

NSPRA Communication Audit Report

Long Beach Unified School District

April 28, 2021



NSPRA

National School Public Relations Association
15948 Derwood Road | Rockville, MD 20855
(301) 519-0496 | www.nspra.org
www.facebook.com/NSPRAAssociation
twitter.com/nspra

Communication Audit Team

- **Communication auditors:**

- Elise Shelton
Lead Auditor
- Tim Carroll, APR

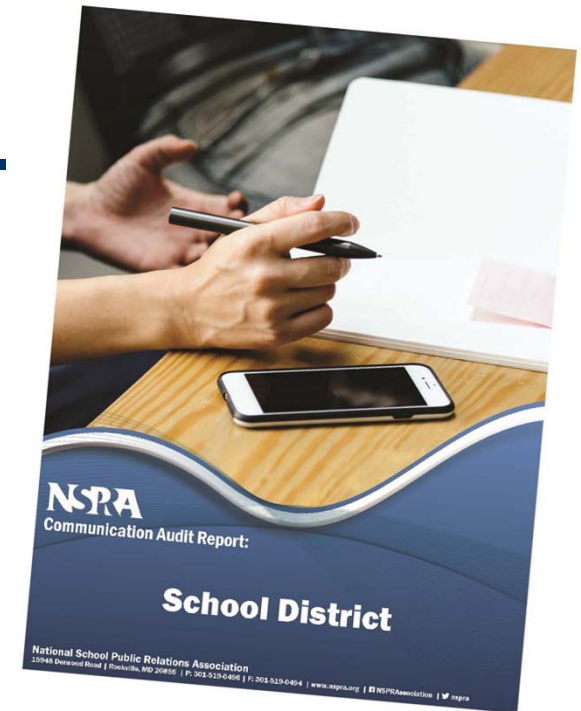
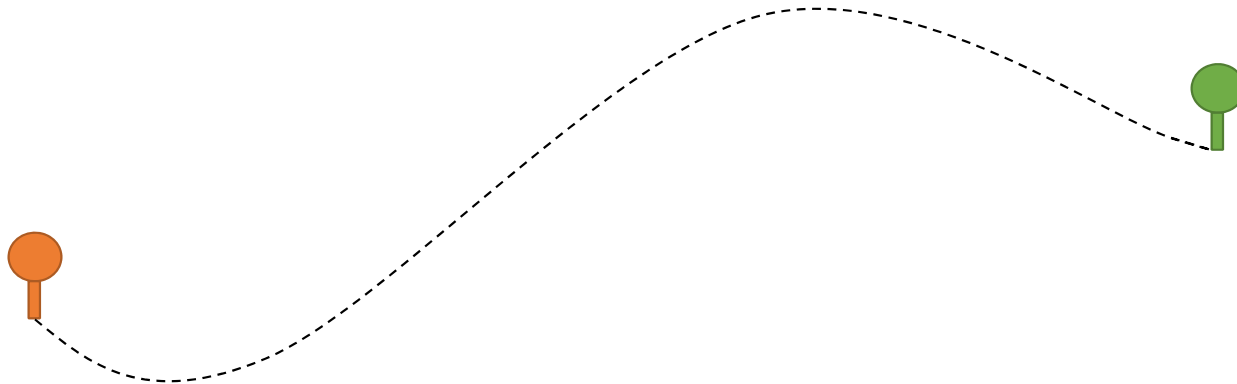


- **NSPRA executive staff:**

- Barbara Hunter, APR
Executive Director
- Mellissa Braham, APR
Associate Director

What is a NSPRA Communication Audit?

**A NSPRA Communication Audit
is your communication program GPS.**



What is a NSPRA Communication Audit?

- **A comprehensive assessment** of current communication efforts and the effectiveness of the overall program.
- **A snapshot of current perceptions** about your schools, district and leadership.
- **A tool that provides baseline research** to evaluate progress and a framework for developing your communication plan.

Communication Audit in LBUSD

Review of district materials:

- Print and digital publications
- Policies, goals, reports, etc.
- Campaigns and plans
- Programs
- Media coverage
- Websites, Videos
- Social media
- ... and more!



January 15, 2021

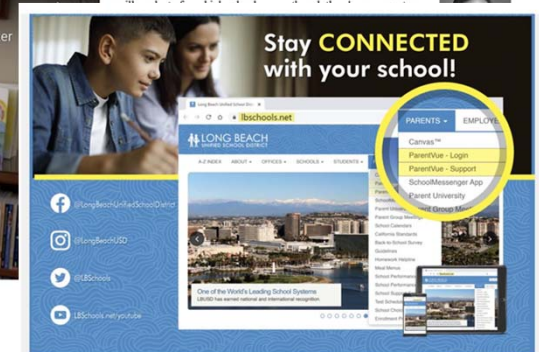


Video: A Message from Superintendent Jill Baker, Ed.D. - January 15th, 2021

November 20, 2020

te teaching profession contributes
ture of our society than any other
sion." - John Wooden. Today's

My quote is by Brene Brown: "Let ourselves
be seen, deeply seen, vulnerably seen, to love
with our whole hearts, even



Communication Audit in LBUSD

Virtual focus groups with key stakeholders

Conducted December 2020, January 2021

22 focus groups:

