



THE MAIN STREET ACADEMY

DISCOVERY SESSION
INSIGHTS | RECOMMENDATIONS | IMPACT

Prepared by Flylight Creative

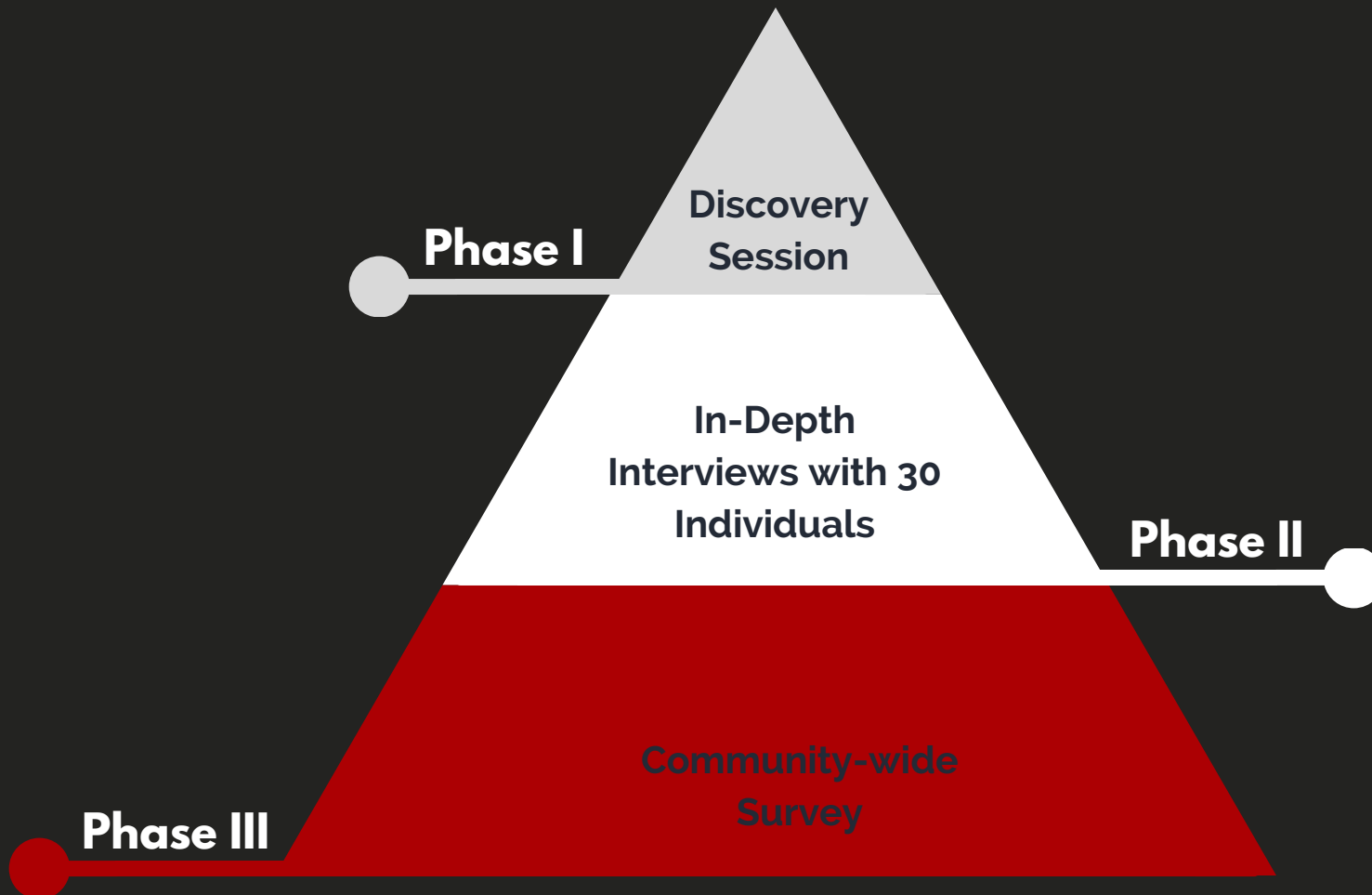
WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

In May 2018, a small but mighty group of The Main Street Academy administrators, parents and teachers participated in a Discovery Session facilitated by Flylight Creative.

