



**COMMUNICATIONS**  
**PLAN 2023-2026**  
YEAR 2 UPDATE



AN INNOVATIVE, INSPIRING AND  
UNIFIED LEARNING COMMUNITY

# DISTRICT CORE VALUES

In partnership with students, staff, and families, the District is committed to the following:

## INTEGRITY:

- Accepting
- Respectful
- Kind
- Trustworthy

## EXCELLENCE:

- Success
- Effort
- Engagement
- Hope
- Adaptability
- Achievement

## COURAGE:

- Creativity
- Inspirational
- Critical Thinking
- Problem Solving

## COMMUNITY:

- Connection
- Relationship
- Caring
- Collaboration
- Inclusive
- Teamwork
- Belonging
- Partnership



# THE PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Communications Plan 2023-2026 which is aligned with the District's Strategic Plan. This report covers all objectives, a summary of key strategies, achievements, and goals in progress for Year 1, which is a timeline pertaining to the 2023-2024 school year. Overall, the objectives and strategies in Year 1 remain the same and will carry on until the end of 2025.

Highlights in Year 1 can be summarized by two main themes: a year of growth, and a year of firsts. As the District continues to grow in student enrolment and staffing, there is also an increase in communications, in particular, the volume of materials, messaging, and renewed messaging to reflect change management processes. Some of the

firsts for the District included the implementation of a community and staff newsletter, setting a record for number of Ministry of Education and Child Care events garnering media coverage, and school visits from BC's Premier, the latter which has never happened in the District's recent history.

In Year 1, the District has worked and continues to emphasize increasing awareness of its commitment to Truth and Reconciliation and its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in our schools. A new emphasis moving into Year 2, will be celebrating positive stories with a more intentional focus on demonstrating examples of the District's work in implementing the Strategic Plan and the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL).

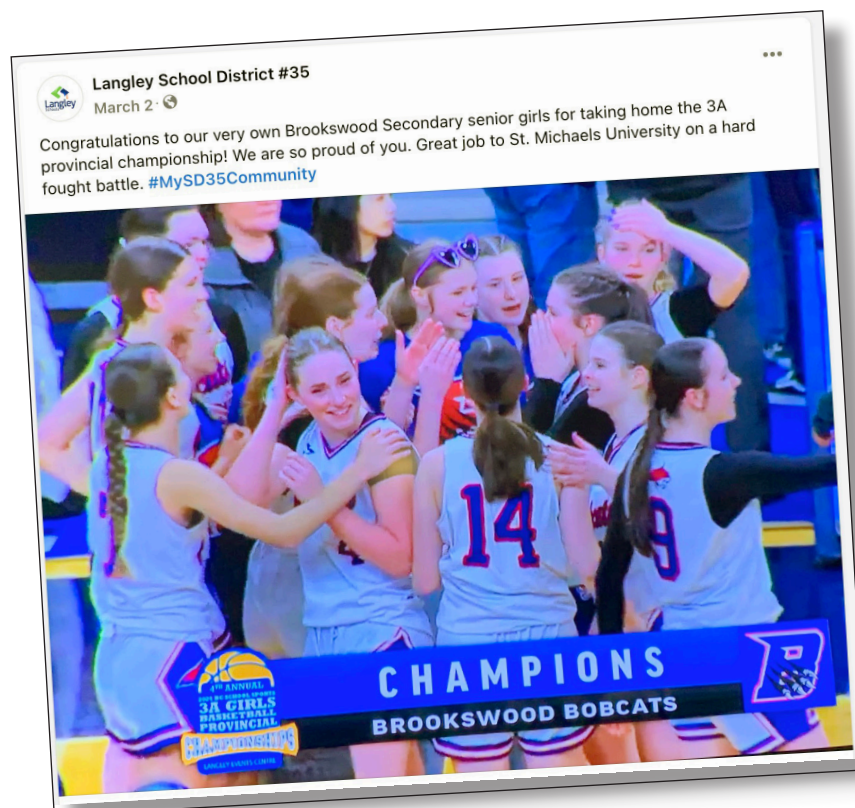


## HIGHLIGHTS/STRENGTHS

- General District Communication to Students/ Parents/Guardians
- Emergency and Crisis Communications to Students/ Parents/Guardians
- Positive news stories on the District website
- Positive news stories on social media
- Positive news stories in the local media
- Social media analytics (growth in followers, engagements, and other metrics)
- District and StaffNet website traffic
- District consultation, surveys, information sessions (growth in attendees, respondents, and engagement)
- Translation services for communications of high priority
- Use of District Communications tools (e.g. SchoolMessenger, Microsoft Teams, Social Media)

## AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Internal communications with staff at all levels
- External communications with all audiences
- Building staff capacity to use District communications tools
- Knowledge enhancement and usability of District website
- Knowledge enhancement and usability of StaffNet
- Equal coverage of schools in telling our story
- Promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion (education, initiatives and events)
- Promoting Indigenous Worldviews and Perspectives and Truth and Reconciliation (education, initiatives, and events)
- Promoting stories that demonstrate the actions of the Strategic Plan which include work in Educational Opportunities, Community of Partnerships, and Operational Priorities pillars.
- Promoting stories that demonstrate the actions of the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning which include work in Intellectual Development, Human and Social Development, and Career Development pillars.





## AUDIENCE

- Students
- Parents/Guardians
- Staff
- Partner Groups (CUPE 1260, CUPE 1851, DPAC, Exempt Staff, LPVPA and LTA)
- Government and Community Groups (Township/City of Langley, RCMP, Ministry of Education and Child Care)
- Community of Partners
- Local First Nations and ya:ʔəstəl' (Aboriginal Advisory Committee)
- Public

## KEY MESSAGES

- An innovative, inspiring and unified learning community
- Inspire all learners to reach their full potential and create a positive legacy for the future
- Relevant, meaningful choices for students ignite a lifelong passion for learning
- Learning takes place through flexible and connected environments
- Learners are knowledgeable, skilled and innovative
- Our schools foster an inclusive and nurturing culture
- The Board of Education provides caring, safe and welcoming schools
- The Board of Education provides educational opportunities to improve student success
- The Board of Education proactively plans for maintaining healthy and sustainable schools
- The Board of Education is committed to responsible stewardship of resources
- Creating compassionate and inclusive social and academic learning communities that provide access for every learner (Ensouling our Schools)

## INTENTS

- Clear, consistent, and concise messaging
- Informative, accurate, and effective messaging
- Timely and proactive distribution
- Caring, thoughtful, and trauma-informed messaging
- Foster collaborative communications and relationships
- Earn and maintain trust
- Create opportunities for engagement
- Value diverse opinions and feedback
- Strive to make all parties feel heard and included
- Foster a culture of mutual respect
- Share our goals and celebrate our successes

## NEEDS/OPPORTUNITIES

- Conduct a communications audit
- Find strategies to increase opportunities for engagement
- Encourage professional development and capacity building
- Explore new technology for support



# COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

## I. CELEBRATE OUR STORY

Increase awareness of positive stories related to the Langley School District that exemplify our Core Values: Integrity, Excellence, Courage and Community.

*Increase awareness of student work, achievements, and programs, and maintain a positive narrative in traditional media, social media, and on the District website.*

*Increase awareness of board activities, roles, and responsibilities.*

### ACHIEVEMENTS

The District continues to produce a significant amount of digital content including photos, news posts, and videos. These stories aim to celebrate all the positive stories related to the District and the Board. Stories highlight student and staff achievements, new programs and initiatives, among other positive news. In relation to news posts on the external website, the District published 37 stories in the 2023-2024 school year, which is three more than the previous school year. This number does not include messages from the Superintendent or Board Chair, invitations to public information sessions and events, or general information and sharing of resources that is relevant to the community.

A review of social media analytics point to an increase in followers and overall engagement from 2023-2024 compared to the previous school year. In the last year, Facebook jumped to 13,300 followers (10% increase), Instagram rose to approximately 7,160 followers (30% increase), X/Twitter moved up slightly to approximately 7,600 (4% increase), YouTube subscribers went up to 550 (25% increase). In the 2023-2024 school year, the District made more of an effort to post on LinkedIn, and realized a 10% increase in followers, bringing the total to approximately 3,000. Social media engagement (reach/impressions) has increased for all platforms. In Year 1, the most popular posts/tweets celebrated student achievements, District and school celebrations, and

success in athletics. Highlights included Langley's unique tradition of grad walks, a banner year for athletics across District secondary schools, and the opening of a new playground at Douglas Park Community School. One of the top stories of the year included the annual Aboriginal Achievement Awards and the annual Odyssey Conference in February, which is a professional development opportunity for all staff focused on Aboriginal Education and Indigenous Worldviews and Perspectives. The latter two events also demonstrated the public's positive reception of the District's collective action in its commitment to promote Truth and Reconciliation.

