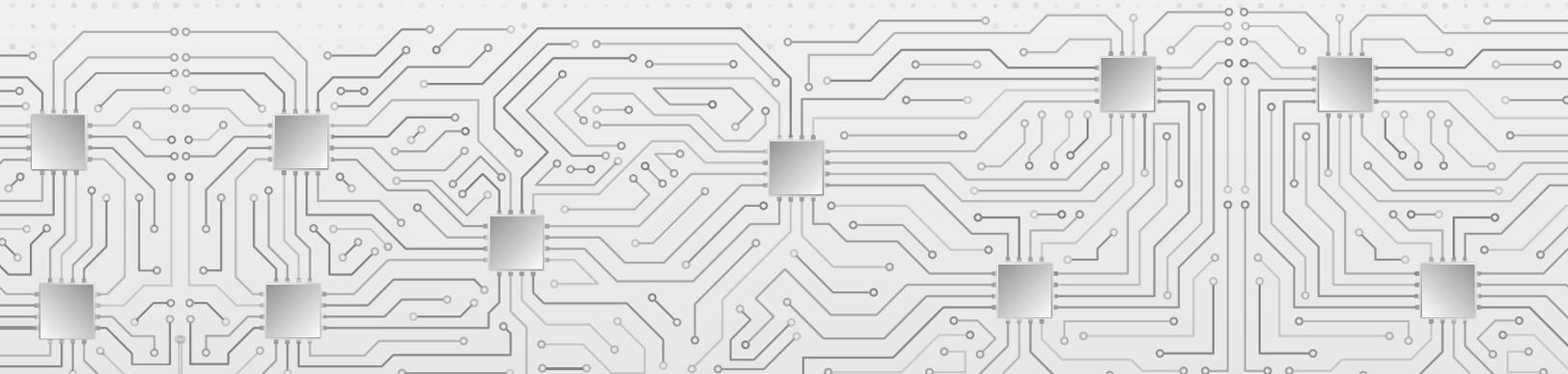


APPENDIX B

COMMUNICATIONS WORKSHEET



A **communications strategy** plays an integral role in keeping a project on task. Implementing a successful, high-quality one-to-one initiative can feel overwhelming, but if a district dedicates time to developing a comprehensive communications strategy, staff, teachers, students, and parents will be on the same page, allowing for success from the start!

This appendix provides information and tools to help you develop a communications strategy for your one-to-one technology initiative.

Note: Though the content here is specific to rolling out a one-to-one initiative, many of these recommendations make up the foundation of any strong communications strategy and can be used for other projects or initiatives.

The narrative section will walk you through the process for developing a strategy, but it is best understood as further explanation for how to complete the template provided in this appendix. We have included two versions of the template. The first version is a completed example template, while the second is blank.

We strongly recommend that you use the template and then organize your plan in a written document. This written document will be an internal document that helps everyone responsible for communications know what they should be doing and why. It should be different from your written one-to-one technology implementation plan.

Definitions

Throughout this document, we use some key terms common in communications practice. Understanding these terms will help you better understand this document. These terms are

Strategy: A communications strategy is a plan created by an organization to detail communications goals, audiences, and tactics.

Audience: An audience is the group of people you are trying to reach. For school districts, common audiences are students, teachers, parents, and staff. Ideally, you want to make your audiences as specific as possible in order to increase the likelihood you will reach them successfully and, therefore, reach your communications goals. For example, students can be broken down into elementary, middle school, and high school groups. You can also further segment each of these groups (by school, for example) in order to better target your communications.

Tactic: A tactic is the communications method used to reach an audience. Examples of tactics include newsletters, posters, social media posts, text messages, phone calls, and in-person meetings.

Channel: A channel is where a tactic is delivered or placed. Examples of channels include social media, radio, website, and e-mail.

Collateral: Collateral is the materials you create for a chosen tactic. Examples of collateral include the text and image needed for a Facebook post, the script for a phone call, and the design for a poster.

Step 1: Goals

Just as the process of planning your one-to-one initiative began with setting goals and objectives, **your communications strategy needs to be based on goals.** The goals of your communications strategy should be the same as the goals of your one-to-one initiative; however your objectives should be slightly different, focusing on how you will communicate the goals and objectives of your one-to-one plan.

