

**SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



# **Communication Plan**

*FOR*

# **Engaging with Parents and the Community 2023-2024**

**SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION**



# Southampton County Public Schools

## Communication Plan

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Southampton County Public Schools

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Susan Street, Principal, Nottoway Elementary School

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Dr. Tonica White, Principal, Southampton High School

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# Southampton County Public Schools

## VISION

The vision of Southampton County Public Schools is that all students will be successful, productive, lifelong learners in an ever-changing world.

## MISSION

The mission of Southampton County Public Schools through the combined efforts of staff, students, families, and the community is to ensure quality education in a safe environment that will prepare students to be successful learners and productive citizens in an ever-changing society.

## DIVISION GOALS

**GOAL 1:** *Expand Learning Opportunities and Increase Student Achievement*

**GOAL 2:** *Expand Our Safe and Healthy School Culture and Climate*

**GOAL 3:** *Expand Professional Training and Improved Employee Retention*

**GOAL 4:** *Expand Community and Parental Partnerships*

**GOAL 5:** *Expand Capital Improvement Efforts and Acquire More Fiscal Resources*

**GOAL 6:** *Expand Opportunities to make them Equitable for All Students*

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## PURPOSE OF THIS BOOKLET

The purpose of this plan is to present a clear and concise framework for communicating with our constituents. The plan will address internal and external communications.

The plan is a working document that is reviewed on an annual basis by the Board of Education.

Our objective is to improve internal and external communications with our parents and school community.

We aim to create open and efficient two-way communications between the School Board, Division Leadership Team, School Administration, teachers, students, parents, and community.

**Southampton Public School Division's Website**

**[www.southampton.k12.va.us](http://www.southampton.k12.va.us)**

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## TARGET AUDIENCES

As part of an ongoing effort to foster effective communications between parents and staff at Southampton County Public Schools, school officials developed the following communication guidelines. The goal is to establish a set of reasonable expectations and behaviors for parents and staff. These guidelines will be reviewed on a periodic basis and adjusted as necessary.

The plan primarily addresses two types of school district audiences: internal (students, teachers, staff, administration and School Board) and external (parents, businesses, civic groups, faith-based organizations, and other members of the SCPS community).

### Internal

1. Students
2. Staff
  - A. School/Site Level
    - i. Classified
    - ii. Certified
    - iii. Department Chairs
    - iv. Leadership Team
    - v. School Administrators
    - vi. Non-classified
    - vii. Related service providers
  - B. District Level
    - i. Classified
    - ii. Certified
    - iii. Supervisors
    - iv. Administrators
    - v. Non-classified
    - vi. Related service providers
3. School Board

### External

1. Parents
2. Prospective Employees
3. Business Community
4. Government Officials
5. Civic Groups
6. Law Enforcement
7. Faith-based Groups

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8. Community Groups
9. Colleges and Universities
10. Private Schools
11. Media
12. Community Partners

## METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

Communication refers to both the sending and receiving of information, such as email and notes, and verbal communications such as telephone conversations and face-to-face meetings.

Our objective is to improve internal and external communication systems with the specific goal of creating open, two-way communication between the School Board, Division Leadership Team, administration, staff, students, parents and the SCPS Communities. We utilize several methods of communication to facilitate this process.

Our current communications methods include, but are not limited to:

1. Printed Materials
  - a. Internal
    - i. Teacher Handbooks
    - ii. Personnel Manual
    - iii. Transportation Manual
  - b. External
    - i. 2020 COVID-19 Resources<sup>1</sup>
      1. SCPS Virtual Manual
      2. SCPS Frequently Asked Questions Handbook
      3. School Resumption Plan
      4. School Reopening Health Plan
    - ii. Tidewater News
    - iii. Parent/Student Handbook
    - iv. Interim Reports
    - v. Report Cards
2. E-mail Communication- SCPS uses e-mail communications to connect with both internal and external audiences.

