The Main Street Academy Communications Strategy

Introduction

The purpose of this plan is to promote effective, two-way communication between TMSA and the community we serve. TMSA is committed to keeping our school community and the public informed about our programs, policies, new developments/successes, and to providing a process for monitoring feedback about the effectiveness of our efforts.

This Communication Plan describes the school's practices for:

- Communicating information to the school community and public, and
- What steps the school takes to ensure on-going, two-way communication with internal and external stakeholders.

Goals

Communications Committee Goals

Support the TMSA vision of being a leader in providing challenging, enriching, and high-quality student experiences, by implementing communications tactics to be measured by critical success indicators of increased: parent satisfaction, media coverage, donor participation.

Objective 1: Generate awareness of TMSA at local, county and state levels with relevant stakeholders.

Objective 2: Increase parental satisfaction with outbound flow of information from school.
Strategy 2a:

- Commit to clear and focused communications from Board and School.
- Increased quality and frequency of important communications.
- Develop communications plan for school communications.
- Outline annual key priorities for staff and reinforce messages throughout the year.
- Maintain up-to-date school calendar as pertains to school events, etc.

Objective 3: Increase community and media engagement with TMSA.

Mission

At The Main Street Academy, all students will receive a challenging and enriching education from a dedicated and student-focused staff in partnership with highly-involved parents. Students will leave The Main Street Academy with high expectations of themselves as they prepare for further education and become contributing members of their diverse communities.

Primary Audience Groups

Internal

Faculty and Staff: This group is defined as all employees of TMSA, in clouding full-time, part-time, contractors interfacing with the school community, and after-school or enrichment staff.

Administration: This group is defined as all academic leaders and members of the leadership team. For example, the Principal, Academy Directors, etc..

Parents/Family: This group is defined as all parents and guardians of students currently enrolled at TMSA.

Governing Board: This group is defined as all active and current members of the Givering Board and its committees.

External

PTO: This group is defined as all current and active members of the Parent Teacher Organization.

Public: This group is defined as the broader local, State and National community that may or may not have a direct relationship with TMSA.

Communications Channels

The following chart represents acceptable communication channels and the corresponding type of information that can be shared on each channel. This approach streamlines the flow of information. When implemented with consistency, the TMSA community will know where to find the information they are seeking.

User preferences on these platforms allow for a customization of the content users want to receive. Content delivery can be as immediate as each and every user desires.

Types of Information	Email	Website	Sangha	Robo Calls	Social Media	Google Classroom & Class Dojo
Emergency Alerts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Public Relations		✓			✓	
Event Promotion	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Non-emergent Special Announcements	✓				✓	
Important reminders			✓			✓
Forms/Documents	✓	✓	✓			
Campaigns	✓	✓	✓		✓	
PTO Information	✓	✓			✓	
Ongoing Weekly Communications	✓		✓			✓

⬤ Indicates Internal Communication Channels

Communications Content

Crisis Communications

During an emergency or sensitive situation, the school must work under rapidy changing conditions to provide internal and external stakeholders with accurate and updated information, while ensuring that the safety of students and employees is not compromised.

During a crisis, TMSA Leadership and/or the Communications Committee works in collaboration with the School Police, local police, and Fulton County School District (if necessary), as well as other agencies that may be involved.

TMSA Leadership will first communicate with employees and students within the building. After ensuring safety and implementing emergency response protocols, TMSA Leadership and/or Communications Committee will release a statement with the most update information regarding the type of incident, status on student and staff safety, and instructions for how concerned parents can follow-up. TMSA Leadership may use any or all of the channels outlined in the Channel Chart above.

Internal crisis communications between internal audiences should be managed by TMSA Leadership and the Governing board.

External crisis communications between and internal TMSA audiences and external audiences should be managed by the Public Relations Committee and the Governing Board, if necessary.

Internal Communications

Employee and Board Communication
Communication between and among the school's board members, administrators, and staff members is critical to implementing a high-quality educational program. The following guidelines will apply to official internal communications between employee and board members.

Governing Board Communications:
The administration and the faculty representative to the Governing Board will bring items of interest from other staff members as necessary to each Board meeting to raise during Public Comments.

