



Marketing and Communications Plan

Office of Communications and
Marketing

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COMPREHENSIVE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM

In 2017, Detroit Public Schools Community District implemented a new strategic plan for rebuilding Detroit's Public Schools titled – Blueprint 2020. To better serve students and families and align with the goals of the Superintendent and School Board, Blueprint 2020 presented a new mission, vision, core values and priorities. Blueprint 2020 is the foundation for initiatives that lead to raising student achievement, transforming culture, serving the whole child, hiring the best staff and being responsible stewards in every way possible. The DPSCD Marketing Plan is designed to support the strategic plan through 2020 to change and align perceptions with the real work that is occurring in our schools throughout Detroit.

GOAL

In alignment with Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD)'s Blueprint 2020, the DPSCD Marketing Plan will position this district as a public education organization providing a new approach to the delivery of instruction, under the governance of the locally elected seven-member board and appointed Superintendent, that will educate and empower every student, in every community, every day to build a stronger Detroit.

OBJECTIVES

- Transform the perception of DPSCD as a competitive and viable public education choice for all students in Detroit through a strategic and meaningful rebranding.
- Raise awareness of DPSCD's core values and priorities and empower parents to become advocates for their students' success.
- Develop clear and consistent core messages that support and promote Blueprint 2020 through duplicative, simplistic and creative campaigns conveyed through earned media, advertising, social media and public relations initiatives.
- Establish a communications rubric of practice and measures as a foundation for improving communications in the following areas: internal, parent/family and marketing/branding.
- Implement and maintain an integrative system to manage image and messages at every level of interaction of all District programs and initiatives to achieve strategic consistency.
- Improve stakeholder satisfaction through consistent and clear messages on all district communication's platforms.

ORGANIZATIONAL ASSUMPTIONS

The key assumptions used to inform the DPSCD Marketing Plan are based on results from strategic planning focus groups, results from branding and marketing focus groups, Family and Community Engagement Surveys, and other research. These assumptions are:

- DPSCD is failing; however, that is not a reflection on teacher talent and student ability.
- DPSCD can do better communicating internally and externally. There is plenty of "good news" but it is "never" shared. Parents, teachers and students feel uninformed of programs, services, and processes. They want two-way communication mechanisms. There is lack of a shared district unified message.

- DPSCD has a tarnished reputation across the city, state and nation as being under-performing, unsafe and poorly governed.
- The newly elected board and superintendent are active listeners and they are changing the District, however their practices are not penetrating the organization consistently and at scale.
- DPSCD does not pay its teachers a fair wage, therefore the ability to attract new teachers is difficult.
- The communications department is emerging and has yet to become an established department.

RECOMMENDED TARGET AUDIENCES

DPSCD audiences/stakeholders are defined as:

Internal Stakeholders:

- School Board
- District employees and staff
- Principals
- Teachers
- Non-Instructional Employees and contractors who work with schools

External Stakeholders:

- Students
- Parents
- Community/Business/Civic Members
- Clergy
- Elected Officials
- Media
- Potential new families, students and employees

Influencers:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • Alumni | • Universities/Colleges |
| • Business/Civic/Faith-based Leaders | • Media |
| • Michigan Delegation | • Coalition of Union Leaders/Members |
| • Detroit Delegation | • Taxpayers (county, city, state) |

KEY MESSAGES

“There’s a simple rule: You say it again, and then again and again and again and again, and about the time that you’re absolutely sick of saying it is about the time that your target audience has heard it for the first time.”

— Frank Luntz

The Office of Communication and Marketing will draft key messages to support the district’s narrative utilizing several different message structures to reach our audience members. Depending on the placement and context, the message may have a variation according to a specific audience, however the message will always be in alignment with the strategic plan to ensure that it is clear, concise and consistent.

A sample Point, Message, Support, Action structure is indicated below:

Point	Message	Support	Action
Detroit students are talented	Students in Detroit have demonstrated through hard work and effort; they can compete and win. Our students have been recognized locally, regionally and nationally in various competitions. We need to recognize that with the proper support and instructions, all students have an opportunity to do great things. There are more than 50,000 students who attend DPSCD and there is an opportunity awaiting them all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each year more than (data point) students are accepted to college and universities • There are top performing students in each school. • DPSCD alumni are successful leaders throughout the community such as rap artist Big Sean, Greentown partner, Marvin Beatty, Journalist/Anchor Jemele Hill 	Support our students by providing robust summer internship opportunities.

