



Structures of Successful Communication

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Objectives

- ★ See one example of a way to structure communication to give all staff a voice.
- ★ Learn one way to get feedback from staff on important schoolwide plans such as LCAP, WASC, vision, mission, and strategic planning for the future.
- ★ Learn one strategy to identify and grow teacher leaders and staff leaders within your organization.



Profile

- ★ located in rural Northern California and is home to 860 students TK-12th grade
- ★ part of a consortium of sister CORE schools (CORE placer and C.O.R.E) and has been in operation as part of this consortium since 1998
- ★ opened its own Charter in the fall of 2007 and had three resources centers, two in Chico and one in Paradise. Due to the Camp Fire and Construction, this year we are only operating one large resource center in Chico.
- ★ Staffing
 - 96 staff members including 50 Personalized Learning Teachers (including 9 SpEd Specialists)
 - High School Director, TK8 Director, Director of Special Programs, AD: TK-8, AD: Assessment and Accountability
 - Chief Business Officer, Operations Officer
 - HR Officer, Executive Assistant, Enrollment Registrar, Counseling Registrars (2), Attendance Registrar, CTE Integration Specialist, High School Counselor, Student Support Services, 1.6 School Psychologist, and other support staff
- ★ 97% graduation rate, 42% free and reduced lunch, 16.6% SpEd Population
- ★ Own LEA for Special Education under El Dorado Charter SELPA





Transition From Staff Meetings to Vertical Groups

- ★ Staff meetings were taking too long and leadership had a desire to ensure staff had a voice in decisions that were made, regardless of staff size
- ★ Desire for transparency with all staff
- ★ Desire to give staff a voice in school-wide decisions and processes
- ★ Creating a cyclical culture of shared information and provide an environment in which staff is able to build high quality, professional relationships with staff in other positions
- ★ How did it start?
 - A desire for Vertical vs. horizontal cross section of staff
 - Horizontal were specialists in an area (k-2, English, Math, Support Staff, etc)
 - Vertical was a cross section of the horizontal groups so that each vertical group had a balance of expertise

Different Platforms for Communication

- ★ Different Goals for Different Platforms
- ★ Digital Feedback
 - Success or failure of a process
 - Specific Site or Program Feedback
- ★ Staff Meetings
 - Disseminating Information
 - Collaboration
 - Learn and Grow
- ★ Vertical Groups
 - Feedback on a Schoolwide Topic
 - Sharing concerns and issues in a specific timeframe



Development of Vertical Groups

- ★ Intentional Process
- ★ Directors are not included in groups
- ★ Mixture of job positions
 - High School Staff
 - TK8 Staff
 - Support Staff
- ★ Understanding Personalities and Group Dynamics
- ★ Team Building at Yearly Back to School Retreat





PC MS
Small but MIGHTY
HOME of the BILLBOARDS!

CBHS
Let's
WELCOME BACK

Let's
Gear
UP

WELCOME BACK
CBHS
Positive
MIND
Positive
VIBES
Positive
LIFE

Work HARD for
SUCCESS
The JUICE
WORTH the SQUEEZE!

WELCOME
BACK
From
MR. NAVY
AC FAX

Home
Sweet
Home

CBHS
Home Sweet Home



Identifying and Developing Leaders

- All Groups are led by a Staff Member, not a Director
- Staff Members can be nominated by previous group leader, by a Director, or can volunteer
- Directors meet to choose leaders from various staff groups
- Leaders serve a two year term
- Leaders meet prior to start of the year to review purpose of vertical groups and discuss norms



Vertical Group Leader Perspective

- ★ Vertical group leaders chosen at beginning of the school year.
- ★ Meet with administration prior to first vertical group to receive training
- ★ Leaders serve a two year term so that different staff have an opportunity to serve
- ★ Training consists of:

*How to take on leadership role and defining leadership at CORE Butte

*Setting norms for your vertical group

*How to run a meeting (time limits on topics, reviewing norms, staying on task, redirecting conversation, etc)

