.C. 101 et. seq.

Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974

Dept. of Education. 34 CFR. Part 99 (May 9, 1980 45 FR 30802) regs.

implementing FERPA enacted as part of 438 of General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) parent and student privacy and other rights with respect to educational records, as amended 11/21/9

Ridgefield, NJ BoE: [ELANOnline District Policies \(straussesmay.com\)](http://straussesmay.com)

0169.02- BOARD MEMBER USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS

Section: Bylaws
Date Created: August 2018
Date Edited: August 2018

In accordance with the School Ethics Act - N.J.S.A. 18A:12-21 et seq., Board of Education members must avoid conduct which is in violation of the public trust or which creates a justifiable impression among the public that such trust is being violated. To avoid conduct that may be in violation or perceived to be in violation of the School Ethics Act, the Board of Education adopts this Policy to provide guidance to Board members in their use of social networks.

For the purposes of this Policy, “social network(s)” shall include, but not be limited to: Internet blogs, electronic bulletin boards, emails, social networking websites, text messages, or any other online platform where people may post or communicate interests, opinions, or any other information that may be viewed by others with or without permission from the person making such post or re-publishing such post. “Social networks” also means an Internet-based service that allows individuals to: construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system created by the service; create a list of other users with whom they share a connection within the system; and view and navigate their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

For the purposes of this Policy, “use of a social network” shall include, but not be limited to: posting to a social network, reposting another person’s post to a social network, messaging, or any other publication of material on a social network.

Nothing in this Policy prevents a Board of Education member from using a social network. However, a Board member must avoid conduct on a social network that would violate the School Ethics Act – N.J.S.A. 18A:12-21 et seq., which includes the Code of Ethics for Board Members. Board members should be advised communications, publications, photographs, and any other information posted by the Board member or reposted by the Board member on a social network could violate the School Ethics Act and be cause for sanctions in accordance with the law.

While this Policy respects the right of Board members to use social networks, Board members shall recognize they are held to a higher standard than the general public

with regard to standards of conduct and ethics. A Board member's use of social networks shall not damage the reputation of the school district, employees, students, or their families. Board members who use social networks shall ensure their conduct is appropriate for a Board of Education member. Board members should exercise care in setting appropriate boundaries between their personal and public online behavior, understanding what is private in the digital world often has the possibility of becoming public, even without their knowledge or consent.

Board members should carefully review the privacy settings on social networks they use and exercise care and good judgment when posting content and information. When using social networks, Board members are advised to:

1. Not post anything that would violate any of the district's policies for Board members;
2. Uphold the district's value of respect for any individual(s) and avoid making defamatory statements about the Board of Education, the school district, employees, students, or their families;
3. Not disclose any confidential information about the school district or confidential information obtained as a result of being a Board member, about any individual(s) or organization, including students and/or their families;
4. Not use or refer to their Board of Education title or position when soliciting for a business organization that he or she or any immediate family member has an interest in, as well as posting or referencing any confidential information regarding the Board of Education or the school district obtained through their Board membership, unless authorized by law;
5. Refrain from having communications through social networks with other Board members regarding any Board of Education business to avoid any potential violation of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act;

6. Not respond to any postings regarding Board of Education or school district business or respond to any question or inquiry posted to the Board member or posted on any social network regarding Board of Education or school district business and shall refer any such questions or inquiries to the Superintendent of Schools to address, as appropriate; or

7. Not post any information on a social network determined by the New Jersey School Ethics Commission to be a violation of the New Jersey School Ethics Act.

A Board member shall comply with all Board policies regarding acceptable use of computers and computer networks whenever a Board member is using a Board of Education electronic device.

If the Board or Superintendent believes a Board member's activity on any social network may violate the Board's policies or the New Jersey School Ethics Act, the Board or Superintendent may request the Board member cease such activity.

This Policy has been developed and adopted by this Board to provide guidance and direction to a Board member to avoid actual and/or a perceived appearance of inappropriate conduct or conduct prohibited by the School Ethics Act while using social networks.

N.J.S.A. 18A:12-21 et seq.

N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.

Adopted: 23 August 2018

West Hartford Public Schools

New avenues should continually be sought to improve relations and communications with all segments of the community and to expand contacts with audiences not typically reached.