Parents; Business/Community Leaders and School Partners;
Students; Teachers; Central Office and School Administrative
Assistants: Principals; Department Directors, Managers and
Supervisors; School Counselors and Nurses; Executive Staff;
Board of Education Members

Key Findings: Stakeholders' Perceptions of LBUSD

Strengths:

- Diversity and equity
- Focus on student success
- Resources and support for teachers
- High graduation rate
- High employee retention
- Community trust
- Rollout of COVID-19 communication
- Parent University

Key Findings: Stakeholders' Perceptions of LBUSD

Challenges

- Disparity of internet connectivity, devices
- Translation support for speakers of other languages
- Finding the right balance/timing/order of communication
- Lack of staff input/impact in major decisions
- Organization of district communication responsibilities
- LBUSD website

Observations:

Auditors' Observations of LBUSD

Positives:

- LBUSD's excellent reputation
- Stability in top leadership
- Respect and appreciation for PIO and MMS
- Effective pandemic communication

Observations:

Auditors' Observations of LBUSD

Opportunities for improvement:

- Need for consistent messaging and materials
- Strategic organization of communication program
- An increase of two-way internal communication
- Relevance of social media content to all audiences
- Communication of Board of Education actions/decisions

Recommendation #1

- **Strengthen the value and usefulness of LBUSD's communication plan by including measurable objectives and research-based strategies.**
 - Action Step #1.1 – Follow the four-step PR planning process
 - Action Step #1.2 – Include SMART objectives in planning
 - Action Step #1.3 – Create mini plans for new programs
 - Action Step #1.4 – Devote time for evaluation and planning
 - Action Step #1.5 – Create a crisis communication plan

Recommendation #2

- **Increase alignment of the varied communication service areas and staff to maximize the effectiveness of the district communication program.**
 - Action Step #2.1 – Reconfigure the communications structure
 - Action Step #2.2 – Evaluate current communication tasks

Recommendation #3

- **Expand LBUSD's inclusive culture for diverse families to its expectations for all communication practices.**
 - Action Step #3.1 – Ensure plans include diversity component
 - Action Step #3.2 – Support principals in delivering inclusive parent communications
 - Action Step #3.3 – Strive to expand translation services

Recommendation #4

- **Make internal communications a priority.**
 - Action Step #4.1 – Update *LB School Bulletin*
 - Action Step #4.2 – Improve internal email management
 - Action Step #4.3 – Keep admins in the communication loop
 - Action Step #4.4 – Create interactive opportunities for staff
 - Action Step #4.5 – Use a communication responsibility grid
 - Action Step #4.6 – Form an employee communication council
 - Action Step #4.7 – Keep employees informed
 - Action Step #4.8 – Help staff understand communication role
 - Action Step #4.9 – Expand employee recognition

Recommendation #5

- **Strengthen the engagement of staff members in the district's decision-making process.**
 - Action Step #5.1 – Clearly outline purpose
 - Action Step #5.2 – Schedule regular school visits
 - Action Step #5.3 – Have administrators use 'rounding' conversations for input
 - Action Step #5.4 – Invite ideas and feedback
 - Action Step #5.5 – Listen to variety of staff voices

Recommendation #6

- **Enhance LBUSD's use of digital communication tools to strengthen their effectiveness.**
 - Action Step #6.1 – Enhance the district website
 - Action Step #6.2 – Inform stakeholders of LBUSD social media
 - Action Step #6.3 – Creatively connect stakeholders
 - Action Step #6.4 – Optimize the use of video

Recommendation #7

- **Incorporate marketing strategies into a strategic communication and marketing plan.**
 - Action Step #7.1 – Define LBUSD’s desired brand
 - Action Step #7.2 – Highlight student successes
 - Action Step #7.3 – Enhance with micro-campaigns
 - Action Step #7.4 – Build outreach with realtors
 - Action Step #7.5 – Add marketing to families new to LBUSD
 - Action Step #7.6 – Assess first impressions
 - Action Step #7.7 – Create Alumni Program

Recommendation #8

- **Create a network of key communicators.**
 - Action Step #8.1 – Identify opinion leaders
 - Action Step #8.2 – Host orientation meeting
 - Action Step #8.3 – Show appreciation

Recommendation #9

- **Expand and enhance Board of Education communications.**
 - Action Step #9.1 – Create a policy on communications
 - Action Step #9.2 – Deliver prompt summaries of meetings
 - Action Step #9.3 – Make BOE more accessible on website
 - Action Step #9.4 – Open dialogue between BOE and public
 - Action Step #9.5 – Develop a School Board Academy for future leaders

Recommendation #10

- **Include students in delivering the LBUSD message.**
 - Action Step #10.1 – Offer a student internship in communication office
 - Action Step #10.2 – Create student liaisons at high schools

Considerations for Implementation

- **Team effort:**

- Recommendations go beyond what can be achieved by communications staff alone

- **Long-term effort:**

- Introduce new components when budget, resources, staff capacity allow
- While maintaining existing programs, may not be feasible to undertake more than 2-3 major recommendations in a year



Questions?

- **Elise Shelton**
 - Elise.Shelton@gmail.com
- **NSPRA**
 - (301) 519-1227
 - info@nspra.org
 - www.nspra.org