A sample Claim, Fact, Example structure is indicated below:

Claim	Fact	Example

<p>Students first (DPSCD Core Value)</p>	<p>Students come first when DPSCD makes academic and operational decisions.</p>	<p>The Board and Dr. Vitti understands the importance of having a certified, qualified teacher in front of every classroom. To close the teacher shortage gap, the Board and Superintendent have worked to ensure teachers receive equitable pay and opportunities for advancement. Not only did they receive a 7 percent pay increase over 3-years, they will now have restored pay and be recognized for previous work experience. In addition, teachers will have an opportunity for more robust professional development aligned to Standards and clear pathways to leadership positions.</p> <p>Progress is being made, this time last year DPSCD saw a decrease in teacher vacancies – which were approximately 275 in May 2017 and are currently at 190 – while adding 250 additional classrooms with the return of the Education Achievement Authority schools.</p>
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APPROACH

Since the District emerged from emergency management to local control, it endured a complete name change under the state’s education reform legislation. The image and branding was never established for the “new” district. Historically, the marketing efforts were geared toward creating robust campaigns to stop the enrollment bleed, address on-going crisis or transition to the next emergency manager (every 18 months for the past decade). The action of communicating and marketing was reactive vs. proactive.

The District Marketing Plan will establish a more comprehensive and strategically proactive approach as it is aligned with the 3-year District strategic plan, Blueprint 2020. DPSCD is the largest public school district in Detroit and in Michigan, with more than 100 schools, including elementary (K-5), combination (K-8), middle schools, high schools and technical center schools for more than 50,000 students. The District Marketing Plan will help inform and shape behaviors and actions to change how public education is viewed in a highly saturated charter school climate and culture, challenge the notion that charter schools outperform public education, and demonstrate the district’s ability to be competitive and stable under local control and governed by a superintendent with a proven track record.

Branding and marketing DPSCD will symbolize and generate a culture and climate of change. The District Marketing Plan will establish a foundation for trust, sustainability and progress through effective communication strategies. The District Marketing Plan will create real value for DPSCD through clear interpretation of policy, clear communication of a balanced budget, reflection of positive teaching and learning experiences through District programs and initiatives, responsiveness to concerns and crisis, and frequent update around student progress. This plan will support key initiatives, programs and district departments and their function areas. For example, key messages and brand elements will be developed to attract certified teachers, support enrollment efforts, community and parent engagement and spread good news.

The Office of Communications and Marketing will also support the production of signature district events such as Teacher Development Day, the Educator of the Year Gala, the Back-to-School Expo, the First Day/Week of School and Count Days.

Tools will be used to convey messages to desired audience members in the most appropriate and timely manner. These tools include: email, automated calls, social media, written letters and memos, newsletters, face-to-face meetings, the website and media.

In addition, media relations will be used to convey key messages and raise awareness around programs and initiatives that are beneficial to our students, parents, teachers and other stakeholder groups. Media relations will be leveraged to debunk myths, tout milestones and address challenges.

The challenge will be to re-establish DPSCD as an organization that is the best public education choice for families. It is important to memorialize the legacy and its rich history. However, it is also important to be progressive and competitive as 21st century realities manifest with the advancement of technology and the niche channels used to convey and receive information.

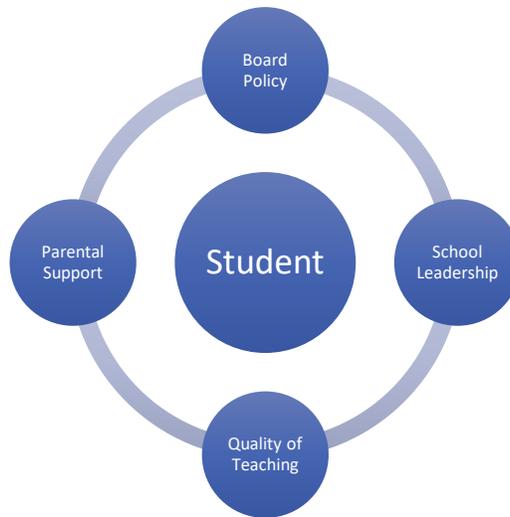
Key to the implementation of the District Marketing Plan will be to establish a baseline in 2018-2019 of buy-in from all key stakeholders, from Central Office employees to students. Internal ownership, especially by district and school leadership, is essential to organizational adoption. If this plan appears to be another “campaign or PR stunt” the goals will not be fully realized.

