

# QUICK TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

1. Plan your message before composing your communication.
2. Avoid buzzwords and clichés since some in the community may not understand them.
3. Be succinct.
4. Make it plain and simple.
5. Communicate in the language of your school community.
6. Be inclusive in your messaging.
7. Be timely in your communication;  
i.e. if you want parents to attend an event make sure you allow sufficient time for them to plan to attend.
8. Don't clutter with clip art or comics.
9. Proofread thoroughly before publishing or hitting the "send" button
10. Email is one of the most effective ways to distribute school council communications, however, keep a couple of things in mind before sending your communication:
  - You must comply with all regulations set out in the CASL.
  - Permission must be given by the person that will receive your email.
  - Use an email tool ie. Mail chimp, constant contact etc. This allows you to see who is opening your email and provides legal "unsubscribe" mechanisms.
  - Keep your email short and meaningful to the receiver.

## SCHOOL COUNCIL WEBSITES

If there is a council member who is interested in developing a school council website, there are a lot of easy tools that will be valuable to the process. Alternatively, the council could request that the Principal create a section of the school website that feature council updates and news.

### PARENTS ENGAGED IN EDUCATION MISSION STATEMENT

To promote and engage parents in their children's education process to increase academic achievement.

To provide resources and skill building opportunities for parents, guardians and school council members in support of children's education in Ontario.

To implement a succession plan to have continuity in the school community to engage parents and the community.

To provide resources to parents to assist them in engaging and supporting their child's learning resulting in increased student achievement.



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# EFFECTIVE SCHOOL COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS

PRODUCED BY:  
**PARENTS ENGAGED  
IN EDUCATION**

[ParentsEngagedInEducation.ca](http://ParentsEngagedInEducation.ca)

# OTHER COMMUNICATION TOOLS

## facebook

1. Facebook can be a great tool to share information with your school community, promote events, allow parents to network, get issues important to the community raised to the council etc.

There are some important strategies that school councils should be aware of before establishing a Facebook account

- Encourage community to not use the page as a forum for complaints.
- To avoid inappropriate postings regarding teachers, students, parents or principals, it is beneficial to post a note in the profile that postings will go through an administrator who will be sure it is appropriate to share with the community.

## twitter

2. Twitter – messaging to school community in real time.

140 characters or less can be just enough to engage your school community with council updates, event announcements, good news about your school.

# WRITING A GOOD SCHOOL COUNCIL NEWSLETTER. **MAKING A PLAN**

Once your council has agreed that a newsletter is an effective way to communicate with your school community, it is worth formulating a plan which will be followed to create each issue.

### Consider the following:

1. Consider how often the council would have enough content to write a newsletter versus sending a message through email or letter to the community.
2. What is the purpose of the newsletter i.e. to increase parent involvement in school or council or to inform the community about school activities or both?
3. Know your community – consider translation
4. Be realistic – don't use the newsletter to promise things that may not come true; eg. The council hopes to have a new playground installed this year (when the truth is "hopes to raise enough funds to install a playground").
5. Don't limit the newsletter to just council news-talk about students, the school board and the Ministry. Provide useful links that would be valuable to parents.
6. Logistics – how will the newsletter be distributed; email or hard copy (remember ECO school requirements)
7. Publishing Guidelines – The two most important points; Align your newsletter to school board's communication policy. All community communications should have the approval of the Principal.

