



# District Communication Plan

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# DIT Communication Plan

Approved by: (insert name, date)

## Overview

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The District Implementation Team (DIT) assists in the selection and successful use of effective innovations. To ensure effective innovations are used with fidelity, scaled-up across the district and sustained, communication to and from the DIT must occur on a regular basis. The purpose of this document is to provide a template and when necessary, worked examples, of communication plan components.

**This document is not inclusive of all methods that might be used by the district to ensure timely and effective communication.** For example, the use of the website, social media, and other communication methods are ways the district uses to connect with a variety of stakeholders about a variety of topics. It has been recommended the district first learn how to apply best practices for communication to the specific effective innovation the DIT is working to develop an implementation infrastructure to support (e.g. MTSS). Following the initial learning, the plan should expand to include other communication topics and methods to support sustainability of high-quality communication.

## Communication Plan

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A communication plan is a written document which outlines the process for communicating with critical groups and partners both internal and external to the district. Some information contained within the document (e.g., categories of information to share, methods, frequency) should be developed with the identified critical group and partners. Once finalized, the plan should be shared with and accessible to all individuals who are identified in this document.

There are four parts to a communication plan. Each part is described in further detail below.

### Part 1: Groups/Teams

Groups and teams identified in the communication plan are internal and external groups whose work would be impacted by implementation of MTSS.

### Part 2: Designees

Designees identified for each team are responsible for supporting communication between identified groups. They should have easy access to the groups they are responsible for communicating with and have the ability to follow through with communication within identified timelines.

### **Part 3: Protocols**

For each critical group or partner, mutually agreed upon protocols identify the designees responsible for communication, frequency and methods for communication and the categories/types of information that needs to be shared with, and gathered from, each group. All communication protocols should be included or linked to this document.

When determining the types of information to include in protocols, it is important to seek input from the critical groups/partners identified. Considerations for each group/partner include:

- What information is needed from the District Implementation Team (e.g., implementation challenges)
- What information is needed by the District Implementation Team (e.g., implementation challenges)
- What is the appropriate level of communication (e.g., frequency of communication, method of communicating)

**There will be some stakeholder groups for which only some components of the communication plan apply, and a full protocol may not be necessary.** It is possible that some communication may be disseminated to a large group (e.g. families) through the use of social media or email. In these instances, include all relevant components of the plan for those groups to ensure communication occurs as intended.

Example Communication Protocols can be found in Appendix A.

### **Part 4: Communication Effectiveness Survey**

The use of an annual or bi-annual communication survey provides districts with a way of measuring the effectiveness of communication to adjust the communication plan over time. Information on which groups should receive the survey and corresponding timelines should be included in the Communication Plan. Specific strategies such as the use of electronic surveys, embedding communication effectiveness questions within existing surveys (e.g., perception surveys), and using existing meeting times for survey completion should be considered to increase survey response rate, ensure data is reflective of the staff surveyed, and reduce survey fatigue. **Effective communication is defined as at least 80% or more staff surveyed from the identified groups/team's rate, "agree" for each item in the survey.**

An example Communication Effectiveness Survey can be found in Appendix B.

### **Guidelines for Use**

Established guidelines need to be developed for how the communication plan will be consistently used. Consider if communication will be included as a standing agenda item and linked to the DIT meeting agenda. The identification of a team member to fulfill the role of Communication Liaison to prompt communication to necessary groups is another option to consider. Also consider where key communication will be documented to ensure it will occur (e.g. minutes, action plan).

## Appendix A. Example Communication Protocols

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### Example #1

The purpose of a communication plan is to communicate information that is critical to staff’s ability to successfully use the components of an MTSS framework. Communication protocols identify designees responsible for communication between groups, frequency and methods for communication and the categories/type of information that needs to be shared with, and gathered from, each group.

### District-wide Communication Norms

Communication norms are agreed upon guidelines and expectations for how communication will occur across all groups within the district. Acceptable district timelines for responding to communication is 48-72 hours. Acceptable methods for communication include meetings, email, phone, and newsletter updates. Specifics about the frequency and method can be added to the corresponding column in the protocol.

Table 1. Communication protocol contents adapted from Hastings Area Schools communication plan (2019)

<b>Groups/ Teams</b>	<b>Need to Knows: From DIT</b>	<b>Need to Knows: To DIT</b>	<b>Designees (Name &amp; Role)</b>	<b>Frequency/ Method</b>
<b>Critical Group 1</b>				
<b>Critical Group 2</b>				

**Example #2**

<b>Critical Group/Partner</b>	<b>Types of Information to be Communicated</b>	<b>To Whom/By Whom</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>How/Format</b>

**Example #3**

<b>Communication Topics</b>	<b>Information to be Communicated</b>	<b>To Whom/By Whom</b>	<b>How/Format</b>

## Appendix B. Example Communication Effectiveness Survey

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The communication effectiveness survey is sent out to groups / teams during the designated timelines listed on the Communication Plan (page 4).

Introduction statement: The District Implementation Team continues to be focused on effective communication in order to help support your school's use of MTSS. We would like to hear from you about how effective communication has been to and from our team.

Directions: Please complete this brief survey. The data will be used by the District Implementation Team to refine and improve how effectively we communicate to you!

Select your primary role:

- MiMTSS TAC
  - Central office administrator
  - Administrator
  - Leadership team member
  - Coach
  - ISD
  - (Add any other group/team roles that are included in your communication plan)
1. I am consistently informed about critical updates and developments regarding the MTSS work.
    - Strongly Agree
    - Agree
    - Disagree
    - Strongly Disagree
  2. The clarity of communication from the District Implementation Team designee is sufficient for understanding the MTSS work.
    - Strongly Agree
    - Agree
    - Disagree
    - Strongly Disagree
  3. I receive timely responses to my questions or concerns addressed to the District Implementation Team regarding the MTSS work.
    - Strongly Agree
    - Agree
    - Disagree
    - Strongly Disagree
  4. Please provide any additional feedback or suggestions regarding communication with the District Implementation Team.

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