

Huntsville High School PTSA Communicating Effectively

Implementation: Well-informed parents continue to stay actively involved in their children's education and assign high value to their PTA memberships. At Huntsville High, we utilize a variety of complementary methods to enhance communication. For example, in an effort to keep families informed of current events and issues, our PTSA provides parents and students with a weekly newsletter *Panther Postings*... it communicates information and news from the administration, PTSA, guidance department, clubs, sports, and anyone else who has appropriate school-related announcements to share. Additionally, the school maintains a website that includes up-to-date announcements, a schedule for upcoming events, information on school-sponsored social activities, links to PTSA news, school calendars, and clubs. There is an electronic billboard located in the front of the school that features pertinent announcements. Breaking news can be sent via an electronic phone tree where recorded announcements can be communicated directly to parents within a matter of minutes. Leveraging technology, the parents have access to *Edmodo*, the computer program system students use for their digital curriculum. Parents can log into *Edmodo* and see student assignments and announcements posted by teachers, students, and administration. In addition, PTSA established a Facebook page to allow parents, students and staff an interactive communication link. There is also an informal Facebook page "Huntsville High School Moms". Prior to orientation, parents are sent out a packet of information with school and PTSA announcements. The PTSA's bundle contains membership information, contact emails and phone numbers of board members, and information of how to get involved. Lastly, HHS

PTSA publishes a quarterly newsletter with pictures and accomplishments of school activities. In past years, this was mailed to families. Recently, the newsletter was sent out electronically to save money. Hard copies can be found at the office.

Success: Successfully intergrading a variety of formats and mediums, families and school staff were continuously engaged in meaningful communications. Over 90% of parents and 100% of students have access to the weekly and quarterly electronic newsletters, additionally hardcopies are provided in the office. The school website and electronic billboard served as an ongoing way to communicate with families.

With the switch to all digital curriculums, parents can now login into the *Edmodo* system and monitor student assignments and announcements from teachers. On multiple occasions, the mass communications phone was successfully used to rapidly communicate with parents and relay important announcements.

Announcement ranged from weather announcements and school closures to invitations to upcoming PTSA programs. The HHS PTSA Facebook page was used to communicate upcoming events and ways to stay involved. The informal "Huntsville High School Moms" Facebook page has 321 members and is used multiple times per day. The distribution of information bundles mailed prior to orientation offered detailed information about orientation, PTSA membership, how to get involved, and answered many common questions about the school and PTSA.