

Presentation to the
Park Ridge-Niles School District 64
Board of Education

RESULTS OF THE 2017 COMMUNICATIONS EVALUATION

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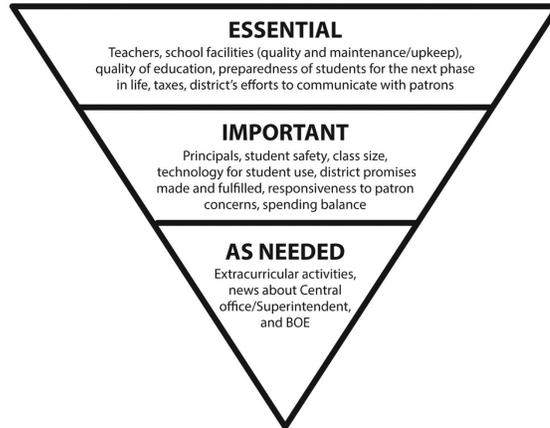
About Patron Insight, Inc.

- Based in the Kansas City area
- Worked with more than 135 school districts in 13 states since 1992
- Focused on communication, strategic planning and stakeholder research issues
- Gathered common findings into book *School Communication that Works*

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What we discovered...

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Our process for District 64

- Analyze outbound content
- Interview 13 Key Opinion Leaders
- One-on-one interviews with BOE members, Superintendent, Cabinet and all principals
- Four focus groups with non-parents
- Random dial survey of 400 non-parents
- Online versions of the survey for parents, staff and community members

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The total?

More than 1,200 people shared their opinions as part of this evaluation.

The District 64 brand today

First, a definition: A brand is the thoughts, feelings, ideas and emotions that come to mind whenever a product, a service, a person or an organization is mentioned.

District 64 brand elements

- “Community”
 - Engaged, supportive parents
 - Walk to and from school
 - Built and nurtured at the building and district level

District 64 brand elements

- “Family”
 - Multi-generational community
 - “People move here for the schools”
 - “Motivated households who value education”

District 64 brand elements

- “Education/High-quality education/ Knowledge”
 - Students are prepared for high school
 - Wide variety of electives at the middle school level
 - Committed staff
 - Develop students academically, socially and emotionally

District 64 brand elements

- “High taxes/expensive”
 - Percentage of tax bill that goes to schools
 - Perception of salaries
 - Uncertainty about financial decision-making processes

Specific findings

- ◉ Outbound content demonstrates consistency, purpose, quality and transparency
 - Driven by strategy
 - Seeks engagement
 - Utilizes multiple venues for the same message

Specific findings

- ◉ Communication about “changes” needs to be presented more individually than collectively, with a benefit-driven message.
 - Strategic Plan – examples of SP in action and the objective of continuous improvement, not the SP itself
 - Bite-size; relatable

Specific findings

- ◉ Expanding “academic performance” definition key to telling “student growth” story
 - Segment of stakeholders rely on standardized testing
 - Need to refocus on how broad-based, multi-phase evaluations present more accurate picture
 - Reinforce national trend aspect

Specific findings

- ◉ Recognize the “legacy” aspect, but reframe the facility discussion
 - Multi-generational community leads to “it was good enough for me”
 - Buildings were a significant investment
 - Sensible, timely (and, sometimes, expensive) upgrades, maintenance and improvements protect that investment

Specific findings

- Persistent, simple demonstrations of transparency – to the point of exhaustion – essential
 - School finance and the decision-making process are complicated; this is unlikely to change
 - District 64 is already making exhaustive information available
 - Next step is to provide simple presentations of each decision: 5Ws and H

I leave you with this reminder
(and my thanks!)

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