IMPACT

The District Marketing Plan will directly impact:

- **Talent** – through branding and communication, the plan will support recruitment and retention of *Exceptional Talent*.
- **Culture** – through consistent and clear messaging to target audiences, the plan will transform the District’s culture. Students, families, community and staff will feel connected and respected.
- **Enrollment** – through strategic targeted dissemination of key messages, parents will become acutely aware of the benefits offered by our schools through the District’s new curriculum, programs and initiatives.
- **Community Support** – parents and students will begin to feel a sense of community and ownership through key messages supported by actions. In addition, as progress is made, more support will build around public education and its impact on students.

Communications and Marketing activities will create real value for DPSCD by focusing on students first. In all District decision making practices and actions on every level, key stakeholders will begin to make a direct connection to student outcomes.



TOOLS AND TACTICS

There are several tools and tactics that will be determined based upon the needs surrounding various key district initiatives and programs. More details are outlined under the branding work, family engagement and internal communications summaries in the following pages. Below are a few staple tools that will be utilized in everyday functions to deliver key messages, share good news and manage crisis.

Media Relations – Earned Media

- Student Achievement – Seek success stories aligned with district initiatives to pitch to media utilizing data, board initiatives, anecdotal and emotional tools to tell compelling stories. Expose stakeholders to stories through social media pitching and traditional print/press release/media advisory tools.
- Transformative Culture – Engage the media on branding and identity opportunities; enrollment initiatives that impact the community i.e. immunization, one-stop-enrollment opportunities, enhanced customer service, etc.
- Whole-child commitment – Illustrate the whole-child commitment through anecdotal stories, data and policy to drive media coverage that can influence funding and procurement of resources.
- Exceptional Talent – Highlight teacher success stories of triumph, professional development and challenges overcome through storytelling. Leverage the Teacher Tuesday program and monthly themes to share their work through media relations.
- Media advisories – prepare advisories to correspond to compelling news following board meetings, initiative announcements and related district milestones. Advise media of student and parent accomplishments. Seek visual and storytelling aids.
- Educational trends – Connect media with subject matter experts related to education reform, policy and best practices/benchmarks as the District identifies such opportunities.
- Develop and implement an editorial calendar to be used for both media relations and social media outreach that aligns with Blueprint 2020.

Social Media

Each day has a theme corresponding to one of the five priorities in the strategic plan. The District will utilize Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. These channels can be measured and evaluated effortlessly with industry tools. We will leverage social media to accomplish the following:

- Discover and build relationships with influencers who can amplify our message within the target audience.
- Partner with influencers and brands to leverage and grow our following and community buy-in.
- Expose our audience members to key messages through social media campaigns to promote hiring fairs, enrollment initiatives, parent and student resources, opportunities, teacher spotlights and student achievement milestones.

Advertising

Strategic placement of paid ads will be implemented throughout various media channels to promote key messages to target audience members. Outlets below will be considered/utilized:

- Radio
- Television
- Digital Ads
- Print Media
- Billboards
- Social Media Channels
- Community Newsletters
- Cable TV
- Transportation

RUBRIC

The Office of Communications and Marketing used the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) Rubrics of Practice and Suggested Measures (2014) as a guide to audit the current function areas of the department and will continue to use it as a guide to measure and evaluate this plan.

The NSPRA created a comprehensive foundation and framework in which to effectively operate the function of communications and marketing in a school district from the executive level to the grassroots school level. They also provide ongoing support through audits, resources and professional development to attain our goals.

The programs associated with the four function areas are based on the Research, Analyze, Communicate, Evaluate (RACE) model of communication.