During this experience, they thought critically and reflectively about the current state of the school's communications, imagined an ideal future of school communications, and built empathy for how other stakeholders are experiencing The Main Street Academy.

LISTENING TOUR

In an effort to improve TMSA's communications, we launched a Listening Tour. We want to learn from you! Speak up!



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KEEP READING TO
SEE WHAT WE
LEARNED!



DISCOVERY SESSION

MAY 2018: A baseline understanding of communication concerns, pain points and root causes.



IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

JUNE - JULY 2018: 30 in-depth interviews with TMSA community members for deeper insight into stakeholder experiences.



COMMUNITY SURVEY

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2018: Community-wide survey to gather qualitative and quantitative data, feedback and perspectives about communications.

WE'RE SUPER EXCITED ABOUT THIS PART.
CHIME IN!

DON'T FORGET

This report is not exhaustive of all communication concerns at TMSA. The point of view statements, insights and recommendations in this report only reflect information collected during the Discovery Session.

Yes!
We want to hear everyone's voice. There will be a opportunity for you to chime in, too!



*KEEP READING TO
FIND OUT WHEN.*

PARENTS

POINT OF VIEW STATEMENT 1:

Parents need to exchange information with TMSA in a way that is streamlined and convenient because parents feel overwhelmed and confused by the different communication channels available at TMSA.

POINT OF VIEW STATEMENT 2:

Parents need to understand all of the expectations that TMSA requires of their families and what their children need in order to be successful, because parents are receiving mixed messages causing them to feel overwhelmed, confused and worried that they are not adequately preparing their children to be successful at school.

POINT OF VIEW STATEMENT 3:

Parents need clearly defined processes for enrollment because many parents develop frustration with the ambiguity of the process, especially not understanding when they will know about acceptance and what comes next.

PARENTS

INSIGHTS

Parents experience ambiguity and anxiety throughout their TMSA experience, because they do not understand the enrollment and matriculation processes. Parents want the most up-to-date information from the school administration and teachers. Parents are having a hard time exchanging the information they need with teachers and administrators because they do not always know where to look for information or where to give information.

Many communications channels are used at TMSA. These channels can vary by grade level, academy, teacher or information type. Parents do not know which channel to use or check for the most-up-to-date information and sometimes find conflicting information on different channels. When a student enters a new grade-level, parents are unsure of what to expect and how to prepare their student for success.

Parents want to believe their child is fulfilled and prepared to participate in learning and extracurricular activities. Parents would like to feel at ease and proud of their choice/school when engaging with TMSA. They want to be up-to-date with the school's expectations and their child's needs. Parents would like to a clear outline of the matriculation experience to prepare them for their year ahead.

PARENTS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Create and implement one digital platform for school to parent communications. Ideally, this platform would allow for two-way communications, and simulate a "texting" experience, as most participants (teacher and staff) indicated that they communicate best through text.

Commit to one consistent form of print communications for school communications to parents or guardians who do not have access to technology.

Implement a software solution for integrated communications allowing quick updates, content relevant to parent concerns/needs, and mass communications.

Train PTO and parent leaders on communication channels and their primary purpose to empower parent leaders with the information they need to support other parents.

Create standard enrollment communications for academies that outline the enrollment process including documentation requested, dates, contact information, etc..

Revise parent handbook, including full calendar of school activities, parent expectations, uniform requirements, testing information, etc..

Develop comprehensive communications strategy around parent - teacher communications.

PARENTS

EXPECTED IMPACT OF RECOMMENDATIONS



SATISFACTION

Increased parent satisfaction. Parents are at ease and experience less anxiety from the TMSA experience.

ENGAGEMENT

Increase parent engagement and volunteering.

COLLAB

Increased parent-teacher collaboration for student success.

TEACHERS

POINT OF VIEW STATEMENT 1:

Teachers need clarity on expectations, messaging, and less ambiguity from administrators and parents, because they feel nervous, unsupported, confused and under-appreciated by both stakeholder groups causing teacher turnover.

POINT OF VIEW STATEMENT 2:

Teachers need clarity on standard communication policies and procedures from administrators, because they are using multiple platforms to accommodate requests from parents and administrators, which causes confusion between stakeholder groups and dissatisfaction with the employee experience.