Adopted: October 19, 1987

Reviewed: December 5, 2006

Reviewed: February 6, 2018

Community Relations

COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC

1100

The Board of Education and the administration of the Fairfield Public Schools will use as many channels of communication as possible to explain the purpose, policies, programs, and problems of the school district to all segments of the town population.

The Chairman of the Board shall be the official spokesperson for the Board and unless the Board shall otherwise direct, shall make or authorize all announcements concerning Board policy or action.

The Superintendent or his/her designee is solely responsible for initiating communication on District plans and processes.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
1-13 through 1-21k Public records and meetings
10-220 Duties of boards of education

Adopted 8/27/2004

Revised and Adopted 3/9/2021

Hamden Public Schools District Policies

1110 - Communication with the Public: General Communications with the Public General

The Board of Education believes it is important to inform the public about school curriculum, programs, and activities so citizens can participate in these programs. Concurrently, the school staff, administration, and Board of Education should be aware of the community's goals and concerns for its children so they may be given consideration in curriculum, program, and activity revisions.

The Board encourages public input into the decision making process. To this end, the Board supports and encourages various means such as publications, press releases, open houses, websites, and public events to disseminate school district information and to hear from the community.

Community members are encouraged to visit the District's website for information about the district including Board of Education and staff email addresses. This will also provide an opportunity for citizens to offer input into District activities or plans.

Administration of the Community Relations Program. The community relations program shall be a concurrent responsibility of the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent of Schools shall work with members of the Board of Education to conduct an active and comprehensive informational program throughout the school district.

Staff members shall be kept informed of community relations efforts, and their support and participation in such efforts shall be sought.

News of Board of Education Meetings and Activities. The Board of Education believes in the widest possible dissemination of news concerning the school and shall cooperate fully with the press, radio, and television to assure that news coverage is complete, balanced, and accurate.

Board minutes shall be available in unapproved form, within 7 days of a Board meeting excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays; a written record of Board votes shall be available for public inspection in the Superintendent's office within 48 hours of a Board meeting excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays. (In determining the time herein, any day on which the Board office is closed shall also be excluded.)

It should be made clear to anyone wishing to review the minutes that they are unofficial until approved by the Board of Education.

Legal Reference:

Policy adopted: Policy adopted:

Connecticut General Statutes

1-200-1-241 Public records and meetings.

10-220 Duties of boards of education.

Policy Adopted: November 12, 1997

Hamden Public Schools District Policies

1110.1 - Communication with the Public: Parent Involvement

Communications with the Public Parent Involvement

Considerable experience and related evidence indicates that meaningful involvement of parents, guardians, and other caregivers in the schooling of children improves the quality of education significantly. To support the goal of the school district to educate all students effectively, the schools and parents must work as knowledgeable partners. The Board of Education believes that closer connections of parents and others responsible for the home care of the children with our schools can result in enhanced academic performance, improved behavior, and reduced absenteeism.

Therefore, all parents, guardians, and caregivers of students enrolled in our school district are encouraged to take an active role in the education of their children.

To this end, the Board supports the development, implementation, and regular evaluation of a parent involvement program in each school, which will involve parents at all grade levels in a variety of roles. They will include, but not be limited to, the following components of successful parent involvement programs:

- Communication between home and school should be regular, two-way and meaningful.
- Such communication may include monthly newsletters, required regular contact with all parents, two flexible parent-teacher conferences for each school year, drop in hours for parents, and home visits.
- Parents should play an integral role in assisting student learning.
- Responsible parenting should be promoted and supported.
- Parents should be welcome in every school and their input, support and assistance sought.
- Parent input should be sought regarding decisions that affect children and families.

Community resources should be made available to strengthen school programs, family practices and student learning.

The Board of Education supports professional development opportunities for staff members to enhance understanding of effective parent involvement strategies. The Board also recognizes the importance of administrative leadership in setting expectations and creating a climate conducive to parental participation.

In addition to programs at the school level, the Board of education supports the development, implementation, and regular evaluation of a program to involve parents in the decisions and practices of the school district, using to the degree possible the components listed above.

The Superintendent will report annually to the Board of Education on parent involvement efforts.

Community Relations

Communications with the Public

The Board of Education considers public education a partnership between the schools and the community. Such a partnership is facilitated by open and regular communication. The school district will attempt to keep the public informed through the various media available to it, and to make appropriate channels of communication open to listen to the community.