In Year 1, the District set a record for number of Ministry of Education and Child Care announcements, hosting seven events in the 2023-2024 school year. This is nearly twice as many than in the previous school year, with 4 events in 2022-2023. In general, Ministry events result in media releases, garner media coverage, and additional promotion via District communications channels. The announcement of the beginning of the seismic upgrades and expansion at Peter Ewart Middle included BC's Premier which was another first for the District. Later in the 2023-2024 school year, BC's Premier returned to the District and visited two secondary schools to engage with and to congratulate soon-to-be graduates.

# Premier tours school undergoing upgrades

Peter Ewart Middle School Students are in class as expansion and seismic work are being done

Heather Colpitts  
heather.colpitts@langleyadvancetimes.com

Expansion and seismic upgrading has started at Peter Ewart Middle School and B.C. Premier David Eby stopped by to check it out Thursday. The school at 7755 202A St. is undergoing an 11 classroom expansion to add 275 seats, and seismic upgrades for the work that is expected to be done for autumn 2024. Students will continue to go to school during construction.

The province provided \$37.8 million and the Langley School District contributed \$1 million for the work on the school. The building, which dates from the 1970s, was refurbished and opened as a middle school in 2018/2019.

"This investment from the province will ensure the health and safety of our students and staff, and help relieve current and future enrollment pressures in our schools," said Lang-

the district director of Facilities, Transportation, and Capital Projects. In 2016, the building of a new R.E. Mountain Secondary School was approved.

In 2019, a new site for R.E. Mountain Secondary School opened adjacent to its former site.

The original building was then reconfigured into a middle school. In 2019, the building transitioned and opened as Peter Ewart Middle School.

"As seismic standards changed, and assessments were completed over the years, seismic issues were identified and now in 2023 they are being addressed," Schaufler said. "The district is pleased to

"Communities like Langley are growing quickly, and families need schools to grow with them," said Premier David Eby. "For years,

previous governments failed to plan for this growth and our kids paid the price. That's why we've made building and improving schools in fast-growing regions like Langley and across B.C. a top priority – and there's much more to do."

The province has funded more than \$230 million to build, expand and improve schools



## VFC players visiting Langley school to spread kindness on Pink Shirt Day

'Nobody is lesser for their differences,' says Alex Hope Elementary student

Kyler Emerson  
Feb 28, 2024 5:00 AM



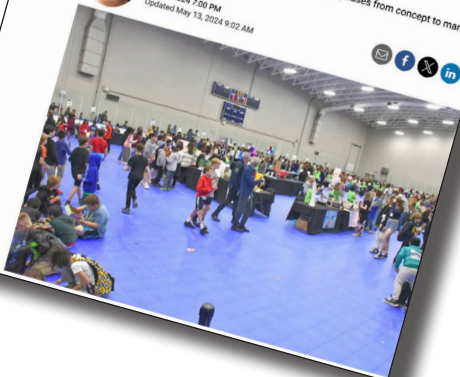
### LANGLEY ADVANCE TIMES

News More Contests Shop E Editions Classifieds Auto Jobs Obitu

#### VIDEO: Langley students put their entrepreneurial skills to the test

IDEA Summit has students create products and doing all phases from concept to marketing

Heather Colpitts  
May 9, 2024 7:00 PM  
Updated May 13, 2024 9:02 AM



## IN PROGRESS

The District will look forward to increasing the use of LinkedIn to help raise awareness of the work of the District and Board as well as to help promote career opportunities to the public and fulfill recruitment goals. The District will continue to ensure equity in our story telling by highlighting schools and programs that may require a boost in promotion.

Looking ahead to Year 2, in consultation with the District Leadership Team, the District will be shifting away from the use of standalone websites to display and communicate the Strategic Plan and the Framework for

Enhancing Student Learning (FESL). A vibrant and robust version of these anchor documents will continue to live on the District website in a flipbook format. When communicating the actions of the Strategic Plan, the District will concentrate on sharing stories from students and staff that document Educational Opportunities, Community of Partnerships, and Operational Priorities. In regards, to communicating the actions of the FESL, the District will be more intentional in sharing stories from students and staff that document Intellectual Development, Human and Social Development, and Career Development.