POINT OF VIEW STATEMENT 3:

Teachers need advance notice of messaging to the TMSA community to prepare to notify their students and families appropriately, because teachers are not always able to answer the questions of parents and students due to a lack of information on their end.

TEACHERS

INSIGHTS

Teachers experience ambiguity from onboarding/orientation and throughout most of their experience as TMSA employees. Teachers feel as though there is not enough information or transparency. Teachers are often the first people parents reach out to for information or to clarify miscommunications.

Teachers are trying to please both parents and administrators, and often find themselves caught in the middle. This leads them to wonder if administration values or cares about their experience. This also causes teachers to feel judged, criticized, and unappreciated by parents. Teachers are not always clear or up-to-date on information, which also causes a rift in the teacher-parent relationship. Teachers also use many different platforms to communicate with staff and parents, by personal preference and compliance.

Teachers want to be viewed and respected as good teachers. They want to timely information and requests. Teachers aim to be effective communicators to parents, and want to know that they are doing this well. Teachers want to feel unified, supported, prepared, satisfied, and willing to go the extra mile.

TEACHERS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Collect more data and trends on teacher satisfaction and retention over time. (i.e. staff satisfaction survey, teacher interviews, teacher attrition study, etc.).

Train teachers on communication policies, procedures, and channels, as well as, implementation and operating within a streamlined communications structure.

Analyze onboarding/orientation/contract renewal communication and improve messaging, medium, and procedures. Provide teachers with an Employee Handbook for questions. (i.e. New Hire Manual and/or Employee Handbook).

Create and implement a standard communications calendar for administrators allowing admin to anticipate some communications to teachers, creating more transparency around the teacher experience.*

Inform teachers before informing parents to allow teachers time to review information, ask questions, and be prepared to respond to parents.

Develop strategies around parent-teacher and teacher-admin communications.*

Develop communications material for parents entering a new grade-level, establishing clear communications and expectations.

TEACHERS

EXPECTED IMPACT OF RECOMMENDATIONS



SATISFACTION

Increased teacher satisfaction, productivity and investment.

RETENTION

Increase teacher retention and acquisition.

COLLAB

Increased parent-teacher collaboration for student achievement.

ADMINISTRATORS

POINT OF VIEW STATEMENT 1:

Administrators need to communicate clearly and effectively with parents and teachers, because they want to keep the TMSA community informed and satisfied with their TMSA experience.

POINT OF VIEW STATEMENT 2:

Administrators need to spend less time creating communications and more time supporting other school operations or academics because administrators are spending a great deal of time creating weekly, monthly and recruitment marketing communications.

POINT OF VIEW STATEMENT 3:

Administrators need to create more capacity to execute on school responsibilities, because they are spending a lot of time fielding communications to the appropriate source.

ADMINISTRATORS

INSIGHTS

Administrators are communicating a lot of information with teachers, parents and community members. They are inundated with communication, and their communication channels are overloaded. Administrators do not always have complete and vetted information to give to teachers or parents in advance. Much of the administrator experience is responsive to stakeholders, situations, and emergencies.

Administrators do not have enough time or capacity to respond to all of the various communications they are receiving on different channels. They are also unable to disseminate all of the information completely and timely. Administrators worry a great deal about the teacher and parent experience, trying to prevent negative interactions from occurring to or between groups. Administrators spend time communicating information that other staff members can easily provide.

Administrators want to feel proactive, motivated, and inspired. They want time to focus on vision-setting, implementation, and recruiting. They want to believe that teachers and parents are well-informed, and students love coming to school. Administrators would like parents and staff to know where to go to receive the information they are seeking.

ADMINISTRATORS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Delegate communications responsibilities to consultant, committed teachers, parents and other stakeholders.

Develop a school-wide communications strategy to foster a culture of communication.

Analyze onboarding/orientation communication and improve messaging, medium, and procedures, and providing teachers with a go-to document for questions. (i.e. New Hire Manual and/or Employee Handbook).*

Create and implement standard communications calendar and templates for administrators allowing admin to anticipate recurring or seasonal communications to teachers, creating more transparency around the teacher experience.*

Develop strategy around teacher-admin communications, including implementing a regular all-faculty meeting cadence.