Because there are different phases to your one-to-one plan that will each need to be communicated, we recommend that you **create different communications strategies for each phase.** This means your objectives should align to the phase. We believe you will need at least three strategies for the following phases: 1) initial implementation, including the “why” of the initiative, responsibilities of all parties, and device rollout; 2) using devices to enhance learning during the school year; and 3) device collection at the end of the year. Below, we have outlined some brief thinking about how the communications work for each phase is different.

1 Initial implementation

- **Why of the initiative**—Despite the apparent advantages of a one-to-one initiative, school districts need to be deliberate in articulating what exactly they hope to achieve by placing a device in the hands of every student. In this phase of the communications strategy, school districts should be communicating about the goals of their one-to-one initiative. ([See Step 1: Goals in the Implementation Guide.](#))
- **Responsibilities of all parties**—One of your most important objectives should be to ensure that every participant in the initiative knows their responsibilities. These will vary based on the audience.
- **Device rollout**—Once the district decides on its plan for device rollout, it will need to communicate to each audience what their role in that plan is in order to ensure smooth device pickup. You will likely need to use a variety of tactics and channels to ensure 100% participation in device rollout.

2 Using devices to enhance learning during the school year

- **Enhancing learning**—During the school year, communications will shift to what audiences need to know to use devices for learning. An early focus may be on communicating when audiences can attend trainings to learn about their device. Staff will also need to develop the content for those trainings.
- **Showcasing success**—As the year goes on, you will want to showcase student and teacher usage to build and maintain support for the initiative. For this, you may need images of students and teachers using devices, brief stories (written or video testimony) from teachers about how they are incorporating technology into their lessons, and other stories about what is now possible because of the one-to-one initiative.
- **Troubleshooting**—One important objective should be to ensure audiences know what to do if they run into issues with their devices during the year, e.g., who do they need to contact if the device breaks? You may have to communicate around this need on an ongoing basis as questions or issues will happen frequently.

3

Device collection at the end of the year

Collection—Similar to the device rollout, there needs to be a plan to communicate device collection. You will need to communicate the timeline, expectations, and responsibilities to your different audiences.

Step 2: Context

Before you can design a communications strategy, you need to understand the context in which you are communicating. This requires you to look **internally at the school district's assets and challenges in terms of capacity to communicate as well as externally to understand what outside factors may impact your ability to communicate effectively**. Questions that can prompt your thinking about these factors are included in the template below among your audiences.

If your district completed a needs assessment in developing its one-to-one plan, you should review it as this can provide important information about the context. If your district did not conduct a needs assessment, you may want to consider conducting one at this point. In the implementation guide, we recommend the Capacity Assessment in MDE's [Digital Learning District Guidance](#) as one example of a needs assessment. You can tailor this assessment to focus on attitudes and assumptions about technology.

Step 3: Strategic Choices

All strong communications strategies start with an **in-depth analysis of audiences**. Your first job is to precisely identify all of your audiences. For the purposes of this strategy, your audiences will include, at the very least, students, parents, staff, and teachers. Once you have identified these audiences, you must think about what each audience cares about—what they value—and what barriers they may face in regards to a one-to-one initiative. For each audience, think of the main theme, or the big picture, that you are trying to communicate. Then, you will develop messages that expand on that theme and can be used when you begin to make collateral.

Don't forget to share your success as part of your messaging. Regardless of the phase you are communicating, it is important for audiences to hear success stories to increase engagement and buy-in to your one-to-one initiative. Use success stories to reinforce the "why" of your initiative.

Below, we have done some thinking about each of the four main audiences that we identified for you. You should expand on or edit what is below to help it fit your own context. *(REMINDER: It is important to have parents, teachers, and students involved in the development of the one-to-one technology initiative for a successful initiative. They can also provide great advice on how to communicate with their specific groups, which can then be captured in your communications strategy.)*

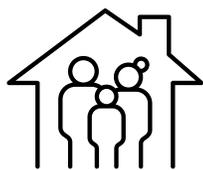


Students

What students need to know is going to vary based on age.

When communicating with **elementary students**, you have to meet them where they are developmentally and physically. This means they will have more barriers to information. Nonetheless, we believe there is value in the younger grades understanding the goals of the one-to-one technology initiative as well as their responsibilities. Consider how you can make information accessible to them. Collateral, for example, should be very picture-heavy to account for children who are not yet strong readers. Channels will also be more restricted, as they will most likely not be on social media or have access to email. Their teacher is the best direct messenger. Teachers can have in-person (or virtual) learning sessions. Teachers can also hand out tangible materials to students.

