

# Cecil County Public Schools Communication Strategic Plan

# Committee Members

- Dr. Jeffrey Lawson, Chair . . . . . Superintendent of Schools
- Ms. Krystle Blomquist . . . . . Parent
- Ms. Frances Bowman . . . . . Community Member
- Ms. Dawn Branch . . . . . President, Board of Education
- Ms. Georgia Soltis Clark . . . . . Executive Director, Elementary School Education
- Mr. David Dollenger . . . . . Principal, Cecil County School of Technology
- Mr. Bruce Fox . . . . . Teacher, North East High School
- Mr. G. Scott Heckert . . . . . Supervisor, Food & Nutrition
- Ms. Summer Hodgson . . . . . Assistant in Human Resources
- Ms. Lori Hrinko. . . . . President, Cecil County Classroom Teachers Association
- Mr. Shawn Johnson . . . . . Principal, Perryville Middle School
- Ms. Kelly Keeton . . . . . Public Information Officer/BEPAC Coordinator
- Ms. Jen Michalak . . . . . Parent
- Ms. Marian Martino . . . . . Teacher, North East Elementary School
- Ms. C. Kelly Riser . . . . . Principal, Conowingo Elementary School
- Ms. Erynn Seato. . . . . Assistant in Business Services

# Cecil County Public Schools Strategic Communication Plan

## **CCPS MISSION**

Our mission is to provide an excellent prekindergarten through graduation learning experience that enables ALL students to demonstrate the skills, knowledge, and attitudes required for lifelong learning and productive citizenship in an ever-changing global society.

## **MISSION: COMMUNICATION**

Cecil County Public Schools will support its mission by delivering accurate, timely information to all stakeholders, providing a platform for engaging the community.

## **VISION: COMMUNICATION**

Cecil County Public Schools is a system where:

- All stakeholders should have an opportunity to provide their perspective to inform our school system.
- We are a primary source for consistent, accurate, and timely information to our community.
- A well-informed community provides the vital partnership to advocate for all students.

## **PURPOSE**

*This document exists to:*

- Present a clear, concise, and consistent framework for communicating with our school community.
- Ensure alignment of communication strategies for internal and external audiences with CCPS goals and priorities.
- Provide a mechanism for regular review of communication efforts and progress measures.



# Cecil County Public Schools Strategic Communication Plan

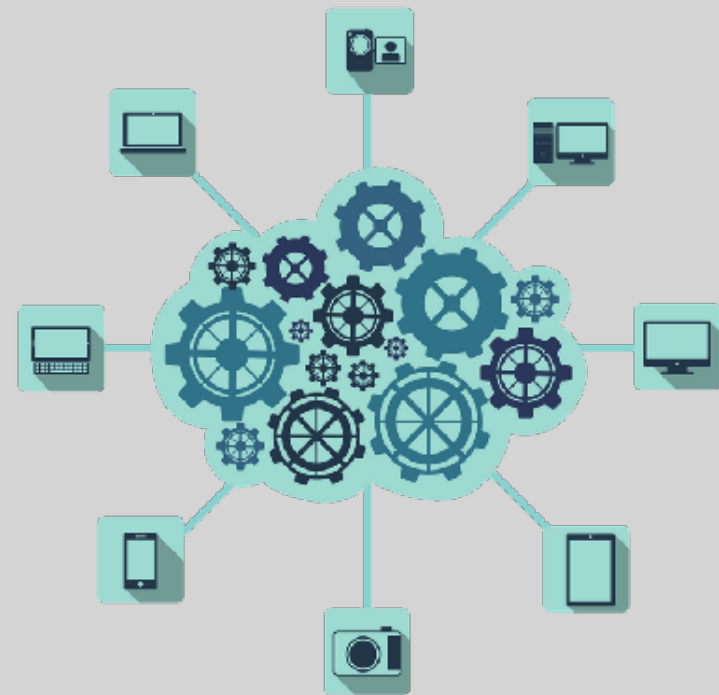
## BACKGROUND

Cecil County Public Schools and the Board of Education of Cecil County are committed to providing and receiving information as ongoing dialogue with all stakeholders. At the direction of the Board of Education, a stakeholder committee was formed to create a framework that would assess and ultimately strengthen the ability of the school system to share and receive information.

The Strategic Communication Planning Committee first assembled in November 2017 and identified the committee purpose. The committee then reviewed other school systems' communication plans, and determined a process for developing and refining the CCPS Communication Plan. The committee's draft was put forward for public input in April 2018 and then modified accordingly before being presented to the Board of Education. The plan will be assessed and updated annually.

## DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION FRAMEWORK

The early stages of communication review should assess the effectiveness of what is in place in order to identify gaps and areas for improvement. As the plan is fully implemented and processes for feedback are put in place, the function of school system communication will evolve from a service-provider role to that of a strategic partner, creating a more effective 2-way dialogue. The information gathered regularly over time should inform future decisions and be integrated into the plan with each review.