Create and/or update teacher and parent handbooks with communications information with emergency protocols.

Develop contact list for specific inquiries from parents, staff or community members. Publish on the website, in the parent and employee handbooks.

ADMINISTRATORS

EXPECTED IMPACT OF RECOMMENDATIONS



SATISFACTION

Increased administrator satisfaction, productivity and overall investment.

CAPACITY

Increased administrator capacity to set vision and drive direction for school achievement, provide effective professional development, strategize and execute towards student retention and recruitment.

COLLAB

Increased collaboration between administrators and the TMSA community to drive towards holistic student achievement.

COMMUNICATIONS INVENTORY

This list is not exhaustive of all TMSA channels & only represents channels collected during the discovery session.

EMAIL

CLASS DOJO

SHUTTERFLY

FACEBOOK (2)

PHONE

GOOGLE
CLASSROOM

WEBSITE

TWITTER

TEXT

REMIND

FLYERS

INSTAGRAM

HOW YOU CAN HELP

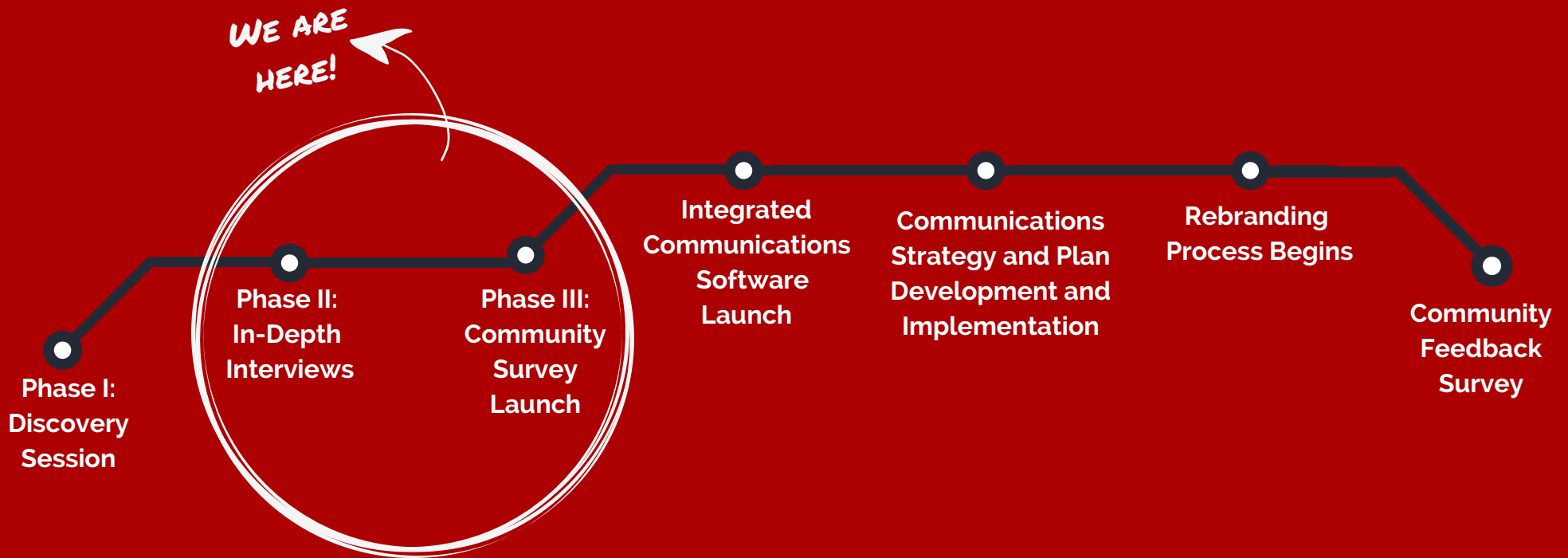
Get involved

Log on & Sign up

Support the process

- Complete your family's survey during Phase III.
- Sign up for our new integrated communications platform.
- Encourage other parents and guardians to participate and sign up.

WHAT'S NEXT?



QUESTIONS?

CONTACT THA VIN, COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIR
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