



# COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT 59

## *Strategic Communications Plan*





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# ABOUT CCSD59

## MISSION

The mission of Community Consolidated School District 59 (CCSD59) is to prepare students to be successful for life.

## VISION

Our vision is to ignite a passion for learning through an environment that:

- Encourages social emotional well-being
- Embraces the strength of our diversity
- Provides a readiness for high school, college, career, and life success
- Inspires curiosity and innovation
- Fosters collaborative spirit, choice, ownership, trust, and respect
- Shares responsibility and accountability for continuous improvement

## CORE VALUES

The District is committed to the following core values:

- Whole Child
- Growth, Ownership, and Continuous Improvement
- Communication and Collaboration
- Diversity and Equity
- Partnerships and Stewardship



# CCSD59 COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

At CCSD59, communication is about more than sharing information - it's about building trust, creating connections, and celebrating the work happening in our schools every day. The Communications Department helps keep families, staff, and the community informed and engaged by ensuring information is clear, timely, and accessible. We see communication as a bridge: one that allows us to listen, share, and highlight the people and programs that make CCSD59 unique. Through open, two-way communication, we work to keep everyone connected to the district's mission and to the success of our students.

## MEET THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM



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# STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN INTRODUCTION

**Clear and effective communication is the foundation of trust between our district, families, staff, and community. As our district continues to grow and evolve, the way we communicate must be consistent, transparent, and inclusive.**

This Strategic Communications Plan was created to strengthen how we share information, listen to feedback, and connect with our community. The plan will serve as a long-term roadmap to guide clear, two-way communication across the district by:

- Building trust and engagement throughout the school community
- Aligning communication efforts with the districts mission and priorities
- Ensuring staff and families have access to the information they need

This plan was developed in partnership with the Strategic Communications Plan Task Force, which includes representatives from district and school staff. The Board Communications Committee also provided input and perspective throughout the process. Family voices played a key role through feedback gathered during the communications audit conducted by the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA). The findings from that audit helped shape the goals and priorities outlined in this plan. All communications initiatives will align to one of the four goals identified in this plan.

Additional information on the audit process and findings are within the next section.



# COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT

In the beginning of 2024, the district began working with National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) to conduct a full communications audit to better understand how well current communication practices were serving our families, staff, and community. The audit process included:



**MATERIALS REVIEW:** The Communications Department submitted samples of materials used to communicate with internal and external audiences. The auditor conducted rigorous review of these materials as well as the district and school websites and social media pages.



**SCOPE SURVEY:** School Communications Performance Evaluation (SCOPE) Survey collected feedback from families, employees (instructional, support, and administrative), and the community.



**FOCUS GROUPS:** An auditor met with 10 focus groups to conduct interviews with representation from: school building office managers families, community outreach specialists, principals, teachers, education foundation, superintendent leadership team, Board of Education members.

Overall, the audit showed the district has many strong communication practices. In particular, CCSD59 was recognized for its transparency and commitment to keeping families, staff, and the community informed through frequent updates. At the same time, the audit also identified areas for growth. The nine recommendations focus on refining how information is shared—making messages clearer, strengthening two-way communication, ensuring consistency across schools, and improving language access, among other priorities.

This Strategic Communications Plan takes those nine recommendations and organizes them into four overarching goals which will be accomplished by different strategies and tactics phased out throughout the next four years. It is designed to be flexible and responsive, growing as the district continues to listen to its families, staff, and community. The full NSPRA audit report can be viewed on our [website](#).



# HIGH-LEVEL AUDIT FINDINGS

Overall, there's a very **positive sentiment** around district communications and many families and staff view the district as transparent and proactive

**75%** of parents and **57%** of staff rated communications as excellent or above average

**Two-Way** communication is lacking - there needs to be more opportunities for feedback

Communications often use **overly complex or technical language** - simpler, more concise messages written at a lower reading level would be best

Communications can be **better tailored** for each audience (i.e., for families and staff) - communications tools should also be **standardized & streamlined**

The district website is sometimes **difficult to navigate** and/or not accessible - improvements to user experience were requested

Staff feel out of the loop on **key decisions** - there's opportunity to improve internal communications

Opportunity to **increase language and translation support** - especially for some terms and events



# STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS GOALS

## CCSD59 WILL EMBARK ON ACHIEVING FOUR GOALS THROUGHOUT THE NEXT FOUR YEARS. THIS INCLUDES:

- GOAL 1** Streamlined & Strategic Communications: Establish and maintain a comprehensive, measurable communications plan while standardizing platforms and practices to ensure clear, consistent, and transparent messaging across the district.
- GOAL 2** Accessible, Inclusive, & Digital Communication: Ensure district communications are clear, concise, accessible, and easy to navigate across all platforms, including print, digital, and social media.
- GOAL 3** Two-Way Communication & Trust: Build trust and transparency with key stakeholders by strengthening two-way communication and involving and updating them in meaningful ways.
- GOAL 4** Board of Education Communication & Transparency: Increase the visibility, clarity, and accessibility of the Board of Education communications to strengthen understanding and trust in district governance.



# STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN ROADMAP

## YEAR 1 (2025-26)

*Build Our Foundation*



- Launch Strategic Communications Plan
- Expand Accessible & Inclusive Communications
- Identify Standardized Communication Platform
- Strengthen Board Transparency

## YEAR 2 (2026-27)

*Streamline & Build Trust*



- Implement Standardized Communication Platform
- Strengthen Internal Communication
- Expand Two-Way Communication & Trust
- Kick-off Long-Range Planning Process

## YEAR 3+ (2027+)

*Optimize & Deepen Engagement*



- Optimize Digital User Experience (website & social media)
- Deepen Two-Way Communication & Trust
- Begin Long-Range Planning Engagement



# GOALS 1 & 2

## GOAL 1

**Goal - Streamlined & Strategic Communications:** Establish and maintain a comprehensive, measurable communications plan while standardizing platforms and practices to ensure clear, consistent, and transparent messaging across the district.

### NSPRA Recommendations

- Recommendation #1 “Develop a Strategic Communications Plan”
- Recommendation #6 “Enhance Internal Communication Efforts”
- Recommendation #7 “Support Standardized Parent Communication Practices”

### Strategies:

- Plan Development
- Evaluation
- Plan Refinement
- Annual Report-Out
- Implementing New Platform
- Staff Portal
- Internal Communication Connections
- Department & Campaign Communication Plans

## GOAL 2

**Goal - Accessible, Inclusive, & Digital Communication:** Ensure district communications are clear, concise, accessible, and easy to navigate across all platforms, including print, digital, and social media.

### NSPRA Recommendations

- Recommendation #2 “Adapt Communications Practices to More Effectively Connect with Different Audiences”
- Recommendation #3 “Enhance District’s Website to Increase Stakeholder Use and Engagement”
- Recommendation #9 “Increase Non-English Speakers Access to Translated District and School Communications”

### Strategies:

- Language Access
- Digestible (Easy to Understand) Communications
- Community Access
- Exploring & Integrating New Website Host
- Website Navigation & Structure
- Accessibility Standards
- Social Media Standards



# GOALS 3 & 4

## GOAL 3

**Goal - Two-Way Communication & Trust:** Build trust and transparency with key stakeholders by strengthening two-way communication and involving and updating them in meaningful ways.

### NSPRA Recommendations

- Recommendation #2 “Adapt Communication Practices to More Effectively Connect with Different Audiences”
- Recommendation #4 “Maintain a Culture of Two-way Communication Throughout the District and Schools to Build Trust with Constituents”
- Recommendation #5 “Increase Participation in and Transparency Around Decision-making Processes”

### Strategies:

- Community Engagement
- Decision Transparency
- Staff as Communicator

## GOAL 4

**Goal - Board of Education Communication & Transparency:** Increase the visibility, clarity, and accessibility of the Board of Education communications to strengthen understanding and trust in district governance.

### NSPRA Recommendations

- Recommendation #8 “Enhance School Board Communications and Outreach”

### Strategies:

- Accessible Summaries
- Community Connection
- Long-Range Planning



# EVALUATION METRICS

## WE'LL TRACK AND MEASURE PROGRESS THROUGH VARIOUS METHODS, INCLUDING:



Community Surveys & Focus Groups for Direct Feedback



Social Media Analytics (Facebook/Instagram) - Engagement Rates, Views, Follower Increases



Digital Analytics (Website) - Page Visits, Open Rates, Heat Maps



Participation at Events and within Surveys



Annual Progress Reports (Evaluate + Refine)