## SOCIAL MEDIA AT A GLANCE



Followers:  
13,300

▲ 10%



Followers:  
7,600

▲ 4%



Followers:  
7,160

▲ 30%



Followers:  
3,000

▲ 10%



Followers:  
550

▲ 25%

*\*Data provided by Hootsuite Analytics*

## 2. ENHANCE OUR BRAND

Enhance the image and public opinion of the Langley School District.

*Increase brand awareness and visibility.*

*Increase public trust in the District and Board of Education.*

*Increase positive media coverage.*

*Facilitate transitions and foster positive reactions to systemic change.*

*Improve staff and community satisfaction with District communications.*

### ACHIEVEMENTS

In Year 1, the District had 95 news stories and media mentions in traditional media which includes TV, radio, print, digital media outlets. Out of the media stories covered, 73% were positive or neutral, which is a majority of the stories. Among them, 40% of those stories were pitched to the media, 25% were requested by the media, and 35% were media mentions. Positive media engagements included capital project announcements such as the construction of the upcoming NE Latimer Elementary and Richard Bulpitt

Elementary modular expansion, the prefabricated building project resulted in more than four stories. Other stories covered included District athletics, school musical theatre productions, and charitable initiatives in collaboration with community partners.

In Year 1, the District continued to use consistent infographics, FAQs, and key messages to assist the Board and staff in their communications with students, staff, families, and the public.

### IN PROGRESS

The District is continuing to review its branding guidelines and distribute to staff. In addition to branding guidelines, the District will be communicating to internal staff and the Board of Education the importance of brand management and identity. The need for consistent branding remains a priority as the District's audience continues to grow.

The District is continuing to work on improving staff and community satisfaction with District communications which could include gathering staff or community feedback on communications methods and content shared.

### 3. PROMOTE HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELLNESS IN OUR SCHOOLS

Deliver fast and effective communications to stakeholders in emergencies or health and safety crises.

*Ensure District Emergency Response Manual and related communications procedures are up-to-date.*

*Increase administrator and staff awareness and understanding of communications related emergency response procedures.*

*Increase parent/guardian and student awareness of procedures, emergency drills, controlled release, muster points, parent marshalling sites, and expectations for communication during emergencies.*

*Communicate urgent messages and instructions to parents/guardians in a timely manner during emergencies.*

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#### ACHIEVEMENTS

The District has made strides in reviewing and updating emergency procedures and related communications to ensure administrators, students, staff, and families are updated on any changes. In Year 1, the District implemented some of the recommendations made by the District’s Emergency Preparedness Committee members. Examples included implementing annual testing of two-way radios at the school level, sharing of the District’s



emergency procedures poster with families as part of school start up, and finding opportunities to demonstrate what procedures look like through digital media. In Year 1, the District documented an earthquake drill as part of the annual Great Shakeout at one of the elementary schools.

The District is continuing to use SchoolMessenger to communicate with parents/guardians during and after emergencies. In response to lockdowns, the District has reduced the time to communicate information to families in these situations. This improvement was a goal that resulted from a debrief after a previous lockdown. In relation to health and wellness, the District established a process to share relevant and timely health information from its community partner, the Fraser Health Authority, on a monthly basis with families.

#### IN PROGRESS

In Year 2, as part of school start up, the District will continue to add additional emergency procedures and emergency preparedness response information for administrators, staff, students, and families as needed. Examples may include procedures and communications around community volunteers in emergencies and procedures related to how schools respond and support students when there is a student in distress. Recognizing that new students join our schools at various times in the school year, the District will find opportunities to continue to educate families throughout the year.

With health and wellness of students and staff as priorities in the Strategic Plan and the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning, the District will be looking at exploring ways to share and celebrate stories that promote wellbeing. The District will continue to strengthen relationships with emergency preparedness counterparts at the Township of Langley and City of Langley.





## 4. STRENGTHEN OUR RELATIONSHIPS

Develop and strengthen collaborative relationships with stakeholders.

