

Overview

The District has an ongoing commitment to offer the best communication possible for our students, faculty and staff, parents and guardians, as well as the community at large. It's our belief that in a time when our community is increasingly focused on being engaged, we need to do everything we can to make sure we are consistently providing them the information they desire.

Last spring, the communications department began investigating ways to evaluate current practices. While we feel the emphasis on communications in our district is strong, and communications are going well, our goal is to constantly be improving. Furthermore, the term "communications" means different things to different audiences. Through interviews and research, the outline below was developed as potential avenues for the district evaluate our various methods.

- I. Goals and Objectives of Evaluation Process
- II. NSPRA Communications Audit
- III. Scope School Surveys
- IV. NSPRA Rubrics of practices and suggested measures
- V. Points of Consideration

I. Goals and Objectives of Evaluation Process

- Measure Effectiveness of Communications
 - Frequency, Message, Method
- Evaluate Communications at Different Levels in Organization
 - District-wide, Building, Teacher, Department, etc.
- Use of Tools and Approaches to Communicating with Different Groups
 - Parents, Employees, Taxpayer/Residents

II. NSPRA Communications Audit — Cost estimate \$13,000

[NSPRA's Communication Audit](#) process takes a snapshot of your current communication efforts, the climate for communication, the issues and image perceptions you are facing, and the communication needs and patterns of your target audiences. Each NSPRA audit is different as each is tailored to your needs.

The first question you will hear from NSPRA when you call to find out more about the auditing process is, "What do you want the NSPRA audit to accomplish for your district, service agency, association, etc.?" NSPRA auditors review all current communication materials and techniques at the district and building level. The auditors talk with key representatives from target audiences and seek their honest opinions on the communication process, role and

effectiveness. The auditors also probe for key responses predetermined at the outset of the audit. (Remember the question, what do you want this audit to accomplish for you?)

The blueprint for success, the final report, then draws upon NSPRA's unique position of being on top of the best and latest communication techniques and plans, and tailors the recommendations to your specific needs. Start Building Support with an NSPRA Communication Audit:

- The First Important Step to Build Support for Your Schools!
- An audit demonstrates your commitment to improving communication.
- An audit demonstrates your willingness to listen and to respond to community views - a major relationship-builder in every audit we conduct.
- An audit will find out what major segments of employees, citizens and customers think about your district's or agency's image.
- An audit will make definitive, workable recommendations for improving two-way communication and building community and staff support in your district or agency.
- An audit can lead to a practical public relations and marketing communication plan for your district or agency.
- Evaluators complete on-site intensive and includes focus groups.

III. Scope School Surveys — Cost estimate \$6,000

[SCoPE](#) is a survey and detailed analysis program designed solely to inform and improve school communications with three key audiences:

- Faculty and Staff
- Parents and Families
- Community

Through the SCoPE program, districts uncover where communications are working, where they are not, and most importantly, what they can do about it. SCoPE Surveys take the guesswork out of school communications.

Created by accredited leaders in school communication, SCoPE is an [exclusive partner with the National School Public Relations Association](#) and aligns with national standards outlined in the NSPRA Benchmarking Project's Rubrics of Practice and Suggested Measures. In an era of increasing accountability, SCoPE is the standardized evaluation tool school communications professionals and school leaders have been seeking. Our colleagues asked and we responded. All SCoPE districts receive a customized follow-up review pointing to school communications program standards based on their highest and lowest performing areas. This review helps our districts identify opportunities to improve your communications and prioritize next steps.

References:

Asked for references as close to us geographically and enrollment size. To date, no district in PA. has done a Scope School Survey.

Lakeland CSD, NY — 6000 enrollment

Reference Notes:

Completed survey of teacher and parents only 1 year ago, found worthwhile.

Survey findings: confirmed some things but surprised by some: I.E. social media wasn't as popular as expected.

Doesn't survey with strategic plan.

Do you have a demanding community? Similar to ours.

Results: Overall strategy retained, minor change of emphasis on social media.

Hudson City, OH — 4600 enrollment

Reference Notes:

District already uses NSPRA rubric for community and marketing related to survey.

Static survey document and process, not customizable to district needs.

Scope provides feedback from survey results.

Survey staff, parents and (community optional).

IV. NSPRA School Communication Benchmarking — Rubrics of Practice and Suggested Measures, 2018 Edition — Cost \$45

[More information from NSPRA](#)

Completed by internal district personal

Is your school communication program emerging, established, or exemplary?

- Assess the current state of your program against rubrics
- Focus on comprehensive, internal and parent/family communications
- Evolve and improve your program
- Assign quantifiable measures
- Track results against the status/evolution of your program
- Share and compare results with high-performing programs/districts; emulate their approaches
- Correlate your communications results with other key indicators of your district such as student performance results, staff engagement results, and more

- Support requests for additional communication resources
- Function Area added in the 2018 Edition: Crisis Communication

V. Points of Consideration

Below are some ideas for consideration stemming from the research above.

- Utilizing local experts vs. the places above.
- Evaluating feasibility of doing our own survey — time and cost.
- Whether the information from a non-customizable survey is useful.
- Consideration of audiences — students, faculty, parents, community.
- How to use this information