

**District 225 Communications Plan – Quarterly Report**  
**SUMMER 2011**

Project	Progress
<b>Website redesign</b>	<p>To ensure website flexibility, we are building a new site from scratch as opposed to purchasing a service. There are various elements involved in this project: a Content Management System (CMS); Template design; Navigation update; Test audiences; Programming; Migration; and Launch.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Branding</li> <li>• After conducting a thorough investigation of options and a focus group, a CMS called Kentico has been selected.</li> <li>• We have identified a direction for branding elements including logos, colors, look at feel;</li> <li>• Currently integrating branding into preliminary website template designs. We have narrowed the options to two that we are continuing to perfect prior to receiving feedback from the website review team. We expect to have solid template drafts in the next month.</li> <li>• A minimum number of webpages will be programmed to allow for testing with parents, students, and staff.</li> <li>• Full programming and content migration will be conducted throughout the fall months.</li> <li>• The goal is to launch the new website in January 2012.</li> </ul>
<b>Calendars</b>	Google Calendars are now available on the school websites. Phase I implementation includes posting the all-school calendars. Phase II goals include providing more specific subcategories (e.g. GBN Marching Band).
<b>E-newsletters</b>	<p>The district will utilize a system called Constant Contact to offer our school community subscriptions to online newsletters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board/District</li> <li>• Connections</li> <li>• Internal</li> <li>• Connections launches with Sept. issue</li> <li>• Board/District updates two days after each BOE mtg</li> <li>• Internal as needed</li> </ul>
<b>Communication guidelines</b>	After careful review of current practice and handbook language, the administration proposed a slight revision to the photo policy to include the presence of media. The new language will alert families that the press is occasionally granted access to our schools in order to promote a positive accomplishment or activity. This change will allow us to continue to improve our media relations and pursue positive press coverage without restriction. We have also outlined a process for parents who opt out.

<b>Social media</b>	Each school will launch Facebook pages and Twitter feeds for PR purposes for the 2011-12 school year. The information will focus on good news sharing including features, events, and positive press coverage.
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**Next steps:**

- Maintain implementation of social media and e-newsletters;
- Continue to develop templates for new website and begin content migration;
- Plan collaboration with student media;
- Revised crisis communications procedures;
- Establish Board PR/communications policy.

# New Communication Initiatives

Book Sale, 2011



Last year, District 225 conducted a communications audit in an effort to improve its services to students, parents and the school community. The research findings supported numerous new initiatives including improved school calendars, websites, newsletters, and social media utilization. The purpose of this flyer is to notify parents of these new services.

## Calendars

The new school year brings with it a new online calendar system that will provide students, parents, and the school community with an easy-to-use, interactive, downloadable format. Google calendars are available for both school calendars and the district Board of Education meeting dates.

Users may subscribe to an entire calendar (e.g. All Student Activities) or just one event at a time (e.g. Homecoming). From Google, users can export any of these calendars to Outlook, iCal and mobile devices. Scan the QR Code below with your smart phone for instructions on using Google calendars.  
[www.google.com/support/calendar/](http://www.google.com/support/calendar/)



## e-Newsletters

*Connections* will be emailed and posted online, instead of mailed to every household.

An added bonus of the electronic format is that parents can also subscribe to receive new bulletins that will include Board of Education Highlights and District Updates. Parents may also receive the *Connections* from both high schools, if they so choose.

While every parent email in our student database system will be automatically scheduled to receive their school's newsletter, parents who do not wish to receive these notices can easily unsubscribe. In addition, grandparents, childcare givers, family and friends can also subscribe to stay informed about what's going on at our high schools.

## Social media

Both high schools will launch Facebook pages and Twitter feeds to help share great news about our students, staff and community. In addition, these venues will serve as another outlet for emergency school closing announcements.



**Glenbrooknorth**  
**Glenbrook\_south**



**Glenbrook North**  
**High School**

**Glenbrook South**  
**High School**

Eliminating the paper version of *Connections* is estimated to save the district more than \$10,000 in printing and postage costs. In addition, it saves paper and offers a timelier outlet for information.