



**NEW LIGHT™
DIGITAL**

Building and Executing an Effective Communication Plan for Your School



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Schools and education-based businesses can benefit from outlining their stakeholders and setting a clear communication plan for how to reach them.

Here's how.

All types of schools require effective, clear communication strategies. Without clear communication, your reputation can suffer and with that, you can experience lessening community support.

Schools have many stakeholders, each requiring varying information. Without a plan, you might leave some of your stakeholders in the lurch without valuable information. Here's a look at the varying parties you might answer to with your communication plan.

- Students
- Parents
- Teachers and staff
- Unions, when applicable
- Policymakers
- Community/taxpayers
- Trustees/school board members for private schools



What Is a School Communication Plan?

Education plans help provide an outline of what you communicate, to who and when. Within your plan, you'll also outline the best channels for reaching your stakeholders and address how to handle issues that arise.

A major goal of creating a communication plan is to keep your audience engaged. You want parents to be involved in their child's education. Taxpayers need to vote for levies. Students need to know about events and projects.

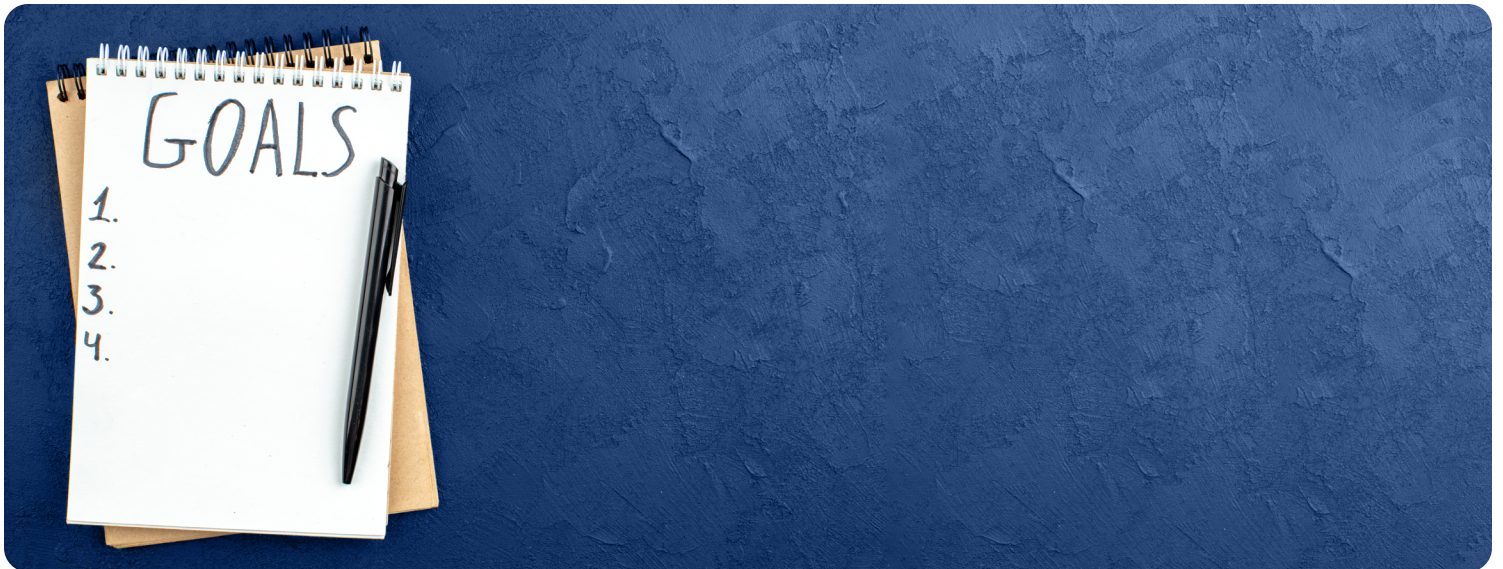
When drafting your communication plan, you can view it like a map. Without it, stakeholders will aimlessly wander without a clear direction of their best next steps. But with it, stakeholders, including your teachers and staff, will know where to go and when.



04 You'll Have Data to Measure Success

With an as-needed or ad-hoc communication strategy, you might have metrics in various systems or even be using systems that don't provide granular information about engagement with your communication.

But with a clear plan in place and the necessary tools to complete that plan, you'll have everything you need to ensure you're meeting your goals. To do that, you have to outline your goals, which is a part of building a communication strategy.



05 Improved Stakeholder Experience

By coordinating efforts and outlining whose role it is to communicate with who, you can improve the stakeholder experience. They'll receive timely communication and follow-ups as needed to know their role and how they can help your school. They won't feel like they are scrambling anymore or need to call your school for information regularly.



Steps to Creating a School Communication Plan

Armed with a clear understanding of what a school communication plan is and who benefits from it, you're ready to start the process of outlining how, when and why you'll communicate with stakeholders.

01 Outline the Plan's Purpose

In this section, you'll want to include a high-level summary of why you're putting a communication plan in place. This will be brief, but it will also outline specifics for why you're doing what you're doing.

Some reasons schools list for creating a communication strategy include the following.

- Market the school
- Outline back-to-school events
- Communicate school closures or schedule adjustments
- Add social media
- Enhance the school's online reputation
- Increase parent and community participation
- Engage leaders or unions
- Outline a crisis communication plan
- Communicate change in school policy or boundaries



04 Outline Your Objectives

Make it clear what you hope to gain by engaging in this new communication strategy. Generally, this should include 3-5 goals or objectives that are measurable, such as an increase on the parental survey from a 6 on a 10 scale to an 8 for effective communication. Or a 10 percent reduction in parent phone calls about special events or field trips.



05 Detail Who Your Audience Is

Your audience will likely have many segments, including the stakeholders listed above. This should include stakeholders that will be directly impacted by this plan, especially employees and teachers. Outline what you want your audience to have a better understanding of once this plan is in place.

06 Explain the Communication Channels You'll Use

Digital communication has opened the door for many new communication methods. But with that comes some challenges in knowing who is in charge of what and what messages are appropriate for each channel.

Communication Planning and Assistance

Building a communication strategy is challenging no matter the type of organization you oversee. But because schools and education-based businesses often have a host of stakeholders, it's even more challenging.

New Light Digital is a skilled digital marketing and communication agency with experts on the team ready to help make your communication strategy a success. We can help you evaluate your existing communication methods and build a strategy that engages stakeholders and simplifies your workload. Schedule a free consultation now.

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