



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 64
(GULF ISLANDS)

Communications Strategy



EMBRACING A CULTURE OF
STORYTELLING, INFORMATION
SHARING, AND ENGAGEMENT

JANUARY 2022

Adapted from C-Shore Communications Inc.: *Communications Strategy
for School District 64 Gulf Islands (October 2021)*

About

The Gulf Islands School District is a diverse and inclusive district committed to supporting students, staff, and families through a culture of caring, respect, and high-quality learning experiences.

The district serves approximately 1500 students, with 10 schools, in five island communities: Salt Spring, Pender, Galiano, Mayne, and Saturna islands. Diverse program offerings include a successful Indigenous Education program, a thriving International Program, and a performing arts academy, as well as ecological, nature-based, and French Immersion programs.

The Board of Education has prioritized enhanced communications to grow and maintain strong and healthy working relationships with all members of the SD64 learning community.

Purpose

This communications strategy is a living artifact, designed to enhance engagement with stakeholders, build trust across the organization, and support public relations with staff, students, families, and local communities.

It outlines a proactive and focused approach to planning and prioritization of internal and external communications that honours the unique context of Gulf Islands School District. Specifically, this communications strategy provides a framework to increase awareness and assurance of the district's commitment to improving outcomes and opportunities for all students as identified in the Strategic Plan.

News. Insight. Storytelling. Branding. Information. Promotion. Engagement. Celebration.

Bringing Strategic Goals to Life



PROVIDE HEALTHY, WELCOMING,
AND SAFE LEARNING
ENVIRONMENTS WHERE ALL
STUDENTS FLOURISH



PROMOTE AND FACILITATE
SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES
THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT



ENHANCE LEARNING AND
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT BY
BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS
THROUGHOUT OUR LOCAL AND
GLOBAL COMMUNITIES

Sd64 Strategic Plan - Extended to June 2023

Objectives

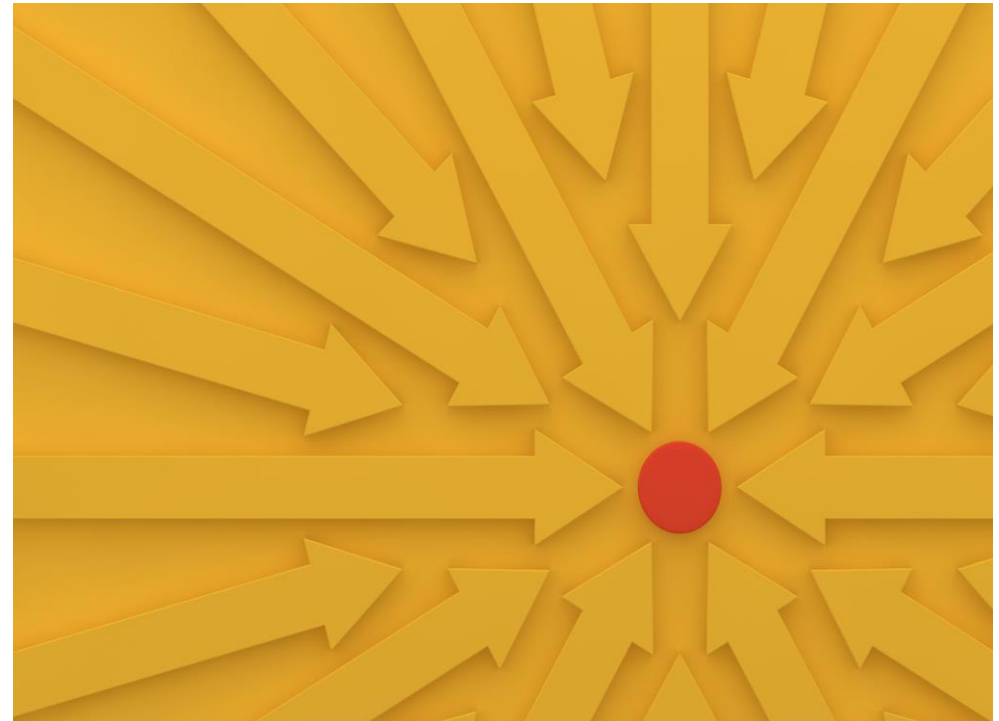
Increase engagement of external audiences in SD64's Vision and Strategic Plan (by telling stories regularly about what is happening in SD64).