Legal Reference: **Connecticut General Statutes**

1-200 – 1-241 Public records and meeting

10-220 Duties of boards of education

Policy adopted: **March 6, 2017**

NEW CANAAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Canaan, Connecticut

Community Relations

Communications with the Public

Parent Involvement

Considerable experience and related evidence indicates that meaningful involvement of parents, guardians, and other care-givers in the schooling of children improves the quality of education, enhances academic performance, improves behavior, and reduces absenteeism.

Therefore, all parents, guardians, and care-givers of students enrolled in our school district are encouraged to be meaningfully involved in the education of their children.

Further, the Board of Education encourages the staff to facilitate a broad variety of opportunities for parents, guardians and caregivers to connect meaningfully with the schools in which their children are enrolled, and with the overall system.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-221(f) Boards of Education to prescribe rule(s), policies, and procedures as amended by PA 97-290 and by P.A. 10-111, An Act Concerning Education Reform in Connecticut.

Policy adopted: March 6, 2017

NEW CANAAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Canaan, Connecticut

COMMUNICATIONS

The Greenwich Public Schools are committed to providing accurate and timely information to the community.

Check the GPS Websites regularly for:

- Announcements: school delays, closings, early dismissals, Open House dates, etc.
- GPS-TV
- Board and Board Committee Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes
- GPS Strategic Plan Updates
- Policies and Procedures
- Curriculum and Program Information
- Calendars: School, Board of Education, etc.

Watch GPS-TV for:

- Monthly Board meetings
- GPS Public Forums
- Distinguished Teachers Awards Ceremony
- Community Service Awards Ceremony

Attend Board of Education Meetings and/or Visit BoardDocs for:

- Information on Curriculum and Instruction
- Current policies under review
- Annual budget development
- Facilities project updates
- Reports and updates on programs, assessments and research

Read ParentLink Messages:

ParentLink is our electronic mass communication system. It is used by the District and School leaders to communicate important information to parents, including emergency alerts. The main telephone number and email address parents provide as part of the registration process are accessed for this communication resource. Please be sure you provide up to date contact information to your child's school office staff in order to ensure timely receipt of information.

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Community Relations

Communication Protocol for Parents – Dispute Resolution

The following guidelines are established so that students and/or parents may bring concerns to the attention of the most appropriate parties and have a process by which issues may be expressed, considered, and resolved.

1. When a concern emanates from a classroom situation, students or parents should first discuss it with the teaching staff member most directly involved. Any of the parties may request that the Principal attend that meeting.
2. If the parties concerned feel that the discussion has not led to a satisfactory conclusion, they may proceed to discuss the matter with the building Principal in an attempt to reach an amicable conclusion.
3. Matters not satisfactorily resolved at the school level may be appealed to the Superintendent. The appeal should be in writing and specify the nature of the problem.
4. When a decision is communicated by the Superintendent and is not deemed satisfactory by the parties involved, they may request a review of the decision by the Board of Education. Such request shall be submitted in writing. A committee of the Board of Education shall, through a fact finding process, review the Superintendent's decision. The committee shall report the results of its fact finding and recommend appropriate action to the Board. The Board of Education shall render a written decision in a timely manner.

