



RBCS Communication Strategy 2017

December 1, 2016

Dear RBCS Community,

Based on the survey feedback gathered by the Community Engagement Committee (HSA, Parent Board Reps, School Leadership) in August and September, and in partnership with Bellevue Communications Group, the committee presents this Communication Strategy Document in an attempt to streamline our current two-way communication systems. Starting in January 2017, RBCS leadership and staff will work to implement this approach in order to provide **timely, consistent, transparent information**, as well as ensure that families have several options by which to provide feedback and ask questions as needed. If any families would like to provide additional feedback, there is still an opportunity to do so! Please contact Mr. Myron Hargrow, Dean of Students and Families & Counselor, at mhargrow@byersschool.org.

What We Learned from the Survey:

- RBCS families primarily get their information from the following sources: Backpack Notices (Blue Folders), Teacher Newsletters, Principal Newsletter, Monthly Newsletter
- RBCS families do not utilize the following sources to gather key information: Twitter and Facebook pages, school Website, HSA Facebook page, Parent Listserve
- Most RBCS families prefer to receive information via Email and Text
- RBCS families overwhelmingly prefer weekly communication (versus daily or monthly)
- RBCS families prefer to offer feedback to the school via survey and face-to-face

Our Strategic Response:

1. Direct Communication:
 - a. As backpack notices and teachers' weekly notices are the most utilized/effective sources of information, the Administration will ensure common practices among all teachers, reinforcing style and consistency
 - b. Administration will provide training and newsletter/flyer samples to new teachers as part of on-boarding process
 - c. In order to promote transparency and consistency, at least one member of the Administration will attend all Home and School Association meetings in order to gather parent input, and leaders will host Town Hall or Info Sessions as important organizational information and decisions are being made
2. Leadership Updates:
 - a. As leadership newsletters were considered valuable but less essential in terms of day-to-day communication, the Administration will work to streamline
 - b. Principal will send weekly updates on key school information, events and opportunities via Constant Contact
 - c. Head of School will send quarterly updates on organizational developments and strategic direction via Constant Contact
 - d. Principal and HOS updates will be sent via email, and can be accessed in both web-based and smart-phone formats for greater convenience



- e. The school will make hard copies of both updates available at the front desk
3. Push Notifications:
- a. The school currently utilizes the One Call App for email-based communication, but will explore potential implementation of an App-based communication system (such as Remind) that families can opt into
 - b. In order to avoid over-use of such push notifications, the Administration will restrict use of the App-based communication to emergencies (bus delays, weather cancellations, disaster alerts, major event reminders)
4. Website Functionality:
- a. As the RBCS website is under-utilized as an information source, the Administration will not initiate new communication on the site
 - b. Rather, the school will treat the website as a repository for valuable resources – archived letters, board documents, photos/videos, newsletters and other reference documents and forms
 - c. RBCS website will continue to link to school’s existing social media outlets (and vice versa)
5. Social Media:
- a. Facebook will become RBCS’s de facto “live website”, in the sense that it will highlight/celebrate community accomplishments, events and news
 - b. Facebook will not be used to disseminate essential/time-sensitive information
 - c. In order to streamline existing social media channels, the school will delete superfluous Facebook pages, and will treat Twitter as an extension of Facebook
 - d. Facebook will be updated at least three times/week with proactive messaging, including photos and videos to promote higher viewership and engagement
 - e. Messages will remain relatively short, and will refer followers back to the school website for documents or further information on what is posted
6. Print Communication:
- a. As mentioned earlier, teacher newsletters and flyers will continue to be utilized as the most effective form of direct communication
 - b. Leadership newsletters will also be available in print copy at the front desk

Community Engagement Committee:

Mr. Myron Hargrow, Chair & Dean of Students and Families
Ms. Kendra Pillich-Rothmaier, Home and School Association President*
Ms. Lauren Hogan, Parent Board Representative
Ms. Imani Powell, Parent Board Representative
Ms. Alana Bouie, Director of Data & Technology
Mr. Jesse Bean, Head of School
Mr. Jeff Jubilirer, Bellevue Communications (Consulting Member)

*Beginning in January 2017, the Committee will be joined by our remaining HSA Officers (Ms. MaryJean Lear, Ms. Kate Clark, and Ms. Danielle Robinson)