The Governing Board will publish minutes of monthly meetings on the Charter Boards website, and link back to the school website. Minutes will be disseminated to the public the following Friday in the school weekly e-blast. Minutes are also kept on file with the Administrative Assistant. The faculty board representative and the administration will transmit information from the board to staff members as necessary.

The Governing Board will send all sensitive information to the Leadership Team and/or staff through email, offer letters and information regarding employment will either be sent via email or post.

Administrator Communications:
The Principal and the Academy Directors (TMSA Leadership) will use the internal TMSA e-mail network to accomplish ongoing day-to-day communication with other staff members.

The Principal will hold regularly scheduled meetings with grade band and "specials" class representatives. Staff meetings will be held on a regular basis, typically once a month or more often as required by specific circumstances to relay critical, complex information (i.e. testing requirements, SST information, etc.).

TMSA Leadership will also use morning announcements as reminders to staff regarding information that they have received via email.

All communication from administration to staff regarding operations, logistics, updates, schedules, student information, parent engagement, board news, employment/human resources, and other items of importance must be relayed through the TMSA email network. TMSA Leadership may follow-up through other acceptable channels thereafter.

TMSA Leadership will make announcements and provide opportunities for dialogue at staff meetings. Employees are welcome to speak directly with administrators by appointment or on a drop-in basis if time permits.

Student Communication

Communication between the administration, teachers, and students is important to assuring that students feel comfortable and informed about their academic experience. Students also need to understand that their perspective is valued and each individual is encouraged to make his or her needs known to adults.

General information will be shared daily through daily announcements. Students are encouraged to speak directly with their teachers as necessary to assure that they anticipate expectations, offer input, and seek clarification when they do not understand.

Students are encouraged to speak directly with the Principal and the Academic Directors as needed. They may make an appointment or, in appropriate circumstances, and with the permission of their teacher if they must leave class, they may speak with the administrator on a drop-in basis if time permits.

External Communications: Media & Community Relations

Community Communication
Support from and involvement of community members and institutions is a rich source of resources for the school.

Governing Board Communications
The Public Relations sub-committee is responsible for all public communications to news media and other media outlets. All media relations will be managed by the Public Relations sub-committee with cross-functional support from other committees or groups within the school as needed.

The Brand sub-committee will be responsible for the visual representation of the School, externally and in the media. They will work closely with any internal or external party interested in representing or replicating TMSA's brand visually.

Parent Engagement

Governing Board Communications:
Parents who wish to communicate directly with the Governing Board should register to make public comments in advance of the monthly board meetings.

Teacher Communications:
Parents are encouraged to access e-Schools, the Fulton County online grade book, to monitor their children's grades and attendance records. Parents who have questions about content of classes, grading, homework, or other classroom-based issues are encouraged to contact the classroom teacher to seek clarification. Teacher contact information is available on the TMSA website. Parents may contact teachers via Sangha, email, Google Classroom or Class Dojo. Teachers are expected to respond within 24 hours during the school week, and by end of day Monday if contacted after 5pm or on Saturday and Sunday.

Parent/Teacher Conversations or Meetings should be made during non-instructional time. A parent may request and schedule a conference with a teacher. Parents should not expect to be able to hold immediate unscheduled conferences with teachers.

Administrator Communications:
Parents who are unable to find answers to questions about classroom issues through discussion with the teacher may make an appointment with the Principal or Academy Directors to seek additional clarification or express their concerns.

Parents who need to speak with the Principal or the Academy Directors are encouraged to contact them by telephone or e-mail. They should make an appointment to arrange a personal meeting in order to assure that the administrator has adequate time set aside for the discussion. Personal meetings can be arranged with the Academy Director themselves, or with an administrative assistant at the front desk.

The Principal will distribute a parent newsletter to disseminate information about the school on a monthly basis.

The Sangha App will be used to deliver targeted communications through telephone and notifications.

Goals

Objective 1: Generate awareness of TMSA at local, county and state levels with relevant stakeholders.

