Communications, Advocacy and Leadership

MASA Region 3 - Southwest & West Central MN

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First Step – Member Survey, Fall 2016

Possible PD Topics, including:

- Strategic Planning
- Long Range Facilities Planning
- Communications
- Leadership
- Rebooting PLCs
- Curriculum Leadership
- HR Basics
- Legislative Advocacy

Listed options for delivery method

- 1-2 longer sessions
- Several shorter sessions

The Winning Topics

- **Communications**

- **Legislative Advocacy**

- **Leadership**

Communications 101

Dawn Zimmerman, The Write Advantage

- Building communication and social media plans
- Branding
- Building internal capacity for communications

Held in August 2017

Communication Trends

- Moving from Traditional to Digital

- Moving from Printed/Mailed to Real Time

- Moving from Monologue to Dialogue

Set Communication Goals

Here are some examples:
- To gain awareness, understanding, and support of the district mission and objectives
- To engage employees and stakeholders as ambassadors for the district
- To actively engage parents, students, staff and community in the learning process
- To celebrate student and staff success and contributions

Start Building Internally

- Create **Communication Teams** or **Communications Squads**
  - Preschool, elementary, middle school, high school, ALC, by building/location, etc. Do what makes sense for your district.
  - Teams meet monthly to plan what's next and share results
  - Teams help build consistency across the district

Develop Key Messages

- Should be relevant, relational and repeatable
  - What do you want to be known for?
  - What makes you different?
- Here are some examples of taglines and hashtags:
  - GREAT people doing GREAT things! (SWWC)
  - #HawkPride (Montevideo Public Schools)
  - #LPStrongerTogether (Lester Prairie)
  - Inspiring Each Student Every Day - #WeInspireEach (Eden Prairie Public Schools)

Know Your Audience

- Teachers & Staff
- Board
- Parents
- Students
- Volunteers
- Community Partners
- Community Members

Core Communication Tools for Schools

- Website
- Facebook and Other Social Media
- Email
- Text Messaging
- Newsletter
- Programs and Brochures
- Signs

Website

- This is your most important tool!
- It is THE central location for district/school information.
- Make sure you have user-friendly navigation.
- Keep it UP TO DATE!

- Key Website Elements
    Calendar   News   Teacher Pages   Parent Resources

Social Media

- Facebook is a very powerful tool
    - Post at least 3-5 times a week - include images and/or videos
    - Serves as an eye into the classroom
    - Use hashtags
    - Tag people (if they have given the ok)

Measure Results

- Set benchmarks and establish goals
- Access analytics
  - Determine best time of day to post on Facebook based on engagement stats
  - Analyze what types of posts get the most engagement
- Identify key metrics
- Report to leadership team and communication teams/squads

Preparing for the 2018 Legislative Session

Roger Moe and Sam Walseth
- Session timelines and deadlines
- Getting a bill sponsored
- Legislative staff roles/responsibilities
- Ways to communicate school district needs

Held in November 2017

Deadlines

- First Deadline: A committee in either body must act favorably on a piece of legislation
  - March 15, 2019 at midnight
- Second Deadline: A committee in the remaining body must act favorably on the legislation
  - March 29, 2019 at midnight
- Third Deadline: Action must be taken on finance bills
  - April 12, 2019 at midnight

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Lobbyist:** Engaged for pay (more than $3,000 from all sources in any year) for the purpose of attempting to influence legislative or administrative action by communicating (or urging others to communicate) with public or local officials
- **Legislative Aides:** Each caucus in the House and Senate employs partisan staff to work for representatives and senators, meet constituent requests, provide media services, and administer committees.

Advocacy is an Ongoing Process

Advocacy is not a one-time thing … it is ongoing.

Keep in contact with legislators on an ongoing, regular basis – not just when major issues arise.

Invitation

Invite your elected officials to your schools.

There is no better way to tell the school story than to let them see education in action.

Stories

Share stories about your schools.

Tell stories or anecdotes that put faces with the numbers.

Implementing Goals and Leading Change

Bruce Miles, Big River Group
- Intentionally developing leaders to lead change
- Tools and strategies to implement goals

Held in March 2018

Hurdles to Implementing Change

- Conflict from lack of focus – review your mission/vision
- Conflict with philosophy and practices – review your decision making system
- Interpersonal conflicts – set up expected behaviors
- Conflict with leadership or followership – identify expected behaviors
- Conflict with bad behavior – tell people to stop it, use the positive grapevine

How Do Leaders Create Followers?

1. Create a feeling of significance - that their contributions matter.

2. Create a feeling of community - a unity of purpose around work and others.

3. Create excitement and challenge - that "edgy" feeling.

Intentionally Developing Leaders

- **Improve Your Hiring**
  - What are the desired hard skills for a leadership position?
  - What are the desired soft skills?

Intentionally Developing Leaders

- **Plan for Succession**
  - Short Term: "You should be ready to step in for these people … and these are the key tasks"
  - Short Term: "These people should be ready to step in for you … and these are their key tasks"

  - Long Term: "These people should be developed to step in for you …"
  - Long Term: "You should be developed to step in for these people …"

Development Growth Plan

- Create a **Development Growth Plan** for those who "should be developed to step in for …"
  - List specific growth goals
  - Identify knowledge and experiences to be developed
  - List other possible growth areas or resources

Tools and Strategies to Implement Goals

Design Stage

- Ensure alignment with mission and vision
- Define vision and purpose
- Explain integration with or relation to other initiatives
- Involve principals in design and decision before it goes to the staff
- Involve stakeholders in design and vetting
- Involve teachers in roll-out and have defined roles

Tools and Strategies to Implement Goals

Implementation Stage

- Develop implementation framework with timeline to guide change
- Develop communication plan to ensure consistency of message
  - Overarching question/message: What is right for the kids?
- Find easy or immediate "wins"
- Process/schedule check-ins after implementation: 30 days, 90 days, etc.