

## School/Home Communications Task Force

### **Purpose**

The main purposes of the Task Force are to:

- Collaborate with the district to develop recommendation for standard of mass communications for schools and families, including recommended tools, frequency, methods of communication.
- Learn about best practices and current school practices in school/home mass communications.
- Clarify the roles of the school and the PTSA with regard to school/home communication.
- Provide a forum for parents to give meaningful input on the Task Force's work.

The Task Force's role

- Review materials, complete pre-meeting activities, and come prepared to discuss and learn.
- Gather feedback from the interests they represent and provide ongoing communications between the district and the group they represent throughout the process.
- Provide advice, as community representatives, on ways to address community concerns.
- Develop an understanding of current school/home communications efforts.
- Partner with the district to develop recommendations for mass communications standards.
- Focus on the specific purpose of the task force, understanding that school/home communication covers a wide range of activities and this group will address only a portion.

The district staff's role

- Provide information on current communication efforts, best practices for school/home communication, opinion research that reflects customer opinions on school/home communications, options and costs for communications tools.
- Provide draft materials to Task Force members four calendar days before meetings.
- Listen and take into consideration recommendations from the Task Force with regards to providing data and requests for analysis and research to support group deliberations.

### **Norms for individual work as members of the Task Force**

- We acknowledge our group's diversity and value different points of view. We will respect each other's opinions and will operate in consistently constructive ways.
- We will make every effort to attend meetings, to participate actively, to read and be prepared to discuss information and issues, and to be available for work between formal meetings.
- We will keep an open mind and come to meetings with interests, not entrenched positions. We will share our interests and objectives with all Task Force members. We will openly explain and discuss the reasons behind our statements, questions and actions.
- We will be responsible for representing the interests and concerns of the community we represent at the table.
- We will listen carefully to the views expressed by others, avoid interruptions, and seek ways to reconcile others' views with our own. We will represent information accurately and appropriately.

- We will adhere to the ground rules and respect the procedural guidance and procedural recommendations of the facilitator.

### **Norms for our work together**

#### Use of time

- We will respect each other's time by being on time. Meetings will begin and end on time, unless otherwise agreed to by the Task Force members.
- When making our comments, we will consider the time needed for others to share their perspectives.
- Task Force members will strive to collectively make reasonable requests and suggestions through a cooperative and collaborative discussion process with the district.
- In discussions, suggestions may not represent unanimity. The facilitator is responsible for seeking and probing for group preferences. It is the responsibility of each Task Force member to voice dissent if s/he cannot live with any particular suggestion.
- Any recommendations from the Task Force will be considered by the district: if any recommendation is not passed on to schools, the district will provide information as to why.
- All schools will be provided with the recommendations and the reasoning behind them. It will be up to each school to determine what they will do as a result of those recommendations.

#### Proposed meeting ground rules

The Task Force members will:

- Start/end on time.
- Silence electronics.
- Ask questions of each other for the purposes of gaining clarity and understanding.
- Express ourselves in terms of personal needs, interests and outcomes.
- Listen respectfully, and sincerely try to understand the other person's needs and interests.
- Come with curiosity and a willingness to learn.

### **Norms for our work with others outside the Task Force**

#### External communications

- All Task Force meetings shall be open to the public.
- We will avoid characterizing the views or opinions of other Task Force members outside of any Task Force meeting or activity.
- We will accurately describe Task Force preferences that are conveyed to the district.
- Task Force meetings will be announced on the district's website.
- Task Force meeting products, such as agendas, summaries, and PowerPoint presentations will be posted on the district's website.
- Note: Task Force member names and representative group will be included in these materials and will be listed on the project website.