The NSPRA's Rubric of Communications is comprised of four function areas:

1. Comprehensive Professional Communication Program
2. Internal Communications
3. Parent/Family Communications
4. Marketing/Branding the District/Schools

Below is a brief overview of the details outlined in the NSPRA rubric to conduct a baseline audit in the fall 2018-2019 to begin accurately measuring the four function areas. It is the goal of the Office of Communications to move from emerging to established.

- An emerging level indicates that a department can execute basic functions to maintain district communications needs.
- An established level indicates that a department has a strategic plan in place and key stakeholders are aware of key messages and familiar with tools.
- An exemplary level indicates that a strategic plan is effectively impacting the behaviors and actions of stakeholders and all goals are being met.

There are clear metrics for each function area. The Office of Communications and Marketing will finalize its audit by August 15, 2018 and align the plan as set forth in this document with the following measurement:

Function Area #1 – Comprehensive professional communications program

1. Stakeholder ranking on communication in the following areas: a.) student performance, b.) school finances, c.) accessibility to school leaders.
2. Percentage of stakeholders agreeing the Board of Education makes good decisions that improve student achievement.
3. Percentage of stakeholders agreeing that DPSCD is trustworthy/does a good job of building trust between district and stakeholders.
4. How well DPSCD keeps stakeholders informed.
5. Percentage of stakeholders agreeing they receive information they want/need from DPSCD.

Function Area #2 – Branding and Marketing

1. Stakeholders have a connection to the District's brand
2. How well DPSCD ensures staff and leadership own and promote the brand.
3. Percentage of stakeholders agreeing the brand supports the strategic plan and promises are being kept.
4. Percentage of stakeholders comfortable with sharing the brand and serving as unsolicited ambassadors.
5. Stakeholders agree that the brand is effectively marketed, and key messages are resonating.

Function Area #3 – Internal Communications

1. Percentage of employees feeling adequately informed about district/breaking news/non-emergency news.
2. Percentage of employees feeling optimistic about the future of the district.
3. Percentage of employees aware of/reliance on key sources of information.
4. Percentage of administrators agreeing DPSCD has effective process for making group decisions and solving problems.
5. Percentage of employees agreeing there is an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect in their school.

Function Area #4 – Parent/Family Communications

1. Parent awareness of key resources available to them by the District.
2. How well the District keeps parents/guardians informed.
3. How responsive the District is to parent/guardian requests.
4. Percentage of parents feeling valued as a partner in their child's education.
5. Parent awareness of District strategic plan and connection to overall brand image and message.

By establishing, “one sound, one voice” DPSCD can begin using a uniformed narrative around the work of implementing Blueprint 2020. Programs and initiatives will be properly branded, and messages will accompany visual aides to help parents and students identify with key points.

BRANDING AND MARKETING

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A New Brand, New Targets and A Strong Commitment to Connecting with Detroit’s Families

In the fall of 2018, the Office of Communications began a districtwide rebranding effort that would ultimately initiate and support a formal communications and marketing plan designed to strengthen connections with all school communities in the City of Detroit. Working closely with the Superintendent, the School Board, and local advertising agencies, the district is adopting a new brand that will mirror the district’s commitment to students, parents, educators and the community. This new brand will reflect that Detroit Public Schools Community District owns the origination and future success of K-12 public education in Detroit.

The new DPSCD brand initiative includes:

- leveraging and analyzing internal and external stakeholder’s data and sentiments;
- integrating a key student voice component and internships;
- updating the district’s visual identity, slogan and tag line approved by the Superintendent and School Board;
- establishing style guidelines for internal and external use;
- coordinating launch activities to generate excitement and ownership; and
- ongoing yearlong tactics and campaigns focused on brand promotion and key messaging to support the district’s new strategic plan (tied to mission, vision and consumable high level goals), enrollment, and teacher recruitment/retainment.

Once the adoption of a new brand is in place and launch efforts to increase buy-in accelerates at the highest levels, the focus will shift to specific tactical marketing plans based on key district targets. These tactics, if aligned with the new DPSCD brand and messaging, will effectively deliver results via consistent communications and strategic positioning, placement, and frequency. By adopting the new brand, internal stakeholders should be able to better focus on meeting their performance goals and results versus trying to recreate branding for every initiative.

