



DISTRICT 25 COMMUNICATION GUIDE UPDATE

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN | JUNE 2016

Arlington Heights School District 25

Communications Plan



Embracing Today

Inspiring Tomorrow

@AHS25

Facebook.com/AHS25

July, 2016

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Introduction

Purpose:

This plan is to provide District 25’s Communications Coordinator, District 25 staff (teachers, administrators, assistants) and the Arlington Heights School District 25 Board of Education a guideline for the communication process and policies that District 25 is to follow.

District 25’s message is strong and must be communicated in a strategic and mindful way to best showcase the positive influence this district has on the students and families of Arlington Heights, as well as the Arlington Heights Community.

Who are we speaking to?

Arlington Heights School District 25 serves a proud and dedicated community of 76,000 people. Arlington Heights is made up of students, parents, families, veterans, volunteers, workers, singles, couples, seniors, and a diverse collection of people of all races and ages. District 25 must reach this wide range audience in an exciting way using the avenues and following the guidelines detailed in this plan.

Whose responsibility is this?

The responsibility of reaching the Arlington Heights community, including the parents, students and staff members of District 25 is of the Communications Department of AHSD 25. The Communications Coordinator must work with the school board, administration, teachers and staff to generate a message that coincides with the vision and image found through the strategic planning process the District is currently going through (spring 2016).

Following the timetables, guidelines and processes put forth in this Communications Plan will help to reach the District’s desired audience. This plan should be constantly under review based on experiences and suggestions from the Communications Department and from the Arlington Heights community.

It is the Communications Department’s job to embrace District 25’s message and image and communicate that message and image to the public and constituents of Arlington Heights through the strategies and avenues listed in this plan.

Arlington Heights School District 25

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One year into my start in District 25.

Answered two questions:

What does this role entail?

What is communications in SD25?

Lacked

Connection to the "why".

Essence.

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ADAM HARRIS
HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS & STORYTELLING

WHAT CHANGED?

