An Engaged Community: Social Media Strategies for Superintendents

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Agenda

• Social Media & Community Relations
• Strategic Communications
• Operational Communications
• Tactical Messaging
Situational Awareness:

“The perception of elements in the environment within a volume of time and space, the comprehension of their meaning, and the projection of their status in the near future”

- Micah Endsley, 1995
Strategic Communications should reflect a clear message that:

- Is connected to a comprehensive educational plan (e.g., CDEP)
- Develops a common operating picture
- Districtwide “memes?”
Strategic Communications should follow a Board approved policy that:

• Defines Official District Use, Professional/Instructional Use and Personal Use of Social Media
• Addresses Privacy Considerations
• References Implementation
• Sample at http://tinyurl.com/aec3krl
What Social Media Platform is Best for Strategic Communications?

• Hit them where they ARE
• Superintendent’s Blog example at http://pritchro.edublogs.org/
• District Website
• Do not be on every platform
When responding via Social Media in the Strategic Information Sphere Consider:

- Survey Tools (e.g., Survey Monkey) embedded in Facebook [http://tinyurl.com/6uut74a](http://tinyurl.com/6uut74a)
- Video “Fireside Chats” impact versus “backpack letter” – viral or static?
- Face-to-Face Invitation – Redirect
- Referendum Information
Operational-level Communications should reflect a clear message that:

• Is synchronized with the vision and mission of the BOE and Superintendent
• Puts into action the strategic plans
• Is proactive – shapes, sustains, and is task oriented
Operational-level Communications should follow administrative regulations:

- That are aligned with BOE policy and legal considerations
- That include a release form for student interviews, photographs, and recordings
What Social Media Platform is Best for Operational-level Communications?

- “Calendaring” feature on Facebook
- School-building Website (link to Pinterest)
- Do not be on every platform
When responding via Social Media in the Operational-level Information Sphere Consider:

- Calendaring of school events embedded in Facebook [http://tinyurl.com/6uut74a](http://tinyurl.com/6uut74a)
- Periodic recognition of items of interest to the community (2-way)
- Face-to-Face Invitation – bad news multiplies exponentially in cyberspace
Tactical messaging is a direct response on a Social Media platform. It should reflect a clear message that:

• Is accurate, non-argumentative and free of anger or defensiveness
• Neutralizes misinformation
• Reinforces positive perceptions
Tactical-level Communications should clearly articulate and enforce an “acceptable use guidelines” expressly stated on the site:

- It is not generally a good idea to delete user comments, unless these are in violation of acceptable use.

What Social Media Platform is Best for Tactical-level Communications?

- Synthesize “school messenger” auto-dial with social media and website verification
- Newspaper “blogger” response management
- Mobile computing and creating digital content “on-the-fly” (e.g., Hootesuite, FB for iOS apps)
When responding via Social Media in the Tactical-level Information Sphere Consider:

• Acknowledge the problem, point with pride, hopeful for the future
• Face-to-Face *Intervention* – deescalate angry stakeholders in a less open forum
• Strictly enforce acceptable use – do not tolerate abusive comments
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