Middle and high school students can take some ownership of the devices and their learning and will be reachable via more channels. For example, they might have access to online applications, cellphones, and social media. They also have direct access to teachers, who can be used as messengers. However, in most cases, middle school and high schools rotate teachers so their individual schedules will look different. You need to identify the teacher(s) that meet with all students in order to ensure the messages are received.



Parents

Parents are unique, which means you will have to use multiple channels and messengers in order to ensure everyone receives the message. Parents are busy, often have children of multiple ages, and are being bombarded with information from not only the school district but other external organizations. You will need to be careful not to overwhelm parents with too much information while still making all information easily accessible to those who want more detail. The list of what parents need to know is long; your communications strategy should precisely list what parents need to know, when they need to know it, and the best way to present that information to reach the majority of parents. Spending time understanding who your parents are will help you develop the best tactics and channels to use in order to best communicate with them.



Teachers

Teachers are a very diverse group representing many different levels of knowledge and confidence in regards to technology. Administrators have direct access to them at school, hopefully through well-established communication channels. Nonetheless, teachers should be engaged early and often. Teachers value feeling like they understand what is going on and that they have been heard by administrators. They also value their time, as it is limited during the school year. The more transparent you can be with teachers about your one-to-one technology initiative, the better it will be for everyone. Teachers also value training and are more likely to serve as advocates for your one-to-one initiative if they are provided time and space to learn how to incorporate the technology into their classrooms. Remember, teachers serve as advocates and messengers daily with their students and parents. They should be a key part of your communications strategy in terms of receiving messages, but you should also consider what they need to serve in their role as messengers.



Staff

Staff needs to have a clear understanding of what their role will be in implementing the one-to-one technology initiative. Similar to parents, this audience is diverse. First, identify the staff that will be involved directly with the one-to-one initiative, and state what they will be responsible for. Once this is complete, you can identify the best way to reach them. Does your district have a strong email culture? Or is there a weekly meeting staff needs to attend? Identify the best channel based on the culture of the school. Also, decide who is the best messenger: is it a school leader or the technology director? From there, you can decide on the best tactics.

Remember that once you know your audiences, you need to understand what they value and what their barriers to information are before you can develop themes and messages.

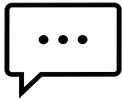
Step 4: Communications Activities

Once you know your audiences and have some basic messages, you need to determine your tactics, plot them on a timeline, and assign key tasks to people. You should also consider your budget for communications at this stage.

Tactics should be specific to audiences, meaning that some tactics will not reach all audiences as effectively. A tactic may also be the same across audiences but vary in the channel you use. For example, a technology handbook is one tactic, but you may distribute it via email to teachers while you send home a paper copy to parents. Be aware that JUST posting your one-to-one technology initiative plan or handbook on your website should not be your only communications tactic and channel. This is a sure-fire way to miss important audiences. Remember to look in your needs assessment data to see if you have any clues about the most responsive form of communication for your audiences.

EXAMPLES OF TACTICS

Newsletters can come in a variety of formats. They can be emailed, posted on websites, printed and sent home with students, or even mailed. Be specific on what the goal for each newsletter is. Keeping a newsletter to one to two pages will help make sure more people read it. Be consistent about when the newsletter comes out so the audience can expect them. For example, publish a newsletter on the first Monday of each month. *(Audience tip: Parents are often the main audience for newsletters.)*



Social media posts are a good place to provide important dates and information in a short-form format. For example, you can post equipment pick-up and drop off dates, list the types of paperwork parents and students need to sign, post the phone number and email address for troubleshooting problems, or distribute short instructional videos. You can embed videos and photos to help increase engagement. Similar to other online formats, keep posts short and sweet. Also, you can sometimes use the same content across different platforms. Instagram and Facebook allow you to post in both places at one time. Remember, though, that Twitter has character restrictions. *(Audience tip: This is a good tactic for parents, teachers, administrators, and older students who are on social media. This is only a good tactic if you have a substantial following on your social media accounts.)*

Video does not have to be professionally produced, but it does have to be specific to the goal and audience. A good rule is to keep an informational video under 2 minutes. Short and sweet is always good to ensure engagement and views. Also, when possible, include captions to increase accessibility. *(Audience tip: Depending on the channel (e.g., YouTube, embedded videos on your website or social media accounts), this tactic can be good for a variety of audiences, especially younger audiences.)*