Increase awareness and understanding among internal and external audiences of SD64's budget, enrolment, and other challenges.

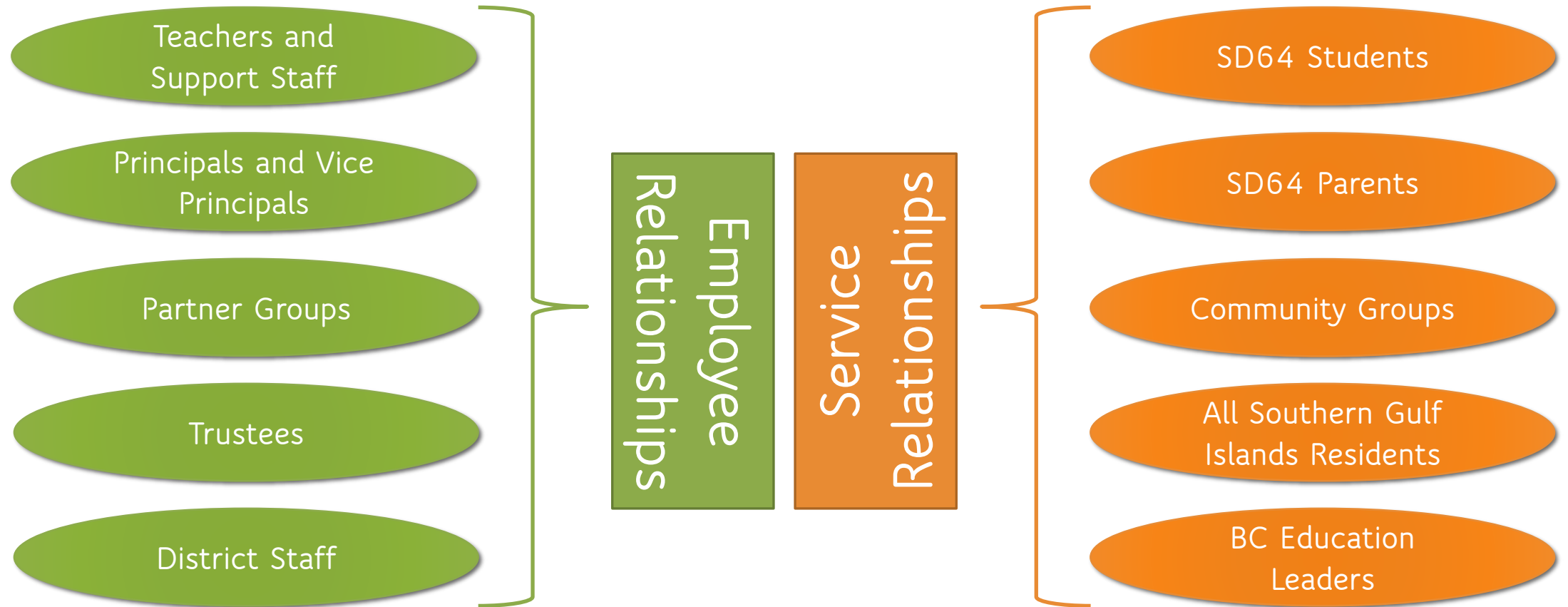
Increase engagement and participation of external audiences in SD64's district and board-level activities.

Create and maintain a professional look and approach for how SD64 communicates with all audiences.

Increase awareness of SD64's efforts to address racism and other inequities in the education system.



Target Audiences



Key Messages

SD64 is a leader in public education in BC.

SD64 is a vibrant school district with many opportunities for students to grow, learn, and succeed.

Safety of students, staff and schools are of the utmost importance in SD64.

SD64's district staff and Board of Education welcome input and engagement from all community members and stakeholders.

Student success is at the heart of everything we do, here in SD64.

There are wonderful things happening at all SD64 Schools.

SD64 is facing challenges in enrolment, budgets and achievement, but our leaders are working to solve them with the input of community.