### Internal Audiences:

*Increase staff awareness of Board and District plans and activities.*

*Enhance interdepartmental connections and communications.*

### External Audiences:

*Increase public awareness of Board and District plans and activities.*

*Enhance connections and communications with families and other community members.*

## ACHIEVEMENTS

In Year 1, the District developed its first newsletter for the community and staff. There were three editions distributed throughout the school year. The concept of a newsletter was an action item resulting from the Board's Communications Committee prior to the pandemic. The newsletters aim to shine a light on the incredible stories, achievements, and happenings within our school community.

The District is continuing to connect and engage with the community through consultations, parent info sessions, and other events. In Year 1, the District engaged with parents/guardians in the Langley Secondary Family of Schools as part of its catchment boundary change process. Although this was a complex and challenging process that impacted students and their families, feedback indicated that some appreciated that the District listened to the concerns raised by the community.

## IN PROGRESS

The District will focus on developing communications strategies to increase staff connectedness, belonging, and engagement. In alignment with the goals of the Strategic Plan, the District will be developing communications strategies such as staff profile stories

to help celebrate the work of staff, and as well, a way to promote recruitment and retention. The District will continue meetings with communications counterparts at the Township of Langley, City of Langley, and Langley RCMP.

## 5. BUILDING OUR CAPACITY

Provide training and support to internal and external audiences in order to increase engagement and help all learners reach their full potential.

### Internal Audiences:

*Enhance capacity of District Communications team.*

*Enhance knowledge and capacity of schools and departments on communications strategies, tactics, and tools.*

### External Audiences:

*Enhance knowledge of the District website and education related matters.*

## ACHIEVEMENTS

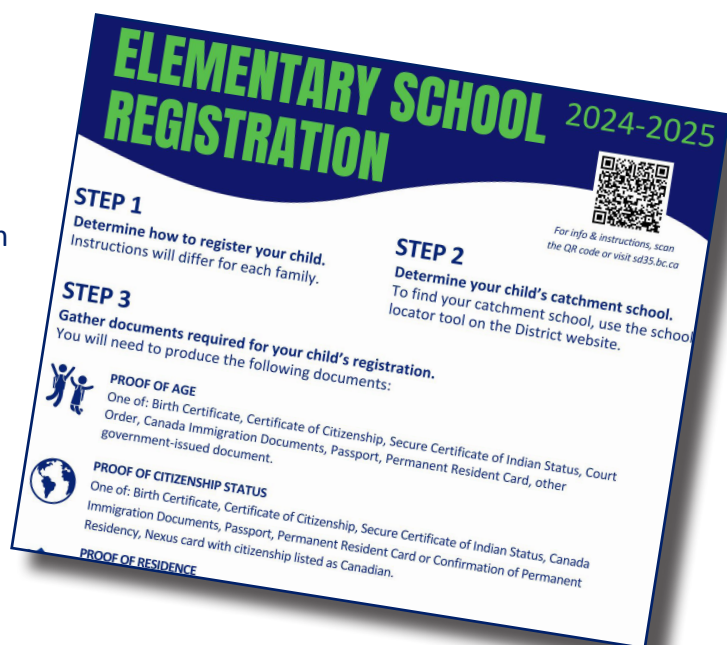
As a growing District with a continual influx of new staff, the communications department has and will continue to train administrators and administrative assistants on school website editing. The communications department continues to coach and share best practices with administrators and departments around key messaging for internal and external audiences, and also communications plans and change management rollouts for various departments in the District.

As the District continues its efforts to streamline and centralize its systems and structures from an educational and operational perspective, comes the need to develop new communications materials, instructional information, and messaging to help facilitate change management.

An example of a change management process included the District's move to online registration at the elementary level in January 2024, which required a set of new instructions and background information for students, staff, and families. Other change management communications projects included the shift in the attendance

## IN PROGRESS

Moving forward, communications staff will work to establish structures such as a media kit for administrators and departmental staff to use as a resource. The media kit may include branding guidelines, best practices on communications,



reporting process for families at the secondary level as well as the districtwide adoption of student inclusive conferences for students, staff, and families at the elementary level. The District will continue to help build the capacity of internal and external audiences to adapt to systemwide changes.

social media usage, photo, video, news post writing, and communications plans templates for events/initiatives. Communications staff will continue to encourage and support the submission of blogs from staff for StaffNet and the District website.





## 6. PROMOTING TRUTH & RECONCILIATION

Increase awareness of the District’s commitment to the journey of Truth and Reconciliation in our schools and helping fulfill the concept of “Every Child Matters.”