Being faithful to brand identity and messaging during year one is essential; this is how brand equity builds momentum and trust and realigns misconceptions with today’s actualities. All variances to the new DPSCD brand will diminish its equity over time and will hinder the ability to change old views that relate to negative perceptions. Once the parent brand is entrenched, developing subordinate brands for programs and services can be developed

if/when they follow the district's strict style guide procedures. Senior leadership must instill adoption at every level.

BRAND IMPLEMENTATION

The following high level phased approach outlines key activities from kick-off through implementation. DPSCD Office of Communications will be the leader in project management, delivery, and gaining final approvals via the Superintendent and School Board. For subsections of the general plan, external agency support will be integrated for the development of conceptual/final brand recommendations and coordinating launch tactics

Phase I – Research & Data Gathering

- Timeframe: September 2017 – December 2017
- Milestone: (1) Provide Key Conclusions & Guiding Insights summary to Superintendent

Phase II – Brand Development

- Timeframe: January 2018 – May 2018
- Milestone: (2) Superintendent to review conceptual brands and make recommendations; (3) Superintendent and key district leadership participate in preliminary pitch of refined brand iterations, launch plan, and provide final recommendations.

Phase III – School Board Presentation and Approval

- Timeframe: May 2018
- Milestone: (4) Final recommendations are provided to Superintendent and School Board during board workshop or special meeting. Superintendent provides recommendation and School Board approves.

Phase IV – Launch & Ongoing Tactics

- Timeframe: May – June 2018
- Milestone: (5) review final logistics with Superintendent; invite School Board and key community to dignitaries
- Milestone: (6) integrate the brand throughout the district and community.

Phase V – Training

- Timeframe: June 2018 – December 2018
- Milestone: (7) Training all employees on the usage of the new brand elements and creating internal ambassadors. The ultimate goal is full adoption of the DPSCD brand by all stakeholders.

AGENCY SUPPORT

To expand the capacity of departmental needs, DPSCD communications will rely on services from agency support to ensure a well-communicated rebrand launch that encompasses feedback and input from various stakeholder groups.

Tactics and Tools:

- Brand Review/Qualitative Analysis

- Message & Placement Review (Initial Launch)
- Launch Plan Review & Community/Grassroots Engagement Support
- Prep - Data/Research Review, Leadership Interview
- Conceptual and Final Brand Design
 - Delivery of DPSCD Brand Style Guide
- Launch Planning/Event Coordination & Management

Brand Key Message and Placement Planning:

- Message Development & Placement Planning
 - Advertisement
 - Collateral material
 - TV
 - Radio
 - Social media
 - Web
 - Billboards
 - Public transportation

Additional Tactics and Tools

School-based Marketing Toolkit

- The Office of Communications and Marketing will develop a comprehensive school-based marketing toolkit to support student and parent engagement, and enrollment efforts. The toolkit will prompt uniformity, concise and consistent messaging under the school brand.

School-based Good News Ambassadors

- The principal will designate an employee to serve as the communications and marketing liaison. The designee will maintain the school calendar and convey activities to the communications and marketing team. Information will be used to place on social media outlets, analyze for media relations opportunities or enrollment/retention efforts.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Internal communication does not refer only to those few “official” channels of communication within DPSCD, such as internal newsletters, notice boards or staff meetings. It is not a process that goes from the Board to the Superintendent to the schools to the intern. Rather, internal communication refers to the almost constant interactions within DPSCD that convey meaning in alignment with Blueprint 2020. Therefore, internal communication encompasses both overt communication like meetings, memos, messages etc., and more casual forms of communication such as gossip, pleasantries and body language.

Internal communication is significant in any organization because it is the building block of its culture. The organizational culture is the atmosphere of DPSCD based on its values, mission and work processes. When every member of DPSCD holds the same values, understands the work policies and procedures in the same way, and is focused on the same mission, the organizational culture promotes much more effective use of resources than under a culture that is left to everyone to interpret independently.

Effective internal communication can ensure that all members of DPSCD are working towards a common goal and assisting each other effectively.