Informational sessions, in-person or online meetings with constituents, allow a target audience to hear directly from school or district administrators and often provide a forum to answer questions. It is important to have a clear agenda or script in order to keep these sessions short and to the point. Because this tactic requires more time for the audience, it might be challenging to get 100% participation. Think about ways you can work with events already on the schedule to increase participation. *(Audience tip: This is a good tactic to use with all audiences, but students and teachers are easier to reach with informational sessions because they are already expected to be at school.)*

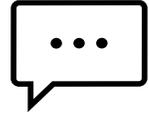
Printed materials could include flyers, posters, one-pagers, FAQs, waivers, copies of the one-to-one technology handbook, letters, postcards, direct mail, etc. There are some materials that you might want to print that are specific to the one-to-one technology initiative.

- **Handbooks:** We recommend that districts develop a technology handbook that clearly lists all policies related to technology use, including the specifics of its one-to-one initiative. The handbook should be student-facing and should include any forms that students and their parents/guardians will have to sign in order to access technology. Handbooks should be readily available online as well as physically distributed among students. It will also be useful to post certain policies, especially those pertaining to in-school use, within classrooms as a reminder to students and teachers alike. *(Audience tip: Students, parents, and teachers should have access to the one-to-one technology initiative handbook.)*
- **Agreements and contracts:** Before distributing the devices, end-users (students and parents) need to sign agreements and contracts about their responsibilities. Most likely, these agreements and contracts will be printed, rather than signed electronically. Agreements and contracts are for legal purposes, but they are also a messaging document outlining families' responsibilities with devices. The status of these documents—whether they are signed already—is also a useful metric to track progress in implementation. Teachers will need to be aware of what is in the documents so that they can answer questions about them. *(Audience tip: Students, parents, and teachers should have access to the one-to-one technology initiative agreements and contracts.)*



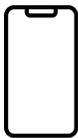
EXAMPLES OF CHANNELS

Your **social media** accounts will only be successful if you dedicate time to them. If you want social media to be a channel that is frequented by your audiences, you have to post regularly and create engaging, relevant content. Examples of social media that school districts commonly use are Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram. Include images and video. Similar to email, short and sweet is best. *(Audience tip: This is a good channel for parents, teachers, and older students who have social media accounts. Be aware not everyone is on social media. This should not be the only channel you use to post updates.)*



If possible, **emails** should be segmented to reach specific stakeholders better. Short and sweet is best, as well as including visuals/graphics. Many will not read a wordy email. *(Audience tip: This is the best channel for teachers, parents, and high school students—if they have school-provided email addresses.)*

You can make a section on your **website** dedicated to the district's one-to-one technology initiative ([sample](#)). Your website should serve as a centralized location for all important information that school audiences will need to access. It is one of the most important channels because it is completely controlled by the school district and allows for transparency. However, a bad website can create frustration and be a barrier to communication. You should spend time annually to audit the district website to make sure information is up-to-date and easily accessible to your audiences. *(Audience tip: This is a good channel for parents, teachers, administrators, and older students.)*



Most school districts have access to **robocall or mass texting software**. Almost all adults (along with many high schoolers) have access to a cellphone or a landline. This channel is usually used for announcements related to weather and school emergencies. It could be used to communicate pick-up and drop-off device protocols, but you should be mindful of the length of the message. *(Audience tip: This is a good channel for parents, teachers, administrators, and older students.)*

Social apps like GroupMe have become very popular as a means for communication with parents. These operate similarly to Facebook groups, in that they can be kept private, and allow for text, image, or video posts. If a district already uses a social app, it should consider how it can be leveraged for communications about the one-to-one initiative. *(Audience tip: This is a good channel for parents, teachers, administrators, and older students.)*



Step 5: Measure Success

As with every plan, you need a way to know whether you are achieving your goals. Your measurement plan should **include both outputs and outcomes**. Outputs measure whether your specific tasks were completed. For example, did you collect a signed release form from every student? Outcomes measure whether your desired changes took place. For example, students take care of their devices, reducing the amount of theft, loss, or damage. Make sure you have output and outcomes specific to each audience.

Step 6: Final Considerations

Update your strategy at least once a year. A communications strategy is a living document, and you will need to revisit it at least once a year, if not more frequently. Take into account any changes to the initiative and if those need to be communicated to your audiences.