*Increase awareness of actions that demonstrate the District’s commitment to Truth and Reconciliation among internal and external audiences and maintain a positive narrative in traditional media, social media, and on the District website.*

### ACHIEVEMENTS

In Year 1, the District has been focused on finding and promoting learning opportunities, inside and outside of the classroom, focused on Truth and Reconciliation and Indigenous Worldviews and Perspectives.



Elementary that was designed by a local Kwantlen First Nations artist, and the Odyssey Conference, a professional development opportunity available to all staff focused on Indigenous cultural teachings, storytelling, and voices.

Some of the top social media posts from the 2023-2024 school year included the annual Aboriginal Achievement Awards, the celebration of a new logo at Gordon Greenwood

This is an indication that the sharing of these stories with internal and external audiences has been well received by the community.

### IN PROGRESS

The District will continue to promote and celebrate the stories, events, and initiatives that reaffirm the District’s commitment to Truth and Reconciliation in our schools.

The communications department will be intentional in highlighting stories, events, and initiatives that are in alignment with the District’s Strategic Plan and Framework for Enhancing Student Learning.







## 7. PROMOTING DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Increase awareness of the District's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in our schools and helping ensure all students feel a sense of belonging

*Increase awareness of actions that demonstrate the District's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion among internal and external audiences and maintain a positive narrative in traditional media, social media, and on the District website.*

### ACHIEVEMENTS

In Year 1, the District has been focused on finding and promoting stories about learning opportunities around Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Some of the top social media posts from the 2023-2024 school year included events, activities, initiatives that took place during the District's Diversity and Respect Week in February.

Examples of stories throughout the school year included a coding workshop for students who are deaf and hard of hearing, and a story about the impact District staff have on contributing to a more accessible community, a feature which aimed to raise

awareness of National AccessAbility Week in the spring. In Year 1, the communications department supported the District's Accessibility Committee in developing communications materials including a plan and a survey to gather public feedback on improving accessibility in schools.

The communications department in consultation with the Learning Support Services department continues to advise staff on key messaging and language to be used with all audiences that is respectful and inclusive.

### IN PROGRESS

The communications department will be intentional in highlighting stories, events, and initiatives that celebrate and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion and are in alignment with the District's Strategic Plan and Framework for Enhancing Student Learning.

This may include stories promoting classroom activities for students, professional development

opportunities for staff, and showcasing the actions that staff in different departments undertake to support compassionate learning communities.

Moving forward, the communications department will connect with the various District committees to showcase the positive work they do to support students and staff.



# CHALLENGES

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## UNDERSTANDING THE PUBLIC'S ROLE IN DECISION-MAKING

It is important that the Board of Education and District share a common understanding of the public's role in decision-making processes and the opportunities for public engagement, and that these be clearly articulated. Fostering ongoing dialogue with those affected by decisions may reveal previously unidentified challenges and concerns. Such discussions may also deepen community connections, develop positive relationships and advocates, and help generate support for future endeavors.

## KEEPING UP WITH TECHNOLOGY

Advancements in technology are ongoing in relation to communication methods and tools. It is important to be aware of emerging trends but mindful that new technology is not always needed, comes at a cost, and requires capacity of staff for training. It is necessary to continue to review communications methods to ensure the needs of diverse audiences are met.

## RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

Resistance to change is natural and should be expected. By working with internal and external stakeholders to communicate the rationale for changes and a connection to the District's long-term plans, concerns may be addressed which broaden acceptance of the need for change.

## PUBLIC SKEPTICISM

In order to earn the trust of the community, it is important to stay true to the goal of communicating honestly and openly. By ensuring the transparency of decision-making processes and increasing opportunities for open communication, the District may increase public and staff confidence and overcome any skepticism.



## SCOPE OF STRATEGIES

The recommended strategies within the District Communications Plan are both broad in scope and ambition. Effective communication requires significant effort and the achievement of identified goals will rely on agreement, support and collaboration among multiple departments and schools across the District.



# MEASUREMENTS & EVALUATIONS

- Feedback from communications survey for families
- Feedback from communications survey for staff
- Social media analytics
- Feedback from social media messages/comments
- Feedback from District website online form
- Feedback from partner groups and DPAC
- Feedback from community consultations or information sessions
- Attendance/participation at events
- Registrants in programs
- Media coverage
- Word-of-mouth in the community





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UNIFIED LEARNING COMMUNITY