

SDCCS Communication Plan

Proposal Updated 9/08/04

Summary

In an effort to improve communication between the primary stakeholders the following plan was developed by Caralyn Henry (teacher/parent), Chris Sullivan (P3/parent), and Jennifer Currie(board/parent). Because SDCCS is based upon a model of shared leadership, the primary aim of the communication plan is two-fold: to create a structured reporting mechanism between the committees, the Teachers, the Administration, the Parent Staff Association, and the Board of Directors; and to provide timely evidence for evaluation of the school, its committees and its goals.

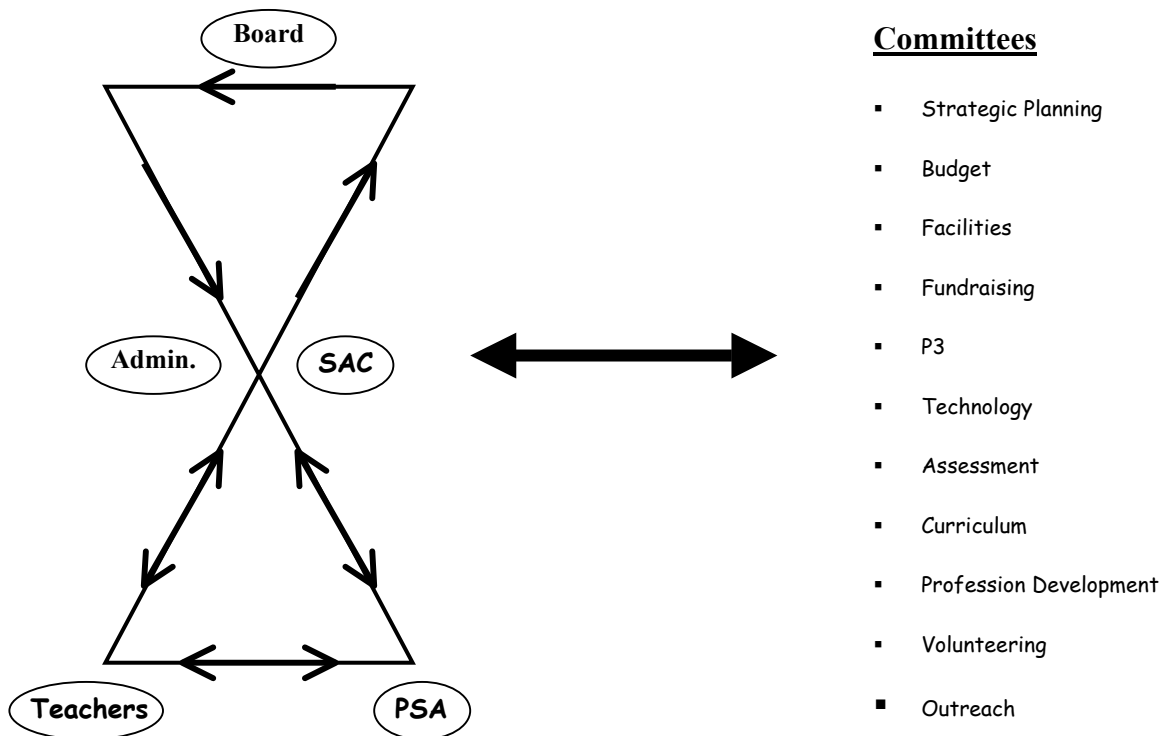
History

Having maintained steady growth despite what were, occasionally, serious impediments in its first two years, SDCCS finds itself on the threshold of long-term sustainability. However, the need for an improved mechanism for communication has been both formally and informally brought to the attention of the Board of Directors; therefore, the Board adopted the following directive from the "2003-2004 Program Review" recommendations:

- ❖ Institute a policy of written staff committee reports to board by designated staff representatives: SDCCS has numerous standing staff committees engaged in the development and implementation of school curriculum and policy. Comprehensive monthly updates are essential for the board of directors to chart the progress of our program goals. (PR 5)

Currently, communication continues to be at the forefront of the minds of many educational leaders at SDCCS. Every person involved in planning for the SDCCS 2004-2005 Retreat named improving communication as a necessary outcome. It was also first on the "Hot Topic" list that was created at the Retreat itself. The consensus is that past communication breakdowns have made the day-to-day operations of the school problematic, and, additionally, they have contributed to a climate of frustration and mistrust between the primary stakeholders of our *cooperative* school.

Solution



1. SDCCS Goals & Action Minutes: The Work of the Committee

One of the outcomes for the SDCCS retreat was to formalize the purpose, goals, and outcomes of the various leadership committees. Therefore, all primary stakeholder groups -- the Board, the PSA, the Administration, and the Teachers -- will use the input from other stakeholders to formalize their own roles/responsibilities and challenges. Similarly, all committees will formalize their purpose, goals, milestones, and meeting schedules by completing the "SDCCS Goals" forms. The committee will keep these forms in a their own Committee Binder that will be stored in the main office of SDCCS. Upon each meeting, the committee chair will bring the binder to the meeting so that the members will always have that goals in mind, and never lose sight of the milestones -- those accomplishments that are necessary for the goals to be realized. At each meeting, "Action Minutes" will be taken and also stored in the binder. That way, the committee is responsible for collecting evidence that it is making progress on its goals.

2. Monitor & Evaluate Progress of SDCCS Leadership: The Work of the School Advisory Council (SAC)

Two additional copies of the "Goals" and "Action Minutes" will be made and given to the principal and the SAC. With up-to-date Action Minutes in hand, the principal will have written documentation that will make his or her managerial responsibilities more manageable. The SAC will also have documentation that it can include as evidence to be used when making recommendations for both daily operations and long-range organizational planning. There will be two additional binders in the main office, the Principal Binder, and the SAC binder that will house two separate compilations of "Goals" and Action Minutes for each committee. These binders should be taken to all Staff, PSA, and Board meetings for the purpose of reporting-out the progress of the committees.

3. Establish Committee Reports At All Stakeholder Meetings: The Work of the Principal, the SAC, Committee Chairs, and Liaisons

Because the SAC is comprised of members from all leadership groups -- Teachers, PSA, and Board -- part of its responsibility is to ensure that brief monthly committee reports are made at the beginning of each monthly Staff, Board, and PSA meeting. If the Committee Chair is not present to make the report, the Principal and/or an SAC member will report on the current status of the committee by referring to the most recent copy of Action Minutes available. As per the Board's directive (PR 5), the principal will submit his report to the board in writing at all monthly Board meetings. Teacher liaisons to the Board and PSA will also report on actions/concerns/challenges to both the teachers and to the group for which they are a liaison. Board minutes will continue to be published on the website, and The Board Notes, PSA Events, and Principal's Corner will remain in the monthly SDCCS Newsletter.

Plan Evaluation

At the end of the first semester of the 2004/2005 school year, the SAC will monitor the progress of the communication plan via a brief survey of Teachers, Staff, Board, and PSA and make recommendations to the Board of any needed modifications. At the end of each school year thereafter, the SAC will include a formal evaluation of the communication plan in its program review to the Board of Directors. In this way, SDCCS has promoted

communication as a top priority, thereby helping to ensure the long-term growth and operational success of the school.