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<sup>1</sup> List is not exhaustive

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3. Division Website- The district's website should be utilized as the key marketing tool. It should be kept up-to-date and include pertinent information for both internal and external stakeholders, i.e. Budget information, RIF Guidelines, Payroll Schedules and Teacher Pay Scales.
4. Remind-used as a one-way communication tool at the division level to send important messages; also used as a two-way communication tool at the school level discuss matters between principals and parents/students or teachers and parents/students
5. Instant Alert- used as a one-way communication tool to send important messages from the division level
6. Telephone (Voice & Text)
7. Social Media- SCPS administrators/designees/employees will not respond to posts via social media. Those with parental/community concerns are encouraged to follow the Communication Process Flowchart to communicate their concerns and receive a response from SCPS personnel.
8. Parent Portal (MySchoolBucks)

SCPS reserves the right to remove any comments on our social media pages that do not reflect the values and standards of SCPS.

9. Classroom Dojo



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## ORGANIZATIONAL FLOW

### Southampton County Public School Division Communication Process Flow Chart

Teachers/Classified Staff



Guidance Counselor



Assistant Principal/  
Supervisor



Principal



Central Office Staff



Superintendent/Designee



School Board Members

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## Communication with Southampton County Public School Division Officials

Southampton County Public School Division strives to ensure positive relationships with families assisting all students and encouraging parents to communicate with school officials. Please become familiar with the "**Communication Process Flowchart.**" This sequence is in place to assist parents on where to begin their communication regarding their problem or concern.

**Most parent and community questions can be answered by communicating directly with the staff member closest to the situation.** As you move further along the flowchart, the staff is less directly involved and usually needs additional time to research the situation before they can give you an answer.

If you do not hear back from the person you have contacted within **two (2) business days**, it is appropriate to reach out to them again before moving along to the next level of the flowchart. We do not expect your questions or concerns to go unanswered for a long period of time.

Each situation should first be addressed at whatever level the initial action was taken with appeals moving on to the next level on the "**Communication Process Flowchart.**" The methods of communication are listed on page 7 of this manual.

**PLEASE UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION** It is important that the school has current phone numbers and addresses on file in our school data system. If you move or change your phone number, it is imperative that you notify the school and update your emergency contact information. Please visit the office to update a form.

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## Southampton County Public Schools Communication Process Flowchart

Area of Concern	First Level	Second Level	Third Level	Fourth Level	Fifth Level	Sixth Level	Seventh Level
<b>Instruction/ Curriculum/ Classroom Testing</b>	Teacher	Counselor	Assistant Principal	Principal	School Board Office— Director of Curriculum	Superintendent / Designee	Southampton County Board of Education
<b>Athletics</b>	Coach/ Head Coach	Athletic Director	Assistant Principal	Principal	School Board Office— Coordinator of Auxiliary Services	Superintendent / Designee	Southampton County Board of Education
<b>Special Education</b>	Teacher/ Special Education Teacher	Counselor	Assistant Principal	Principal	School Board Office—Director of Special Education & Student Services	Superintendent / Designee	Southampton County Board of Education
<b>Student Concerns/ Guidance</b>	Counselor		Assistant Principal	Principal	School Board Office—Interim Director of Human Resources	Superintendent / Designee	Southampton County Board of Education
<b>Classroom Discipline</b>	Teacher	Counselor	Assistant Principal	Principal	School Board Office—Interim Director of Human Resources	Superintendent / Designee	Southampton County Board of Education
<b>Non-Classroom Discipline</b>	Teacher	Counselor	Assistant Principal	Principal	School Board Office—Director of Curriculum	Superintendent / Designee	Southampton County Board of Education

