

Communications Committee

Agenda

Wednesday, April 14th, from 4:30-6:00 pm

Meeting ID/Password:

<https://zoom.us/j/92905975979?pwd=Nzd1TS9vV2dEcExXeFBhN3I5ZGJpUT09>

Present (underlined): Tammy B., Maggie B., Shannon F., John G., Justin G., Carrie H., Jen H., Jessie H., Cheri H., Girish J., Heather K., Amelia L., Shannon M., Joell P., Mariah S., Amanda S., Teresa W., Justin G.

Purpose of Committee

1. to create and maintain procedures and guidelines relating to MSA's branding, marketing and external communications.
2. to ensure the effectiveness of communication between different school related groups.
3. to ensure the effectiveness of communication between school community members.
4. to review MSA website components for accuracy and standardization.

1. Staff data privacy in regards to the profiles on the website. Discuss specifics of what needs to be on the profiles vs staff being conscientious about updating their bio yearly. (Need for August Training) We did an updated training at the last staff workshop day, but there are questions as to where the lines are as to staff data privacy. Thus, this process is halted until further information can be determined. Justin says there needs to be a determination as to what staff can be required to publish on the website. Heather says we need to determine who the group is that determines the minimum requirements. There have been recommendations, for example, that photos can be replaced with Bitmojis, and points such as this should be looked into to present to the BOD. Heather would like to establish a sub-committee to look into this. Justin referred to policy 206.

Cheri suggested that we bring it up in the May staff meeting. Jessie will conduct a poll, and we will go from there. Justin recommended then that we could make the training for profiles part of the August teacher workshop days.

2. Opt In/Out List (from Justin) Justin shared a spreadsheet entitled "Communications Methods Database" which lists the nine sources that communications/emails come through. The first four are mandated as to how parents access them. The last three of these are "semi-opt-out." They are the "must work" platforms. Others such as the Weekly Update and Daily

Announcements will be automatically sent with opt-out capabilities. The last three platforms will be opt-in options. (See spreadsheet)

3. Update on Skyward messaging from teachers/coaches. Staff, including advisors and coaches who have skyward access, should use skyward for messages that need parent involvement. - Has this been shared with staff?

Shannon says that coaches should not have access to student grades, discipline matters, etc. Justin says that if the rosters are in Skyward, in theory, the access of information could be limited to the message center. Shannon recommended that we begin with badminton, so Justin will look into this. Joell sent out information to teachers about sending skyward messages after the February meeting and the group noted that there have not been as many complaints about not knowing about material pick up.

Tammy brought up the occasional issues of some groups not receiving emails (e.g., all Yahoo emails, random parent emails (recent COVID announcement)).

4. Board Member Request: Can the section of the website that has information about who to contact be updated to include the list of communication order that is in policy 103? This is in the Parent/Student handbook as well, but it would be good to keep it consistent across all media that families and community might reference or look up. (January Meeting - **The High School Manager** will work with Justin on a spreadsheet noting who is in charge of the content for the current families section. For current families, questions or comments on the information should still be sent to info@mnmsa.org - is this done and where is it posted?)

This chain of communication is currently published under current families on the website and was last updated on November 13, 2020. Justin has added it to the top of the Our Staff page.

Heather wants to put it on record that this list was compiled and is in place. She will recommend that if the asker is still not satisfied that the parent be encouraged to reach out to Justin directly.

5. Task forces: Need these started up to be ready for 2021-22 school year. Heather asked if this is a good time to consider these. Shannon said that we usually solicit staff for committees and task forces in the fall. Volunteers?
 1. Website spider/paths (Justin - Jeff, Girish, Heather prior to COVID) Justin says a website-refresh task force is always a good idea, but he is okay if we wait for the fall and look forward to making the changes the following summer.

2. Cultural Calendar (Michelle shared this with John and Heather) (1) A student brought the idea of adding cultural and other significant dates to the MSA calendar during open forum (2019-2020 school year) 2) The BOD agreed that it was a task force item to explore and as a member of the BOD and Communication Committee I said that I would bring it to the committee. 3) As a member of communications, I led the task force. 4) I solicited community input for various proposed items and received input that I added to a spreadsheet 5) In June 2020 I sent Carrie a spreadsheet with the dates and other important information that was a result of the community input 6) As of July 2020 I was no longer a member of the Communications Committee, so there would either be a new leader of that task force (if it needed to be started again) or an individual would be assigned to maintenance as part of their job role.) Cheri recommended that the calendar committee would be the best group to handle this since the calendar committee can take into consideration the holidays that reflect our student population. The calendar committee has already met in March for next year's calendar, so Cheri will field these dates for now.
3. Handbooks/Guides Heather asked if there is anything that we should be doing with these. The answer is that various handbooks are handled by the various groups in charge of them, and we (this committee) do not work on these as a group.
6. Communication challenges: Are there challenges other than those listed here?
 1. Miscommunications
 2. Policy vs Procedure vs Plan
 3. Following timelines provided in writing
 4. Updating info in a timely manner
 5. Sending Information or Requests - timing Cheri asked if there had been complaints made, and Heather said yes. Cheri pointed out that if the communications committee is not in charge of this, what can we help? Jessie clarified by saying, "How can we ensure that people do their jobs?" Cheri reminded us of the chain of command. Heather clarified that the lack of communication is not always the job of the communication committee. However, Joell reflected as to how the committee started and suggested that follow-up be done when the effectiveness of communication falters.

Jen asked if perhaps we consider changing our name.

Maggie pointed out that the things we often want done are really the job of a PR and/or HR person.

Tammy spoke as a parent and added that it is well known that MSA has communication problems and finds herself frustrated and disassociated after trying so many times to get things properly communicated.

Joell recommends that we hire a communications coordinator.

Cheri reminded us that in the beginning of this committee the need for this position was recommended, and now we are coming back around full circle. She recommends that this be brought to the BOD.

Heather summed up that this committee can only make recommendations at this point and wonders how we proceed. As we are hiring a new director and making administrative changes, do we recommend this need to the board.

Joell recommends that we wait for the next year to see how things unfold and reassess the need.

Justin says there is a breakdown in who has authority to make changes (For example, the WIN Friday document is incorrect and Joell says that she was told that we are not allowed to change it without going back to the BOD.) (Heather also brought up the use of the word "plan" and "protocol." Cheri pointed out that this lack of continuity is a problem and is what we are missing. Heather acknowledged that the inability to follow-through is frustrating and that we would like to find a way to resolve issues effectively.

F. COVID Model results the results were shared via email

Next meeting: Wednesday, May 12, 2021 4:30-5:30 (This will be our last meeting for the 2020-21 academic year.)

Note: Cheri and Heather will work together to fix the ZOOM link.