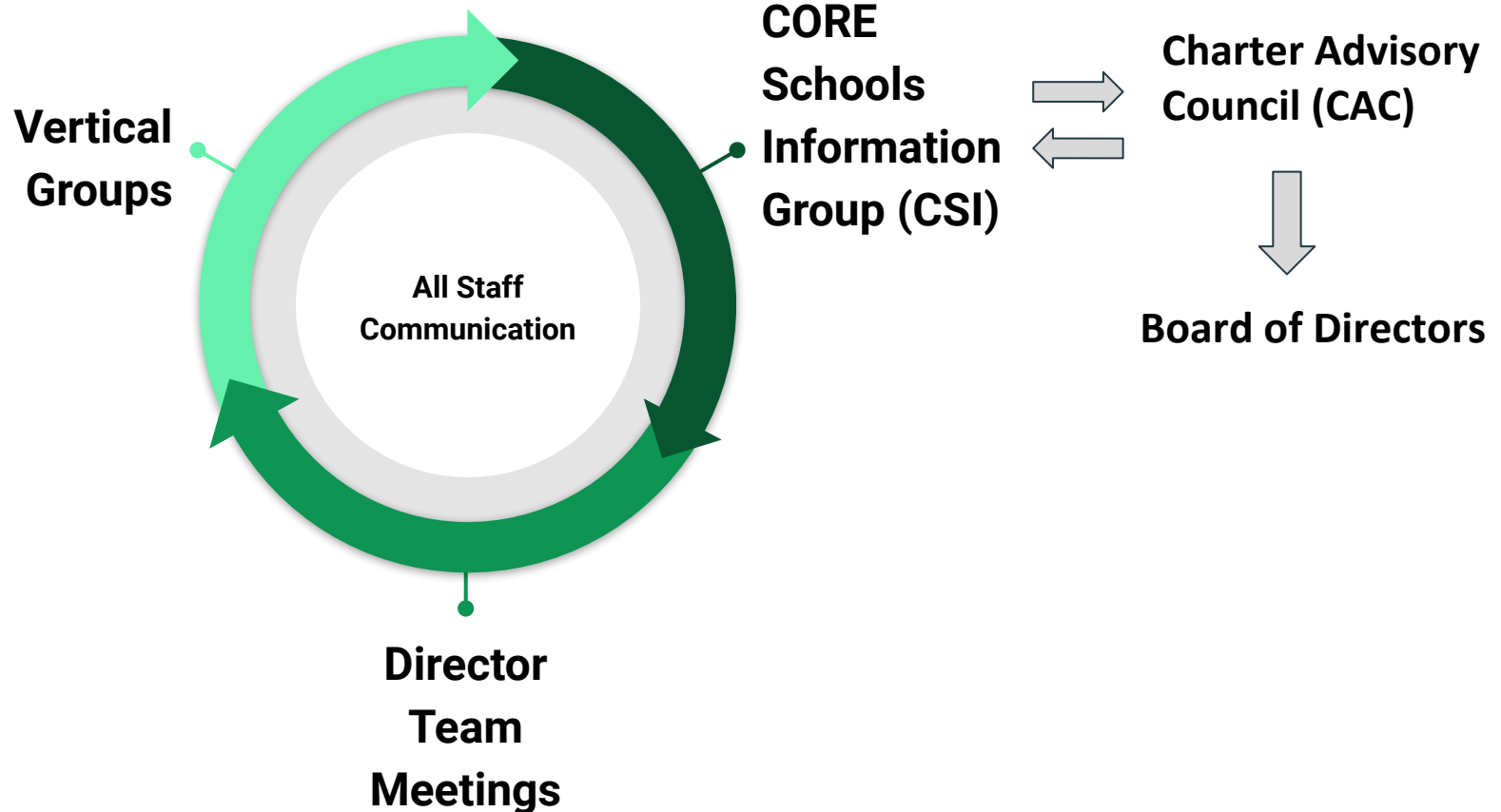
Purpose of Vertical Group Meetings

- ★ Fostering relationships
- ★ Sharing information
- ★ Sharing concerns with constructive feedback
- ★ Helping the Director team, intervention team, and support staff to know where to focus our energy and time
- ★ CSI is not to complain or share personnel issues, it should be constructive and progressive
- ★ If there are specific complaints, they should be addressed with the appropriate Director or the ED.

Structure of Meetings

- ★ [Sample Agenda](#)
- ★ Review Norms and Purpose of CSI
 - [Meetings Norms](#)
 - Affirmations and Celebrations
 - Set a positive tone for the meeting and allow people to celebrate together
- ★ Topics for Staff Feedback
 - Discussion, Input, New Ideas
 - LCAP, WASC, Strategic Planning
- ★ New Concerns
 - Platform for sharing concerns and frustrations
 - A forum for bringing these issues to Directors

Cycle of Communication



CSI: CORE School Information

- ★ All Vertical Group Leaders and Directors (staff leadership team)
- ★ Meet the week following vertical groups
- ★ All CSI leaders are asked to input notes into a shared google doc to review at meeting
 - [Sample Shared Notes](#)
- ★ Go around the table and share out each group's feedback, synthesizing as we notice trends
- ★ Directors can get clarification and can have leader elaborate if needed

Director Team Meetings

- ★ All Directors have access to the google doc
- ★ Directors meet weekly for an hour to touch base and discuss easily answerable concerns
 - [Sample CSI Notes](#)
- ★ Monthly, Directors meet for several hours, off campus, to address the items shared at CSI and draft responses as necessary to share out
 - Trainings are developed and scheduled
 - Changes are made and shared with staff
 - Items are clarified for all staff and shared in an email

Charter Advisory Council and Board Of Directors

- ★ Charter Advisory Council Follows the format for a high school site council
- ★ One CSI leader attends or is voted onto the CAC
- ★ CSI updates are a regular standing agenda item on CAC agenda
- ★ A member of our Board of Directors is nominated to run as a parent member on CAC
- ★ CAC updates are a regular standing agenda item on the BOD agenda
- ★ Communication flows through all stakeholders (see visual)