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<b>Classroom Concerns</b>	Teacher	Counselor	Assistant Principal	Principal	School Board Office—Interim Director of Human Resources	Superintendent / Designee	Southampton County Board of Education
<b>Scheduling Concerns/ Changes</b>	Counselor		Assistant Principal	Principal	School Board Office—Director of Curriculum	Superintendent / Designee	Southampton County Board of Education
<b>Transportation —Discipline/ Other Issues</b>	Assistant Principal		Principal	Transportation Supervisor	School Board Office—Coordinator of Auxiliary Services	Superintendent / Designee	Southampton County Board of Education
<b>Transportation — Permanent Changes</b>	Transportation Secretary			Transportation Supervisor	School Board Office—Coordinator of Auxiliary Services	Superintendent / Designee	Southampton County Board of Education
<b>Food Service Issues/ Concerns</b>	School Cafeteria Manager	Assistant Principal	Principal	Food Service Supervisor	School Board Office—Coordinator of Auxiliary Services	Superintendent / Designee	Southampton County Board of Education
<b>Classroom Technology Issues</b>	Teacher	Technology Coaches	School Administration	Technology Department	School Board Office—Technology Supervisor	Superintendent / Designee	Southampton County Board of Education
<b>Parent Access Technology Issues</b>	Teacher	Technology Coaches	Guidance Department/ School Administration	Technology Department	School Board Office—Technology Supervisor	Superintendent / Designee	Southampton County Board of Education
<b>Building/ Facility Concerns</b>	Assistant Principal		Principal		School Board Office—Coordinator of Auxiliary Services	Superintendent / Designee	Southampton County Board of Education

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<b>Daycare</b>	Child Care Supervisor		Principal		School Board Office—Interim Director of Human Resources	Superintendent/ Designee	Southampton County Board of Education
<b>School Attendance</b>	Attendance Clerk/ Secretary	Counselor	Principal	School Board Office—Truancy Officer	School Board Office—Director of Special Education & Student Services	Superintendent/ Designee	Southampton County Board of Education
<b>Health Related Concerns</b>	Teacher	Nurse	Assistant Principal	Principal	School Board Office—Interim Director of Human Resources	Superintendent / Designee	Southampton County Board of Education
<b>State Testing</b>	Teacher	Counselor	Assistant Principal	Principal	School Board Office—Director of Special Education & Student Services	Superintendent / Designee	Southampton County Board of Education

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**Note. Parents that have not followed the “Communication Process Flowchart” will be directed to the appropriate level based on the circumstances.** Phone messages are checked regularly.

Please allow for **two (2) business days** for a response. If no response is received from before that time, send a second email or phone call before moving to the next level on the flowchart. **Please note - Classroom questions concerning your child should be addressed with your child’s teacher before contacting the counselors and/or school administration.**

## Guidelines for Parent Communications to Teachers and Staff

In order to ensure a successful exchange of information, it is important that all parties follow a few key principles.

### Maintain Respectful and Open Communication

- Always use a respectful and polite tone.
- Request, don’t demand.
  - Be ready not just to provide information, but to listen to teacher/staff observations and perspectives.
- Enter the exchange with an open mind and assume a shared best interest for your child.
- Be prepared to work collaboratively to solve problems.
- Threats and/or inappropriate language will not be tolerated.

### Confidentiality

- Recognize that confidentiality may limit information that can be shared from school to parents, including consequences for other students’ behaviors.

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## Southampton County Public Schools Communication Process Flowchart for Employees

Area of Concern	First Level	Second Level	Third Level	Fourth Level	Fifth Level
Instruction/Curriculum	Assistant Principal	Principal	School Board Office— <b>Gillette</b>	Southampton County Board of Education	
Athletics	Athletic Director	Principal	School Board Office	Southampton County Board of Education	
Special Education	Special Education Teacher	Principal	School Board Office— <b>Dr. Taylor</b>	Southampton County Board of Education	
Student Concerns/Guidance/Health Related Concerns	Counselor	Assistant Principal	Principal	School Board Office— <b>Hicks</b>	Southampton County Board of Education
Classroom Discipline	Assistant Principal	Principal	School Board Office— <b>Hicks</b>	Southampton County Board of Education	
Non-Classroom Discipline	Counselor	Assistant Principal	Principal	School Board Office — <b>Taylor/ Gillette</b>	Southampton County Board of Education
Classroom Concerns	Assistant Principal	Principal	School Board Office — <b>Gillette</b>	Southampton County Board of Education	
Scheduling Concerns/Changes	Counselor	Principal	School Board Office — <b>Gillette</b>	Southampton County Board of Education	
Transportation	Assistant Principal	Transportation Supervisor	School Board Office- <b>Melbye</b>	Southampton County Board of Education	
Food Service Issues/Concerns	Assistant Principal	Food Service Supervisor	School Board Office-- <b>Melbye</b>	Southampton County Board of Education	
Technology Issues	ITRT	Principal	Technology Department	School Board Office- <b>-Hatch</b>	Southampton County Board of Education