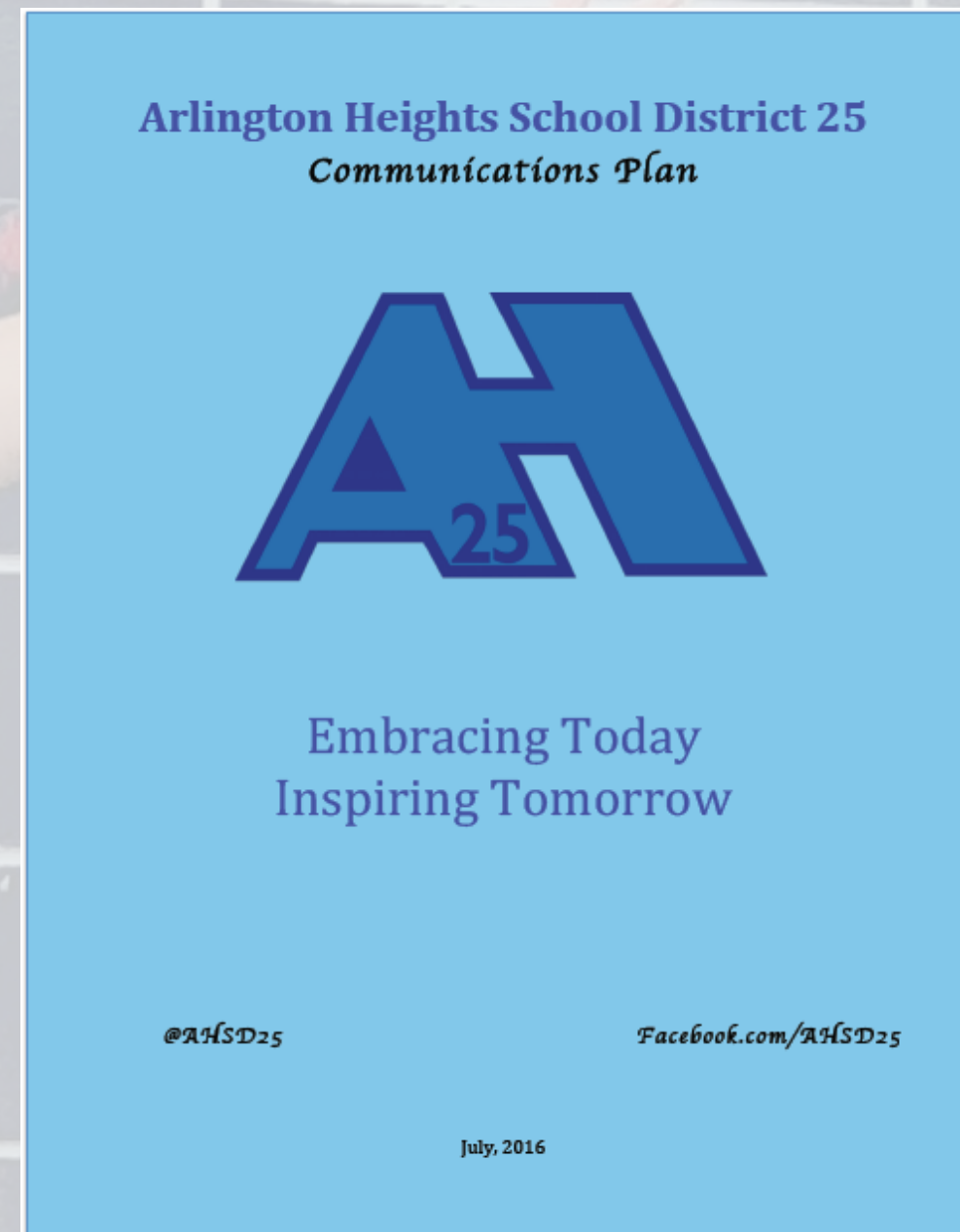
Plan vs. Guide

Essence

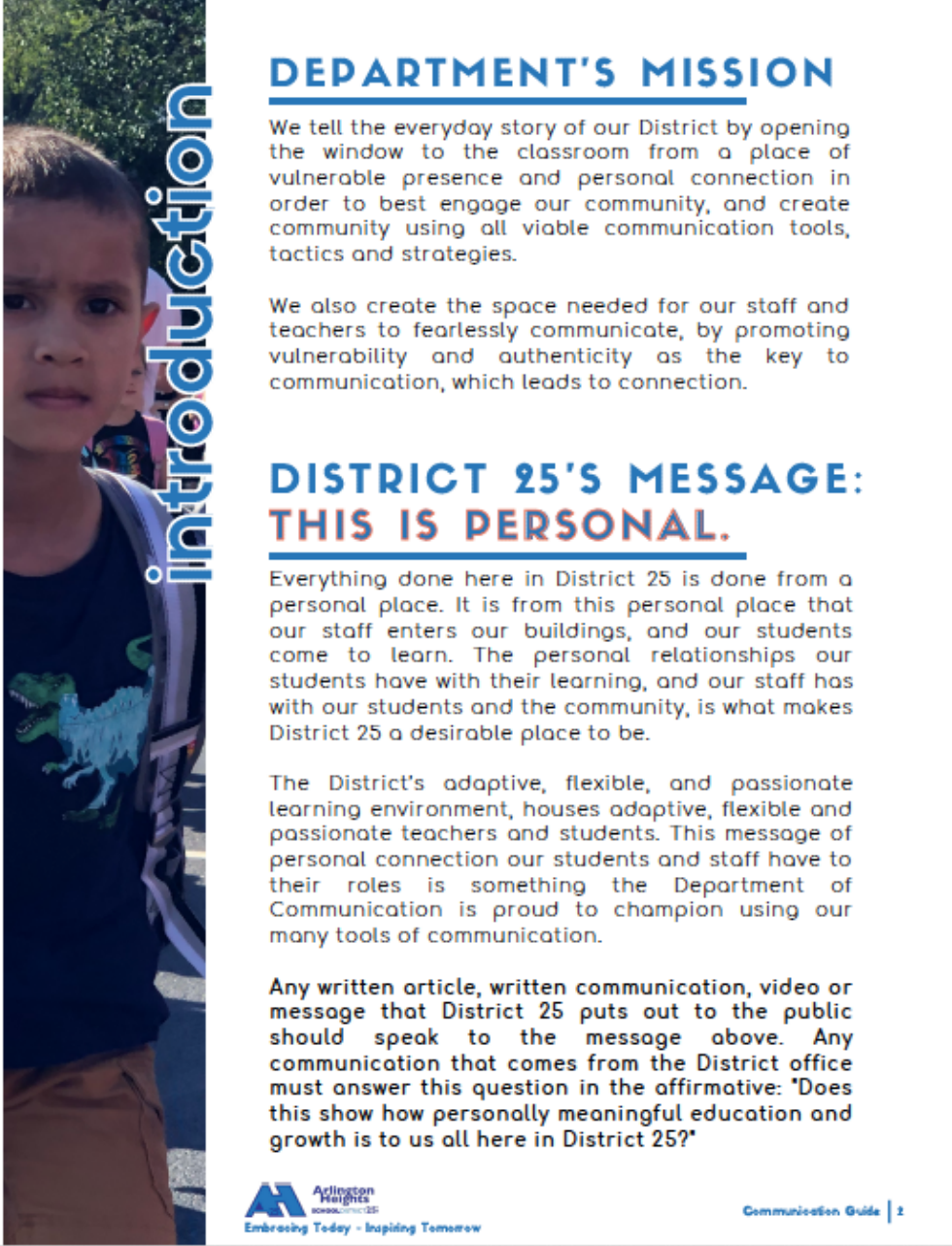
