

Escalon Unified School District Organizational Communication Plan

Problem/Challenge/Opportunity:

Based on the information gathered through an employee and family and community survey conducted in the spring of 2016 as well as feedback during their annual LCAP process, Escalon Unified School District is developing a new organizational communication plan to be implemented over the 2016-2017 school year.

Situation Analysis:

Internal/Employee

EUSD conducted an employee survey between March 11 and March 23rd, 2016 and received 143 responses on a variety of questions about working for the district. The survey revealed a large majority feel that they belong at their school site, slightly less feel the same way about belonging at EUSD and many indicated they didn't feel they received enough recognition. Believing every student can learn and quality work is expected from employees received the highest level of agreement from respondents. In the open-ended section of the survey, employees provided a variety of comments and suggestions in the areas of collaboration and professional development, operational and personnel concerns and decision-making.

External/Families and Community

An online survey of families and community members was conducted between April 6 and April 30, 2016. The majority of the 184 respondents used smartphones to complete the survey. Respondents indicated they knew the most about EUSD's day-to-day operations, events, policies and mission. Respondents knew the least about EUSD's plans, accomplishments and challenges. Respondents rated automated calls, emails and school websites as the most effective current communication methods and school newsletters, the district website and the Escalon Times were rated lowest currently used methods. Respondents also indicated that the district should be using mail and text messages, social media and the website more often. They recommended more emails and e-newsletters with information about meetings and links to more information about topics and events, updated websites at school and district level, social media, continued opportunities for input and more Spanish translations of materials.

LCAP Input

Stakeholders' input on the district LCAP noted they wanted to continue to see increasing student access to technology, more technology training for teachers and professional development for paraprofessionals. They also conveyed that CTE courses, English learner intervention and social emotional support systems are important. School safety routines/preparations, health services support and improved parent communication mechanisms were also highlighted by stakeholders.

Goal:

Implement an overall organizational communication plan to improve awareness, perception and knowledge of district initiatives and programs with internal and external audiences.

Audience: Escalon Employees

Messages

- EUSD welcomes employee input, listens and makes decisions based on input
- EUSD appreciates the hard work of our employees at every level
- EUSD has a vision and a plan to get there
- There are great things happening throughout EUSD

| Objective | Tactics/Tools | Output/Evaluation |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Increase employee engagement over the 2015-2016 school year. | 1A - Implement a districtwide certificated and classified staff advisory council with one representative from each campus by October 2016. | 1A - Meeting attendance |
| 2. Increase employee recognition activities over the 2015-2016 school year. | 2A - Review the ways in which EUSD recognizes and rewards employees - annual, monthly and as-they-happen recognition programs at the site and district level.. 2B – Prepare employee recognition plan prior to December 2016. | 2A and 2B - Creation and implementation of new employee recognition program |
| 3. Increase employee understanding of EUSD vision as measured by annual employee survey. | 3A - Communicate more about the EUSD vision and academic areas mentioned in surveys and the LCAP process. Should include clear communication about district expectations in these areas with explicit examples of how sites are implementing activities in these areas. | 3A – Development of specific items to be shared through Internal email and with leadership team for school site meetings |
| 4. Increase employee perception of EUSD positives as measured by annual employee survey. | 4A – Collect and communicate more about the positive things happening at all levels - EUSD’s accomplishments, people and programs. 4B – Assist employees in customer service refresher and school promotion skills that focus on positive changes, future plans and statistics that show progress. 4C - Employees should be encouraged to get involved and serve as representatives within community groups – to provide organizational information to community partners as well as to learn about potential opportunities and partnerships that benefit Escalon students. Change board policy to pay for entire membership amounts. | 4A -Collection of accomplishments 4B – Scheduling mini-workshops with school site and DO staff 4C – List of community representatives |
| 5 - Continue to measure perception of EUSD and communication efforts. | 5A – Implement annual employee survey and track progress and trends. | 5A – Survey implementation and tracking report |