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Building/Facility Concerns	Assistant Principal	Principal	School Board Office-- <b>Melbye</b>	Southampton County Board of Education
Benefits/Finance	Principal	School Board Office-- <b>Carr</b>		Southampton County Board of Education
Workplace Complaint/Issue	Principal/Direct Supervisor	School Board Office— <b>Hicks</b>		Southampton County Board of Education
Licensure	Principal	School Board Office— <b>Hicks</b>		Southampton County Board of Education



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## GOALS & STRATEGIES

Goals and strategies are put in place to ensure the smooth operation of the communication structure of SCPS. This list is in no way exhaustive and is dynamic in nature.

### I. Internal

Target Audience	Goal	Strategies	Person Responsible
Teachers	Utilize timely communication with staff in buildings	Weekly memos Faculty Meetings Grade Level Meetings Emails Remind Google Classroom	Building Administration
School Board	Update on pertinent matters related to division goals	Provide monthly updates at School Board meetings	Superintendent
Students	Provide students an opportunity to voice their opinions and/or concerns	Maintain and improve Superintendent's Student Advisory Council  Utilize Schoology messages	Teachers Building Administration Central Office Staff Superintendent
Students	Communicate with students their academic and behavioral progress in a timely manner	Remind messages  Schoology assignments in a easily accessed way  Phone	Teachers Students Parents

### II. External

Target Audience	Objective	Strategies	Person
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			Responsible
Parents	Utilize timely and efficient communication	<p>Return phone calls within 2 working days</p> <p>Respond to emails within 2 working days</p> <p>Develop a process for tracking, monitoring and responding to concerns.</p> <p>Continue with electronic communication tools to provide information (Remind, PowerSchool, Instant Alert, Social Media, etc.)</p>	Building Administration
Community	<p>Engage in two-way communication</p> <p>Facilitate connections among community stakeholder groups and district administrators: religious leaders, business groups, and area legislators.</p> <p>Expand on external key communication initiatives and share information to promote education with the empty-nester group.</p> <p>Build and maintain partnerships with business and community leaders.</p>	Continue with electronic communication tools to provide information for all stakeholders.	
Media	Use electronic, print and mass media tools to publicize our schools' good news; events,	Share information through press releases, briefings and photo opportunities.	

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	<p>activities and awards.</p> <p>Maintain an effective media relations plan that enhances the district's image in the community.</p>	<p>Invite press to campus activities to cover events.</p> <p>Encourage staff to submit articles and photos to newspaper</p> <p>Respond in a timely, reliable fashion to media inquiries and requests.</p> <p>Superintendent serves as the division spokesperson</p>	
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## PROTOCOLS

### Outside Organization Information Dissemination

Any outside agency that wishes to have a flyer sent home via the parent communications system must get the approval of the Superintendent and generally meet the following criteria:

1. Must not contradict the SCPS mission, values or policies
2. Must have a direct benefit for the students of SCPS
3. Must be a non-profit entity
4. Other as determined by the Superintendent

Individual parents cannot utilize the parent communications system for the dissemination of information.

### Board of Education Meetings

- 2nd Monday of each month - 7:00 p.m.
- Southampton High School Commons

### Public Complaints

Complaints involving a particular school are handled within the school through the **established channel of responsibility**. If the complaint cannot be resolved at the level of the principal, it is referred to the superintendent or superintendent's designee. If the central office staff and complainant cannot reach a satisfactory solution, the matter may, at the School Board's discretion, be heard at a regular board meeting.

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