

## **Sample Communication Plan District Awards for Teacher Excellence (D.A.T.E.) Program**

### **What are the crucial components of a D.A.T.E. communication plan?**

A communication plan should aim to build support among all stakeholders for the new pay structure. You should determine your target audiences and design multiple means of communication (electronic, written, and face-to-face) to engage stakeholders. The communication plan should include goals, a timetable, and a feedback mechanism to ensure your communication is being received and understood.

Three of the primary goals of a communication plan include: establishing regular and timely communication between district level leaders and each participating school; raising awareness of the program among teachers, principal and community members; and using positive publicity to promote the program.

In order to enhance the effectiveness of the performance award program, a communication plan should include the following components:

- involve teachers at the outset
- engage multiple communication formats on a frequent basis
- communicate clearly the goals and structure of the award plan to multiple audiences, and the development of an ongoing relationship with the local media.

### **Goals of the Communication Plan:**

The goals of the Communication Plan are as follows:

1. Establish a regular and timely communication process between the facilitator of your performance pay plan and each participating school.
2. Raise the awareness of the D.A.T.E grant among educators and non-educators (parents and community members) across the district.
3. Use positive publicity to encourage and solicit increased funding or in-kind contributions from additional sources.
4. Garner support for the program from a wide range of school and community stakeholders.
5. Use media outlets effectively to promote your districts performance pay plan.

### **Action Plan:**

An effective communication plan includes multiple vehicles and methods for delivering communications. The table below illustrates the type, audience, person responsible, and the timeframe.

<b>Type</b>	<b>Public</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Goal</b>
Monthly newsletters to participating schools	Internal	Administrative Assistant	Monthly	1
Provide required reports to TEA and other relevant governing bodies	External	Project Director	Quarterly	3,4
Attend and circulate information from various conferences and workshops	External	Project Director/ Program Specialist	Monthly	2
Ensure open communication between your district, TEA and your ESC	External and internal	Project Director/ Program Specialist	Annually	2,3,4
Establish positive relationships with journalists in your area who cover education	External	Program Specialist	Weekly	2,3,4,5
Create pamphlets for local libraries and conferences	External	Administrative Assistant	Annually	2
Provide current information on the district's Web site	External and internal	Administrative Assistant	Weekly	1,2,5
Provide training and guidance to principals on media relations	External	Program Specialist	Annually	5
Train at least one teacher from each school on calculating payouts	Internal	Project Director	Annually	4
Establish an e-mail address and/or phone number for questions	Internal External	Project Director	--	1,2,4
Hold after-school Q/A meeting at each participating school	Internal	Project Director	Monthly	1,2

Establish a focus group of stakeholders to address ongoing concerns about the district's pay plan	External	Project Director	Annually	2,4,5
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**Evaluation:**

Listed below are the goals of a good communication plan and the method for evaluating the goals of the communication plan are as follows:

1. Establish a regular and timely communication process between the facilitator of your performance pay plan and each participating school.
  - *Feedback forms will be provided to all school leadership personnel soliciting specific information on whether they perceive the communication is regular and timely. In addition, all staff will complete a similar Likert-style survey about each participating school. The survey results will be aggregated for the district office and disaggregated for each participating school. Results from the surveys will be used to guide changes in communication policy.*
2. Raise the awareness of the D.A.T.E grant among educators and non-educators (parents and community members) across the district.
3. Use positive publicity to increase funding.
  - *Conduct annual budget reviews, and survey those involved (or their assistants/aides) with allocating money for D.A.T.E. to determine their motivation.*
4. Garner support for the program from a wide range of school and community stakeholders.
5. Use media outlets effectively to promote your districts performance pay plan.

Annually, the data sources mentioned above will be analyzed, and the community relations plan will be changed accordingly. The Project Director will conduct the data analysis and meet with the team for input on appropriate changes.