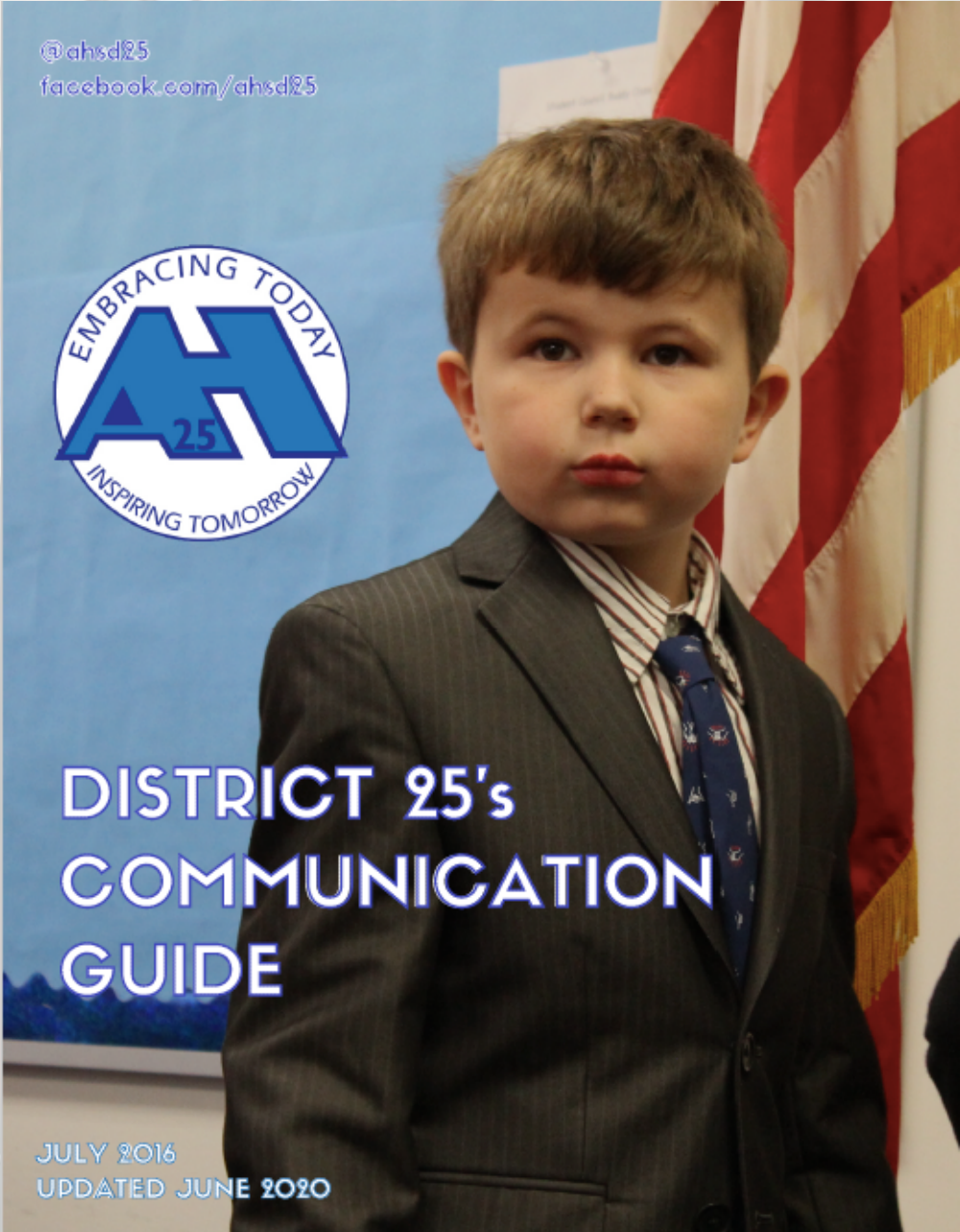
Vulnerability
It's Personal
Storytelling