When DPSCD is communicating effectively with its internal stakeholders, whether they are employees, management or volunteers, it develops a cohesive culture where everyone is focused on the same goals and has the same objectives. By working within a cohesive culture, stakeholders can work more efficiently together and collaborate more effectively. Some specific benefits that can result from effective internal communication include:

- Employees can make more decisions independently, they will have the tools and knowledge to know the "right" decisions in line with the Blueprint 2020.
- Staff can identify better with the goals, mission and procedures of DPSCD, which can result in a sense of "making a difference" and increase effort and efficiency.
- Departments share more resources and information resulting in less duplication of work and stronger impact.
- Reducing day-to-day conflict. Although effective internal communication may not bring about these results for DPSCD, putting forth an aligned effort can go a long way towards building our brand.

DPSCD is still in transition. With the launch of the new brand, it presents an opportunity to overly communicate Blueprint 2020 and lead employees, managers and teachers to mirror what they hope the external audience will see and experience. It is an opportunity to establish ownership, redefine the district's culture and become "one district".

Although more research is required, informal research reveals the following:

- Employees are not aware of any established culture.
- Employees are somewhat aware of systems and processes but are still in "survival mode".
- Employees are nervous and somewhat apprehensive to buy into Blueprint 2020.
- Employees are seeking a source of attachment and belonging, the desire to establish and adopt a culture is apparent.
- Employees desperately need consistency and a reliable, trusted source of information.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS GOAL(S):

- Employees will feel informed in a timely manner and able to articulate key messages.
- Employees will feel optimistic about the future of DPSCD.
- Leadership will feel the positive of processes when collaborating and communicating with other departments.
- Employees will feel mutual trust and respect as a result of effective communication.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES:

- To ensure that individuals/departments within DPSCD have access to all the information they require to perform at their optimum levels and operate strategically in alignment with Blueprint 2020 while carrying out their normal duties.
- To ensure that individuals/departments within DPSCD communicate their needs, concerns and ideas in a safe and secure environment that reflects trust and respect.
- Ensure that all staff is aware of DPSCD's vision, mission and values by December 2018, and of its key developments and initiatives for the 2018-2019 school year.
- Ensure that all staff is aware of DPSCD's communication channels by September 2018 and can engage in two-way communication methods i.e. submit an inquiry to the superintendent, submit information for publication on the web or social media, submit information and get confirmation of any good news stories, ideas or concerns.
- Ensure employees are aware of key systems and processes to help them become more efficient and accountable for their body of work.

The communications team will develop key messages in alignment with Blueprint 2020 that corresponds to the new brand that conveys the District's mission, vision and core values. These messages will be incorporated in all correspondence and usage will be encouraged and supported through various tools and tactics. In addition, as systems and processes are implemented, employees will need to be made aware, given support and training. In addition, employees will be provided with updates around new policies and their rights and responsibilities associated with the employee handbook.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS IMPLEMENTATION

Tactics and Tools

In-Person Communication –

- All-Staff Meetings – the Office of Communications and Marketing will support the District in two school year all-staff meetings – 1) an opening of schools message and 2) a state of the schools message mid school year. Dr. Vitti will be provided a platform to address the staff at the beginning of the school year to set expectations and share the vision, mission and core values. In addition, the Superintendent will address all staff in the second semester to provide a status update of the District.
- Host Internal Communications Task Force meetings where representatives from each department meet monthly with the Office of Communications and Marketing to discuss needs, debrief and plan support around initiatives and programs for the editorial calendar.
- *Chats with the Supt.* – the Office of Communications and Marketing will maintain a calendar for the Superintendent to host intimate discussions with various employee and stakeholder groups.
 - Principals
 - Students – High School and Middle School Leadership Groups
 - Parents – PTA leadership meetings, dads and grandparents
 - Teachers – National Board Certified, Master Teachers and Special Education Teachers/Para Professionals
 - Community Stakeholders – Examples include 482 Forward, the Brightmoor Alliance, NAACP Education Committee

- *Speakers Bureau* – the Office of Communications and Marketing will promote the DPSCD Speakers Bureau to provide the community with opportunities to stay informed about K-12 public education, ask questions and provide input as deemed appropriate.
 - Subject matter experts:
 - Dr. Vitti
 - Members of the Board
 - Members of the Cabinet (as directed by Dr. Vitti)
- Once a year, the communication team will organize a half-day workshop where staff can discuss Blueprint 2020 as it relates to their work. Staff outside the main office to be included via teleconferencing.