- Edlio Integrated Communication Software Rollout and Adoption
  - Target audience: Staff; parents; external community
  - Timeline: July – October 2018
  - Responsible persons: Ariana Santiago (Flylight Creative); Communications Committee
  - Evaluation measures: Analytics to report out #of users and community adoption

- Develop and maintain communications calendar
  - Target audience: Staff; parents; key communicators
  - Timeline: September 2018-May 2019
  - Responsible persons: Ariana Santiago (Flylight Creative); Public Relations Sub-Committee
  - Evaluation measures: Completion of deliverable and training for PR Sub-Committee

- Identify key messages to promote throughout the year
  - Target audience: Staff; parents; external community; local media
  - Timeline: September 2018-October 2019
  - Responsible persons: Ariana Santiago (Flylight Creative); Public Relations Sub-Committee
  - Evaluation measures: Approval of Communications Committee Chair

- Develop reputation, media strategy and press kit
  - Target audience: external community; local media
  - Timeline: May 2019
  - Responsible persons: Public Relations Sub-Committee
  - Evaluation measures: Completion of deliverable and training for PR Sub-Committee

- Bolster social media community on Facebook
  - Target audience: external community; local media; parents
  - Timeline: September 2018-May 2019
  - Responsible persons: Public Relations Sub-Committee
  - Evaluation measures: Facebook analytics

- Refresh TMSA brand (visuals and positioning)
  - Target audience: Staff; parents; external community
  - Timeline: February -May 2019
  - Responsible persons: Ariana Santiago (Flylight Creative); Communications Committee, Governing Board, TMSA Leadership
  - Evaluation measures: Completion of process and receipt of assets and deliverables

Objective 2: Increase parental satisfaction with outbound flow of information from school.

- Edlio Integrated Communication Software Rollout and Adoption
  - Target audience: Staff; parents; external community
  - Timeline: July – October 2018
  - Responsible persons: Ariana Santiago (Flylight Creative); Communications Committee
  - Evaluation measures: Analytics to report out #of users and community adoption

- Commit to clear and focused communications from Board and School.
  - Target audience: Staff; parents; external community
  - Timeline: July – October 2018
  - Responsible persons: Ariana Santiago (Flylight Creative); Communications Committee
  - Evaluation measures: Consistent posting of minutes and easy access for TMSA community

- Increased quality and frequency of important communications.
  - Target audience: Staff; parents
  - Timeline: September 2018-May 2019
  - Responsible persons: Ariana Santiago (Flylight Creative); Communications Committee; TMSA Leadership
  - Evaluation measures: Increased click rates

- Develop communications plan for school communications.
  - Target audience: Staff; parents; key communicators
  - Timeline: September 2018
  - Responsible persons: Ariana Santiago (Flylight Creative); Communications Committee
  - Evaluation measures: Completion of deliverable

- Outline annual key priorities for staff and reinforce messages throughout the year.
  - Target audience: Staff; parents; key communicators
  - Timeline: August 2018
  - Responsible persons: TMSA Leadership; Communications Committee
  - Evaluation measures: Completion of deliverable; EOY Staff Satisfaction Survey

- Maintain up-to-date school calendar as pertains to school events, etc.
  - Target audience: Staff; parents; key communicators
  - Timeline: August 2018- May 2019
  - Responsible persons: TMSA Leadership; Public Relations Sub-Committee
  - Evaluation measures: Completion of deliverable

Objective 3: Increase community and media engagement with TMSA.

- Develop and maintain communications calendar
    - Target audience: Staff; parents; key communicators
    - Timeline: September 2018-May 2019
    - Responsible persons: Ariana Santiago (Flylight Creative); Public Relations Sub-Committee
    - Evaluation measures: completion of deliverable and training for PR Sub-Committee

- Liaison between Academic and School Performance Committee to shape messaging for non-academic audiences
    - Target audience: Staff; parents; external community
    - Timeline: Ongoing
    - Responsible persons: Public Relations Sub-Committee
    - Evaluation measures: # of academic-related messages and media placements

- Develop approval process for school-wide and public-facing communications
    - Target audience: Staff; parents
    - Timeline: December 2018
    - Responsible persons: Public Relations Sub-Committee
    - Evaluation measures: Completion of deliverable and training for PR Sub-Committee