Yes, and...
Pick up the phone
Selfie-Videos

Pictures & Branding



WHAT CHANGED?



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YES, AND...

The "yes, and..." mentality is vital to the success of this department. Teachers, students, staff, principals, cabinet members, administration, media, parents, organizations, colleagues, community partners, etc., will all have ideas and proposals that will be brought to the Head of Communications & Storytelling's awareness. Going into all of these ideas with a "Yes, I can help, and here's how I am willing to help..." is vital. These ideas/proposals/stories come from a personal place and they deserve to be validated and covered with curiosity. Also, you never know what will come from saying "Yes."

PICK UP THE PHONE

This is a simple, yet, effective technique. Usually, when the phone rings in the Communications Department, it is a question that is urgent to the caller and easily answered by the Head of Communications & Storytelling. Whether it be a staff member with a question about how to update something on the website, or a media member with a question about a story they are covering, picking up the phone ensures that the request will be given the proper attention, in the moment, and the caller will not need to find an answer on his/her own, often leading to more work for the HoC&S in the long run. Pick. Up. The. Phone.



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BE THE GOOD



BE COURAGEOUS



WHAT IS A BRAND?

By definition, a brand is the promotion of a particular product or company by means of advertising and distinctive design.

Here in District 25, we choose to look at a brand as how we want people to **FEEL, THINK and ACT** when they **HEAR, SEE or EXPERIENCE** Arlington Heights School District 25.



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HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS & STORYTELLING

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SELFIE-VIDEOS

The Head of Communications & Storytelling has developed an easy, fun and effective way to not only tell a story but bring the students and teachers to the forefront of the story. With the selfie-video tactic, the HoC&S covers a story by interviewing the subject (student, teacher, or staff member) with a phone as if they are taking a selfie photo. This gives the students/teachers a casual and comfortable platform to tell the story in their own words. The HoC&S must make sure to do a few things to ensure to get the most out of this video:

- Bring the subject to a well lit area away from the classroom (the hallway or the LMC).
- The HoC&S must be in the video as well.
- Have the subject voice their nerves.
- Casually practice the interview by asking them about their project or subject/topic.

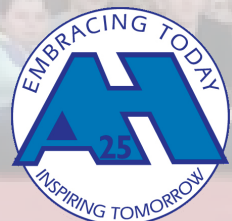
The selfie-video tactic honors the phrase "there's a story in every classroom". This is something that can be utilized without an appointment, or a teacher reaching out to you. These videos are then posted on FB, Twitter, sd25.org, etc.



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A MEDIA PARTNERSHIP

The media is an asset and should be treated as such. Developing colleague-type and trusting relationships with the individual reporters who are assigned to cover Arlington Heights School District 25 is a great way to ensure fair and non-dramatic coverage. Consistent communication, while also being realistic and transparent about how and when the reporter will get an answer to a question, or access to an interview, is a great way to establish a trusting relationship.



THE BIG IDEA

COMMUNICATION IS PERSONAL

There are many responsibilities that the Head of Communications & Storytelling has. In fact, there are 21 pages worth listed in this guide. The Head of Communications & Storytelling must manage all social media, all parent communication, all community communication, the brand of the District, every emergency communication, every page of the website, and more. But at its core, the Communications Department was created to simply tell District 25's story.

Who works here? Who are our teachers? Who are our administrators? Who are our students? What motivates us? What motivates this community? What does it feel like to live, work, and learn in Arlington Heights School District 25?

Asking and answering these questions upon tackling every responsibility listed in this guide will ensure the HoC&S is headed in the correct direction. Go toward what feels like District 25. Go toward what feels personal, and this job will become easeful, comforting, rewarding, and impactful.





THANK YOU.



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