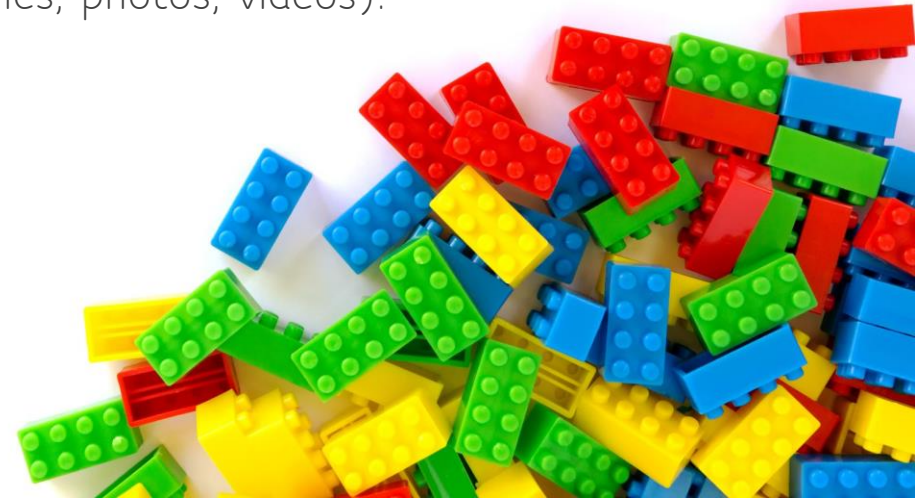


Communications Tactics

Create a Culture of Storytelling

There is a need and desire to share the wonderful things taking place across the district. Storytelling is one strategy that honours the unique context of Gulf Islands School District and respects all members of the SD64 learning community. It serves to increase engagement and audience attention and helps establish the narrative. A culture of storytelling supports a dynamic practice of sharing information that is inclusive and compelling and easily understood by audiences.

1. Make everyone a storyteller – regular calls for material (quotes, stories, photos, videos).
2. Create a space for sharing (Spotlight64)
3. Promote via website. Share with partners. Post to social media.





Regularize Timing of Communications

Establishing regular timing for communications activities increases reach, develops generalized expectations for communications, and grows audience engagement by virtue of predictability. When audiences know when and where to expect information, they are more likely and prepared to tune in.

1. District storytelling – Spotlight64
2. Board meeting highlights
3. District newsletter
4. Local media publications

Enhance Online Presence



Best practice would establish the use of online spaces as main channels for audience engagement and information distribution. Website and social medias are ideal platforms for sharing stories, important news, key facts, and general information. Public-facing communications, shared through website and social media accounts, is a proactive approach to issues management and community building. Interconnected online spaces extend reach and empower the viewer to further network and circulate information by following, liking, reposting, and commenting.

1.



2.



3.



Activities

Strategy	Channel	Objective	Audience	Frequency
Spotlight64	website/social media	storytelling	all	monthly (min.)
Board meeting highlights	email/website	promote/inform (Board activities)	partners, parents, staff, community	after each public Board Meeting
District newsletter	email/website	storytelling, info sharing, branding	partners, parents, staff, community	quarterly
SD64 news subscription	website (email notifications)	information sharing (notices, stories, announcements)	partners, parents, staff, community	ongoing
Social media accounts*	Facebook LinkedIn	F: information sharing (outward facing) L: recruitment, retention	F: parents, community L: staff (new/potential)	F: regular both: as needed
Website organization	website	improved access, user experience, utility	all	regular review
Media relations	SSExchange, Driftwood, other Gulf Islands publications	information sharing, issues management	partners, parents, staff, community	as needed
Style/branding guide	shared document	branding, consistency, visual appeal	district staff	long-term goal
Standardize school newsletter/websites	school newsletters/websites	branding, consistency, visual appeal	parents, staff	long-term goal

**requires policy development*

Analysis and Review



Website Analytics analysis of visitors, by page, referral roots, and length of engagement

Social Media Analytics analysis of mentions, sentiment, followings, and interactions

Stakeholder Feedback surveys, focus groups etc. to gain insight and gauge effectiveness

Communications Activities reviewed annually to assure alignment with budget and resources

Communications Strategy reviewed each trustee election and renewal of the district strategic plan



Summary

Increasing engagement and strengthening relationships with community and partner groups are the central focus of this plan. Clear, transparent, and accessible communications are the key to successful implementation.

Through targeted communications, School District 64 demonstrates its ongoing commitment to improving the experience of all Gulf Islands learning community members.