Audience: Escalon Families

Messages

- EUSD welcomes family input, listens and makes decisions based on input
- EUSD has a vision and a plan to get there
- There are great things happening throughout EUSD

| Objective | Tactics/Tools | Evaluation |
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| 1. Increase engagement opportunities over the 2016-2016 year. | 1A – Create calendar of “touchpoints” with families and community members - annual events happen on a regular basis and bring people together, provide and collect information - back to school and open house events, consider providing site leaders with organizational updates and/or collecting feedback from attendees about key issues. | 1A – Planning tool for communicating at events that are already happening |
| 2. Improve perception of communication as measured by annual survey. | <p>2A - Addition of a districtwide calendar that allows everyone to contribute information about events and deadlines that are important for families and community members (Google calendar that is displayed on the homepage).</p> <p>2B- Facebook page posts once per week – Positive accomplishments from school sites, rotating among the school site awards, accomplishments, surveys, monthly events – for example back-to-school, holiday traditions and performances, open house events, sporting events, academic milestones, LCAP forums and graduations.</p> <p>2C -User-friendly website that links with Google calendar and allows staff to easily maintain fresh content.</p> | <p>2A – Addition of Google calendar and training/outreach about how to use it</p> <p>2B – Creation of Facebook page and social media calendar for the year, posts and interactions</p> <p>2C – Development of new website starting in January</p> |

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| 3 Continue to measure perception of EUSD and communication efforts. | 3A -communications survey conducted annually so that the organization can see this year as a baseline, continue to review the effectiveness of specific tools and monitor the community for communication trends that can be helpful for the organization. | 3A – Survey implementation and tracking report |
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Audience: Escalon Community/All Stakeholders

Messages

- EUSD welcomes community engagement and makes an effort to communicate well
- EUSD has a vision and a plan to get there
- There are great things happening throughout EUSD

| Objective | Tactics/Tools | Evaluation |
|---|--|--|
| 1. Organize communication efforts to make it easier to engage all stakeholders with existing efforts. | 1A – Create communication worksheet that can serve as a brainstorming tool for organizational leaders thinking through the communication strategy of a given change, event or accomplishment. It can also be completed and collected centrally as part of an annual report of communication efforts to document the efforts in this area | 1A – Worksheet creation and outreach |
| 2. Improve perception of positive things happening at EUSD schools as measured by annual survey. | 2A - Collecting accomplishments from throughout the organization through a Google Form. 2B – Accomplishments provide content for ongoing communication in all of the organizations platforms (website, Facebook, etc) and when pulled together annually, it can provide an impressive report that can be turned into print or electronic publications to be shared with community members and used for obtaining key partnerships, grants and other positive opportunities for the organization | 2A – Creation of form and outreach about collecting accomplishments 2B – Accomplishments included in annual social media calendar and other communication tool planning |

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| <p>3. Improve engagement opportunities over the 20115-2016 school year.</p> | <p>3A –Create a new web presence That is mobile friendly and includes a simple content management tool. Train district department webmasters to ensure there are a variety of website contributors to keep the content fresh.</p> <p>3B - School websites - technical assistance and links to district level news and calendar items to keep content fresh and develop group of school webmasters to develop minimum guidelines of expected information for school level sites</p> <p>3C – Create e-newsletter sign-up “pop-up” that will ask website visitors to sign up to receive organizational updates</p> <p>3D -Create “Key Communicators” group of community leaders that could be brought in from time to time to provide feedback on potential changes as well as receive updates about organization accomplishments. Begin with city staff and police and expand to other groups in 2017-2018.</p> | <p>3A – See Families 2C</p> <p>3B – Creation of group, development of guidelines</p> <p>3C – e-newsletter creation and utilization (families, community and staff)</p> <p>3D - Schedule and implementation of meetings</p> |
| <p>4. Increase the number of positive items provided to local media over the 2015-2016 school year.</p> | <p>4A -Create media announcements from items submitted to the accomplishments/good news form.</p> <p>4B - Media and promotion training throughout the organization leadership.</p> <p>4C - Develop and maintain a centralized list of area media outlets and interest areas, including community organization newsletters to ensure that there are regular updates to local outlets.</p> <p>4D – Work with school sites to develop their “Principally Speaking” articles for Escalon Times</p> | <p>4A – Number of announcements, placement</p> <p>4B – Schedule and implementation of trainings</p> <p>4C – Development of list</p> <p>4D – Review and submission of articles</p> |