# Key Audiences

Internal Audiences	External Audiences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students</li><li>• Staff<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Central Office</li><li>◦ School-based</li><li>◦ Contracted</li><li>◦ Itinerant</li></ul></li><li>• Board of Education</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parents</li><li>• Extended family</li><li>• Businesses</li><li>• Elected officials</li><li>• Government and county agencies</li><li>• Community members</li><li>• Media</li><li>• Post-secondary institutions</li><li>• Community and civic organizations</li><li>• Private education institutions</li><li>• Faith-based organizations</li></ul>



**Goal 1: Stakeholders inform decision making and participate in information sharing by using the most suitable and multiple methods of communication.**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Financial Considerations</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<b>1.1</b> Conduct parent/community surveys regarding school-based needs (e.g., best methods for communication) or district issues (e.g., budget)	Annually	School leadership / Central Office	None	Parents, students, and community members will be able to share ideas with schools and Central Office
<b>1.2</b> Promote opportunities for face-to-face conversations between schools and parents/community members	Quarterly	School leadership	None	Parents and community members will be able to share ideas with schools
<b>1.3</b> Provide online content for stakeholder feedback (e.g., feedback form, question/concern link)	Ongoing	Central Office / Public Information Office	None	Feedback can be submitted outside of surveys and face-to-face meetings
<b>1.4</b> Routinely gather information that a concerned citizen would want to know as it relates to how CCPS communicates with the community	October 15, 2018, then annually	Public Information Office	None	Data that can be used to inform next steps and to improve communication
<b>1.5</b> Inventory system's ability to provide a variety of methods to push out information to stakeholders	Immediately	Public Information Office / Safe Schools Steering Committee	Possible communication upgrade	Possible acquisition of updated communication tool
<b>1.6</b> Create mailing list/community contact list that includes churches, daycare centers, etc., for recipients of information	Fall 2018	Public Information Office	Board supported	Provide the community with information about CCPS
<b>1.7</b> Improve relationship with local business leadership groups / Create liaison such as Business and Education Partnership Advisory Council (BEPAC) and Cecil County Chamber of Commerce	Immediately	Public Information Office	None	Regular attendance at leadership meetings by CCPS staff

**Goal 2: Communications follow a consistent structure and timeline.**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Financial Considerations</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<b>2.1</b> Evaluate existing communication channels (system level and school level)	Fall 2018	Department leadership / School leadership	None	Lists of communication types from each department
<b>2.2</b> Develop a plan for regular internal communication (i.e., week's end newsletter)	Fall 2018	Department leadership	None	Timeline and method for distributing information internally to be presented at principals meeting or
<b>2.3</b> Develop a comprehensive communication plan for regular communication with families	Fall 2018	School leadership / Public Information Office	None	Timeline and method for distributing information to families
<b>2.4</b> Provide ongoing training and support for school staff on effective communication	Annually	School administration	None	Teachers and instructional staff will be able to effectively and appropriately respond to requests for information from parents/ community (i.e., phone calls, emails, conferences, etc.)
<b>2.5</b> Develop and provide social media training, expectations, acceptable use, and resources	Fall or winter 2018	Public Information Office	None	Principals or appointed social media managers will utilize common technologies to communicate
<b>2.6</b> Develop templates for communication	Developed by December 2018	Public Information Office / Leadership	None	Templates will provide frameworks and prototypes for effective communication  Timeline and method for distributing information to be presented at a principals meeting.
<b>2.7</b> Collaborate for the Office of Technology to ensure that online communications meet accessibility compliance standards	Ongoing	Public Information Office/Office of Technology	None	The CCPS website and school websites will meet compliance standards.



**Goal 3: Distribution of information is regular and timely.**

Strategy	Timeframe	Person Responsible	Financial Considerations	Outcome
<b>3.1</b> Distribute information from Central Office to schools	In response to priority (urgent information via phone)	Central Office designee	None	Information shared between Central Office and schools will be accurate and timely
<b>3.2</b> Distribute information from school administration to school staff via meetings, emails, automated phone messages, letters, social media, website	As needed, based on urgency	School leaders	Nominal	Information shared between school leadership, school staff, and community will be accurate and timely
<b>3.3</b> Distribute information to the school population with automated phone messages, social media, website	As needed, based on urgency	Central Office designee and school leadership teams	Nominal	Information shared between Central Office/schools and the community will be accurate and timely
<b>3.4</b> Employ other forms of distribution such as community update newsletters, press releases, coordination with media, marquees, reports	As needed	Central Office designee	Mailing and printing	Information shared between central office/schools and the community will be accurate and timely and distributed through best means possible





**Goal 4: Accurate and timely information is provided to both employees and families during crisis situations.**

Strategy	Timeframe	Person Responsible	Financial Considerations	Outcome
4.1 Review processes and procedures for communications during crisis and develop a crisis communications plan	December 2018	Public Information Office, Administrative Services, and Safe Schools subcommittee	None anticipated	Timeline and method for distributing information in crisis situations
4.2 Conduct a communications-based tabletop drill	2018-2019 school year	TBD based on the final communications plan and Leadership Team	Possible consultant fees, overtime, possibly grant-eligible	Critique and modify plan based on data and feedback collected based on exercise outcomes