Recognition Programs –

- Board Meeting Recognition – The Board will recognize employees, parents and students each month for manifesting a core value through action or achievement. The Office of Communications and Marketing will develop a formal system and process to allow employees to make nominations for consideration by the Superintendent.
- Teacher Recognition – Teachers are our most valuable employees and should be recognized for their work.
 - The District will develop a plan and implement *Teacher Tuesdays*. Teachers will be nominated and recognized each week by the Office of Communications and Marketing. Teachers who win will receive recognition through the District’s various communication channels and promotion through earned media. Various community stakeholders will be approached to offer gifts for our winners. In addition, district staff will be invited to visit schools and recognize teachers and support staff.
 - *Educator of the Year* – A formal gala will be planned each year to recognize teachers, principals, assistant principals and support staff for their relentless dedication, effort and manifestation of the core values and priorities through their work and results.
- Employee Recognition – Central Office staff are often comprised of leadership team members who are not recognized for their efforts. The District will work to identify an appropriate recognition program to boost morale and show appreciation for their work. This could include peer-to-peer acknowledgements that accumulate and can be redeemed for prizes such as, lunch with the superintendent, or a trip with students to a cultural passport experience.
- Employee Discounts – A program to establish merit in the community for District employees to receive discounts on goods and services. In addition, this could coincide with employee recognition to include free/reduced tickets for sporting events and entertainment.

Printed Communication –

- Staff Handbook – The Office of Communications and Marketing will support the Office of Human Resources to distribute the updated employee handbook. It is a good tactic to ensure that staff are aware of the District’s expectations by communicating policies and operating procedures and to ensure that staff are clear on their rights, entitlements and responsibilities, and can help ensure a smooth relationship between staff and leadership.

- Style guide – The style guide will provide clear direction on usage for the new brand and identity elements. This will support employees becoming empowered and equitable ambassadors of the brand.

Electronic Communication –

- DPSCD Daily News – This internal news source will serve as the District’s “good news” guide. The Office of Communications will redesign the Daily to align with Blueprint 2020 and new brand/ new name will become *DPSCD: Rise Up*. Each message will have a clear line to a priority or core value. The new brand will enable the team to utilize visual aides to help make the connection to Blueprint 2020. The Rise Up E-zine will include a section from human resources highlighting and explaining new policies and/or procedure to staff.

Each week will include a profile of a district department, a designated department ambassador (Communications Task Force Member) to include an update on their department’s initiatives or a profile of resources or skills offered that impact employees.

As teachers and employees are recognized, employees will look forward to sharing their good news with colleagues and community partners. In addition, schools will begin to use this to integrate with their individual marketing plans and web sites.

- Superintendent Podcast – The Office of Communications and Marketing will launch a podcast featuring updates from the Office of the Superintendent. This channel will reflect current initiatives, district news and topics that are beneficial for all stakeholders. The podcast will feature special guests and stakeholder topics that will be solicited through in-person communication opportunities.
- Staff Briefing Document – This emailed internal briefing document will be used to convey important messages, reminders and updates to staff. Employees will be encouraged to use this as an active resource to stay informed and engaged. Perhaps to keep employees engaged, we create a section called the *Wall of Debate*, employees will be invited to ask questions and await responses from the first employee with the correct answer. This can create team spirit and two-way communication. A process to filter questions and provide answers will need to be established.

NEW DISTRICT/SCHOOL WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT AND LAUNCH

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Detroit Public Schools Community District, its Office of Communications and Marketing and IT, have partnered with a web development and hosting firm with applicable K12 experience to create, develop and assist in the implementation of a new website platform to support the school district’s primary site, individual school sites, and hosted site solutions for teachers.

In the fall of 2017, the Office of Communications and Marketing started the rebranding process designed to strengthen continuity with all school communities in the City of Detroit. Branding efforts will be final in the first quarter of 2018. As a result, DPSCD must also strengthen its digital presence and connections with students, parents, teachers, and the Detroit community. Working closely with district leadership, the chosen web development and hosting company will help DPSCD formulate a new web strategy, implement an effective content management system, and a mobile application that are accessible by all desktop and mobile devices. Simple access for all users, the ability to locate information, and increasing use by school and district stakeholders must be the primary driving forces behind the strategy. In addition to replicating and representing the District’s new brand visually, best practices to promote smart and consistent navigation and efficient options to post and update content by district and school content managers are required. This new platform must comply with all federal and state web accessibility requirements.

