

# Miner Elementary School’s Communications Plan for Increasing Engagement, Equity, and Community

School Year 2020-21

## Statement of Purpose

Consistent and equitable communication is critical to the success of Miner Elementary School. Communication impacts all stakeholders in the school community, including current and prospective students, families, teachers, administrators, and members of the community. This Plan sets out the minimum communication expectations among all Miner stakeholders. This Plan also serves as part of Miner’s written policy on family engagement, which is required for Miner as a Title I school and is a component of the Miner Mission/Vision work. This Plan and Miner’s implementation will align with and encompass communications-related aspects of OSSE’s [“Guiding Principles for Continuous Education.”](#)

## Consistency

The Miner Community should have a clear understanding of how they will receive important information from the school and be given regular opportunities to opt-in to communication platforms to sign up.

### PRIORITY ACTION:

In advance of the school year, and periodically throughout the year, Miner families are provided a short, clear handout explaining how and when communication will be relayed by the School Leadership during the year. Families will be given the opportunity to add their email, cell phone for SMS messages, and instructions on accessing other apps.

## Equity

This Plan furthers Miner’s efforts to achieve equity in all school activities. Equitable communication at Miner means that all members of the school community have a full and equal opportunity to receive relevant information, and equal opportunity to communicate back to school administrators. Miner’s communication methods will be varied and inclusive, and they will seek to reach the entire school community regardless of race, ethnicity, limited English proficiency, disability, family status, LGBTQ status, socioeconomic status, or any other characteristic. Equitable communication is also essential to community school engagement.

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## PRIORITY ACTION:

The Miner Administration will conduct quarterly reviews of communication to assess where gaps in delivery occur and take corrective action to ensure families not receiving communication do so. The Miner Administration will commit to ensuring all community concerns are responded to with the same efficiency and follow-up, regardless of from whom the request originates.

## COMMUNICATION METHODS

Internal	External
Master Email (Blackboard Messages)	Miner Website
Bears Bulletin	Instagram
Communication Apps	Facebook
Paper Flyer in backpacks	Twitter
Text Messages	Fence Banner

## COMMUNICATION GOAL #1

**Ensure all members of the Miner Elementary School Community are informed of important school-related policies, procedures, news, events, and updates.**

- Identify communications methods to be used for All School Communications. If a communication is classified as All School Communication, ensure distribution occurs via each internal communication method (at minimum via email, Communication Apps and Text Message with link to information) in a timely manner.
- Develop schedule for schoolwide communications relative to key dates and events (i.e. school closures, back to school night, enrollment).
- Maintain a schoolwide calendar posted to [minerelementary.org](http://minerelementary.org), published via social media periodically throughout the school year, and available for download by the school community. School Administration will ensure that school events are kept up-to-date and relevant school organization representatives are timely notified.
- Memorialize and post emergency communications plan for rapidly informing school community of emergencies and inform Miner community of the plan using an All School Communication consistent with DCPS policies.
- By the beginning of every school year, Miner Administration will publish an updated electronic and paper copy of the Miner Handbook, which will include a compilation of all Miner policies, procedures, and expectations.

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- Miner Administration will designate and publicize a central point of contact for implementing the communications channels in this Plan.

All School Communications (i.e., families, staff, and leadership) will include, but are not limited to:

Events	Announcements
School performances	DCPS Announcements
PTO meetings	Personnel Changes/Updates
Back to School Night	Before and After-care
Parent/Teacher conferences	Building updates
Family engagement	School updates
Teacher appreciation week	Emergencies
Assemblies Open to Families to Attend	Distance Learning
School Picture Day	Class Achievement
Whole School Celebrations	Student Achievement

### COMMUNICATION GOAL #2

#### **Strengthen Miner community and Administration engagement through regular Bears Bulletin.**

- Develop schedule for consistent distribution of Bears Bulletin throughout the year (i.e., Monthly or more frequent during distance learning) and ensure distribution via all internal and external communication methods.
- Use Bears Bulletin to build community through highlighting important events such as Whole School Celebrations. Consider including updates from the Miner Equity Team, PTO, LSAT, Green Team, and other school community organizations.
- Use Bears Bulletin to inform school community of important news, highlight unique class activities, and celebrate Miner achievements. (During distance learning this will be of particular importance and may need to occur more frequently).