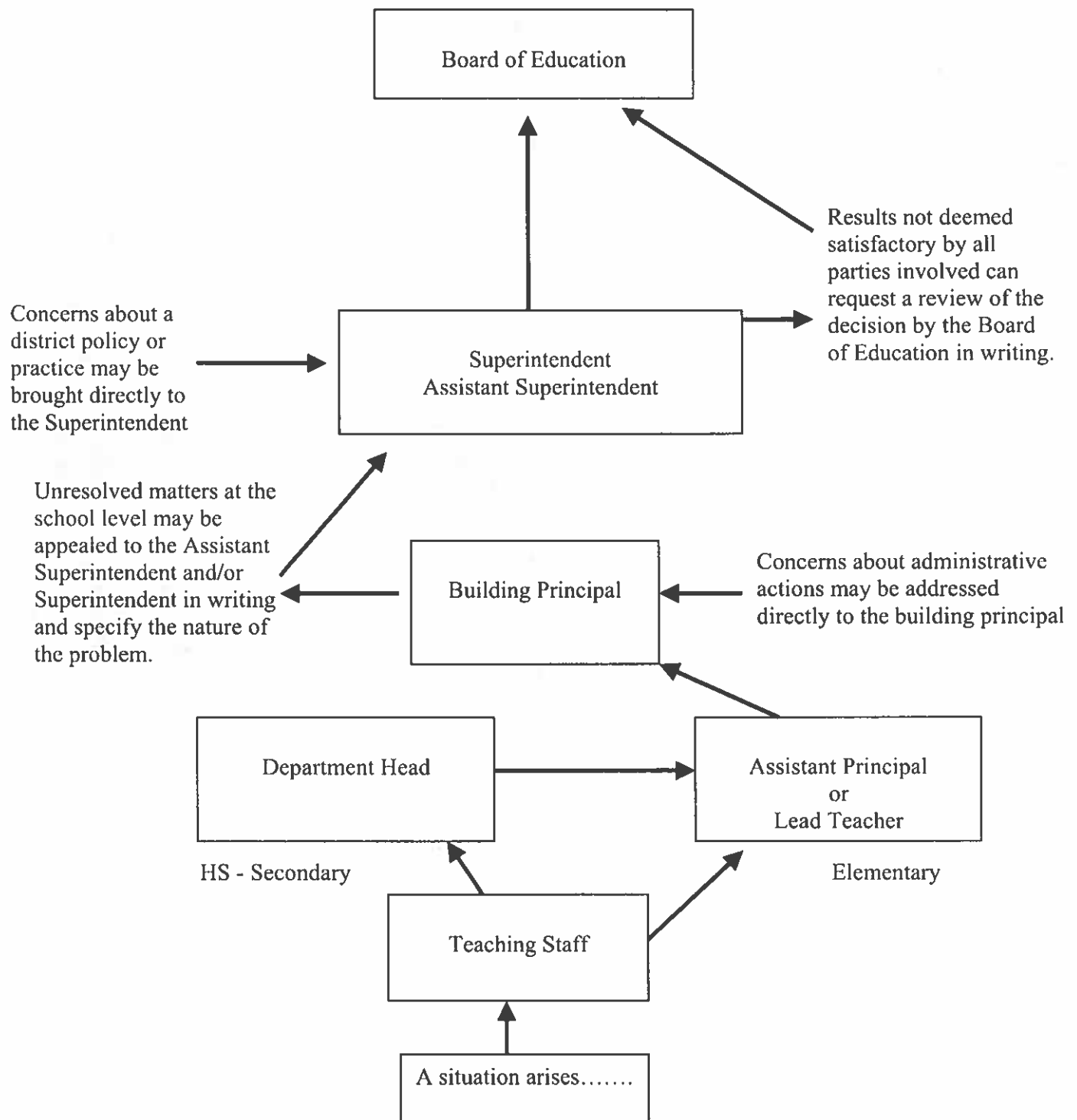
Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
 1-200 – 1-241 Public records and meeting
 10-220 Duties of boards of education

Policy adopted: May 5, 2015

NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
 Newtown, Connecticut

EFFECTIVE: July 1, 2015

PROCESS STEPS FOR COMMUNICATION FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS
Working from the bottom up...



Community Relations

Communication with the Public

The Board of Education recognizes that the community determines the quality of local education. The Board of Education shall involve members of the community and school personnel in planning, developing policy, and implementing programs.

The Board of Education shall keep the public informed about the function and operation of the school system. They shall continuously assess public reaction to all school programs.

School-community relations are not merely reporting and interpreting. Rather, they are part of a public enterprise in which community members and school personnel play their respective roles in the best interests of the school district.

Policy adopted: October 15, 1997

Administrative Regulation

Community Relations

Communication with the Public

Recognizing that an open relationship should exist between school administrators who are charged with the responsibility of conducting public business, and the news media who has the responsibility of reporting the actions of government to citizens, the Superintendent of Schools is authorized to provide to the members of the press information which is a matter of records and public information.

Members of the press, television and radio stations will be directed by the Superintendent of Schools to the administrator directly responsible for the information they seek.

Information released to the media shall be that which is public information as covered by statute. It is recognized that there is information of a confidential nature which shall not be released, such as information concerning personnel, grievances, negotiations, court actions and special placement of students. Information provided to the media should be factual and should not involve speculation or assumptions.

Administrators may release any information which has been previously generated. This does not include, however, generating new information at the request of a member of the press. All communications by school officials to the press shall be "on the record." Press releases are to indicate the administrator's name and title.

The principal has the right to restrict interaction with students on school property if he/she deems it interferes or disrupts the educational process.

Regulation approved: October 15, 1997