Conceptual and final design, navigation, applicable content migration, and launch is estimated to take approximately three (3) months from the execution of contract. A desired launch timeframe is August 15, 2018.

OBJECTIVES

- Create a highly usable website, designed for responsive use across all devices and browsers, and organized in a consistent manner allowing viewers to easily find information via an efficient navigation layout and search engine tool.
- Convey the organizational culture consistent with the DPSCD brand.
- Provide training and support services to a variety of DPSCD end users and maintainers initially and ongoing.
- Once design and testing of conceptual sites are complete, consolidate and migrate existing content as approved in advance by DPSCD to the new platform.

WEB IMPLEMENTATION

Phase I – Research & Data Gathering

- Timeframe: April – May 2018
- Milestone: (1) Establish a process to communicate to relevant departments for audit and migration of content.

Phase II – Design and Usability

- Timeframe: April – May 2018
- Milestone: (2) Superintendent to review conceptual brands and make recommendations; (3) Superintendent and key district leadership participate in preliminary review of website functionality from the user end for Home and all related nodes for Central Office and department content; school options, board options and access for relevant materials.

Phase III – Content Migration

- Timeframe: April – June 2018
- Milestone: (4) Content is migrated and tested for end usability.

Phase IV – Site Deployment and Training

- Timeframe: June – August 2018
- Milestone: (5) School and District web managers identified, trained and activated.

Communication and IT will continue to support web managers through training, monitoring back-end systems and reporting, and provide updates as dictated by compliance and technological needs.

PARENT FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Communicating the District's and school level key messages are imperative to gaining trust and buy-in from students and families. The Office of Communications and Marketing will work closely with the Office of Family and Community Engagement, Curriculum and Instruction and Enrollment to align key messages with programs and initiatives. Using data and informal research, this plan will be able to accomplish the following goals:

- Families and students are aware of key resources available to them by the District and Schools.
- Families and students will feel that their voice is heard and concerns are efficiently addressed.
- Families and students will be advocates and ambassadors for the District's Strategic Plan, initiatives and programs.
- Parents will feel valued as a partner in their child's education

OBJECTIVES

- Develop and communicate tools to be used by all families to openly communicate with district staff and school level leaders.
- Develop a toolkit for families to learn three key messages that they will use to convey the District's goals, priorities and core values.
- Support the Parent Academy initiative through frequent and consistent call to action messages, testimonials and updates as needed.
- Support and celebrate student achievement by sharing good news stories, communicating resources and information that will help them at school and in the community.

TACTICS AND TOOLS

Community Newsletter – Develop a monthly community newsletter to make key announcements, alert of deadlines and action items and reminders of upcoming events as related to Parent Academy, Board meetings, policy updates and available resources.

Uniformed Flyers – Develop a database for each school roster to implement a secure protocol that enables digital flyer distribution via email. Parents will be served digital information at their fingertips. This is way for them to receive school and district level information on their mobile devices or view information parent resource areas located in our schools.

Updated website – The updated website will serve as portal of information that will be easily navigated by our parents and families. Each school will have a uniformed website and the ability to maintain it at the school level. This allows schools to tailor information for their family's needs.

Principal Events – The Office of Communications will work with school principals to develop marketing plans to target family needs. These events can be themed for personalization such as Donuts with Dads, Back to School with your child, Parent Teacher Conference enhancements, Talent shows and Resource workshops in collaboration with FACE and Enrollment.

Book Study – The Office of Communications and Marketing will work with Deputy Superintendent Iranetta Wright to organize a book study utilizing “Why School Communication Matters” by Kitty Porterfield and Meg Carnes. This selection was written by public relations professionals for school leaders to help them understand why communication is important, how to communicate effectively to gain trust and buy-in, when communication is most important, how to handle crucial conversations and crisis events and who needs to be engaged in the conversation. The selection is available digitally.

EVALUATION

Utilizing the NSPRSA rubric, the Office of Communications and Marketing will evaluate each function area at the end of each quarter. We will identify best-in-class or superior performers and compare our performance, identify gaps and set new targets by developing and implementing improvement plans as needed.