*Note: The Bears Bulletin supplements but does not replace regular school communication identified in Goal #1. For example, information about an upcoming schoolwide event should be included in the bulletin as well as distributed using internal communication methods.*

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## **COMMUNICATION GOAL #3**

### **Foster two-way communication between Administration and Miner Community**

- In all school communications, promote method for the Miner School community to communicate back to Administration (e.g., develop and publicize Web form for questions/concerns, include link in footer of all school emails, with capability for anonymous feedback, and provide a suggestion box in the main office).
- Clearly communicate a method for members of the school community to meet with Miner Administration.
- Schedule two Town Hall events for the Miner Community to come together to discuss key issues with Administration.
- Ensure equitable response to requests from the school community and provide timely updates on requests to individual(s) who made request.
- **If an event occurs in the classroom causing a major disruption to the learning environment, Miner Administration will notify all affected parents or guardians while respecting personnel and student privacy and DCPS policies.**

## **COMMUNICATION GOAL #4**

### **Regularly assess school communication to determine gaps and take corrective action to rectify.**

- Ensure every member of the Miner School Community has the opportunity for access to at least one internal communication method.
- Consistent with DCPS direction, phase in the use of the Remind App or similar tool to supplement other forms of communication currently used to reach the Miner community.
- Review email open/delivery rates and similar metrics to determine reach of communication.
- Assist Miner School Community with accessing Class Dojo or equivalent. Review to determine percentage of families not participating and develop strategy to reach out, including through staff who interface directly with families.
- Identify Administration contact person to collect feedback on communication methods and content.
- Conduct regular Aspen audits to ensure contact information is accurate, including, emails, cell phone, address, etc.

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- Track low contact families and create Action Plans to improve communication (consult with social workers and attendance counselors for support)

## **COMMUNICATION GOAL #5**

### **Improve communication between teachers and Administration.**

- Miner Administration will circulate weekly bulletins for staff updates prior to the start of the work week.
- Encourage staff to contribute to the staff bulletin.

## **COMMUNICATION GOAL #6**

### **Identify clear and consistent procedures for teachers to communicate with families. Procedure can vary but must be communicated to classroom parents and maintained throughout the school year.**

- Teachers and staff create contact lists and share with individual managing ASPEN entry to ensure accuracy each year.
- Teachers should conduct middle of year (MOY) survey to gather contact information and preferred method of contact.
- Teachers should communicate with families at the beginning of the year mutual expectations for communication.
- Miner administration will work with the Equity Team to develop a 'room parent' protocol to encourage communication between all community members.
- Classroom or grade-level monthly newsletter. Specials Teachers will similarly provide a monthly newsletter to families (which may be combined among Specials Teachers).

## **COMMUNICATION GOAL #7**

### **Identify special procedures, including more frequent communication methods referenced in other Communication Goals, for distance learning. This Goal will be adapted to the evolving circumstances for any distance learning situation.**

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- Miner leadership will provide a periodic recorded community wide greeting, which will include, among others, announcements regularly made at the school, reminders about upcoming school events/meetings, simple messages of support, like the following: "Hello Miner Community, we miss you and cannot wait to see you all!", DCPS updates.
- Weekly internal announcements will include birthday celebrations and other news targeted to families.
- Miner leadership will coordinate virtual celebrations to mark important points in the school year.
- Miner Administration will establish and publish contact information for IT help to assist families in engaging in distance learning, which may include Miner staff, parent volunteers, and DCPS contact information.

### **COMMUNICATION GOAL #8**

**Establish a committee of Miner Administration, staff, and family volunteers, with representatives of various school community organizations (e.g., PTO, LSAT, Equity Team, etc.) to evaluate, identify, and help implement integrated communications tools to assist in the implementation of this Plan.**

- The Committee will annually evaluate this Plan and facilitate equitable discussion among the school community to make improvements.