One-to-One Technology Initiative Communication Strategy Sample

We created this template based on the [SMART CHART™](#) model from Spitfire Strategies. The SMART CHART will help you assess your strategic decisions and create a high-impact communications strategy. Complete this chart for the main three phases of implementation: 1) Initial implementation, including the “why” of the initiative, responsibilities of all parties, and device pickup; 2) Using devices to enhance learning during the school year; and 3) Device collection at the end of the year.

The sample below is focused on phase 1) Initial implementation, including the “why” of the initiative, responsibilities of all parties, and device pickup.

STEP ONE: PROGRAM DECISIONS

What are you trying to do? What is the big ambitious change you want to make? [This is where you list your goals.]

Communicate to all audiences the importance of the district’s one-to-one technology initiatives and their role in the process.

Overall Vision:

1. *Deliver New Capabilities*
2. *Future Ready*
3. *21st Century Learners*
4. *Preparing for the Best*

What concrete steps will you take to achieve these goals? *(Remember this template is for developing your communications strategy. Your objectives should be specific to how you are going to communicate your one-to-one technology initiative, not how you are going to execute the one-to-one technology initiative. Also, know you are going to have multiple objectives.)*

Objectives:

1. *SAMPLE: Create a one-to-one handbook to disseminate to students, parents, and teachers should include messages around the “why.”*
2. *SAMPLE: Create a video to inform audiences how to troubleshoot basic issues on their devices.*
3. *SAMPLE: Get a signed copy of a code of conduct form from every parent and child that receives a device.*

Who makes your objectives a reality?

Identify the key communicators for your objectives. Be specific. You should be naming individuals.

EXAMPLE: The superintendent, a principal, name of technology director

STEP TWO: CONTEXT

Understanding your assets and challenges on the front end will help you streamline communications once you define your audiences and tactics. Think about access to resources, staff time, etc. Think of this as a quick version of a SWOT analysis.

Internal Scan	Assess your organization’s assets and challenges from a capacity perspective. Consider all the things you control that may impact your communications efforts. <i>What staff, resources, and tools do you have to use?</i>
External Scan	Take stock of what’s happening around you that will affect your communications strategy. <i>Are there misconceptions or misinformation that might get in the way of your communication efforts? Are there time considerations or key events that you might need to factor into your strategy? Are there natural communication opportunities you can leverage to help advance your strategy?</i>

STEP THREE: STRATEGIC CHOICES

AUDIENCE: Who are the people who can help you achieve your objectives? Be specific. The “general public” is not an audience. You want to break down your audiences as much as possible so you ensure you are providing the exact information they need to know in order for you to reach your objectives. There is no limit on the number of audiences. For the purpose of this template, we are only identifying four: students, parents, staff, and teachers.

Identify Audience	Students (Break this down by schools or grades. Strategies and tactics will look different for elementary vs. high school, etc.)	Parents (Break this down by school or grades.)	Staff (This should include specific individuals that will play a role in the implementation of the one-to-one initiative.)	Teachers (Break this down by school or grades. Expectations for teachers will be different depending on school and/or grade.)
<p>Identify Core Concerns: Determine what will compel the audience to move toward your objective. Think about this in terms of what the audience values and what will be barriers. Make sure you think about what your audience needs to know that they do not already know or what misconceptions they may have.</p>	<p>Example Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not having to share technology with other students - Individual devices can give quick feedback on learning - Clear instructions - Clear expectations <p>Example Barriers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to the internet at home - Not knowing how to keep the device safe - Knowing how to use the device for education 	<p>Example Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wanting their child to have access to the best education possible - Helping their child academically <p>Example Barriers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No time to come to the school to sign/pick up paperwork - No time to read a long handbook - No internet at home - Don't want to be responsible if the device breaks 	<p>Example Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear expectations - Professional development and training <p>Example Barriers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not technology savvy; don't know how to use the equipment 	<p>Example Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear expectations - Want to be a part of the process and be heard - Want students to have high-quality instructional materials - Professional development and training <p>Example Barriers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not technology savvy; don't know how to use the equipment
<p>Theme: What is the big picture you are trying to convey to each specific audience?</p>	<p>Your [type of device] will open up the world.</p>	<p>We are preparing your student/child for the future.</p>	<p>You are instrumental in getting devices into the hands of students.</p>	<p>Technology will help you open the world to your students.</p>
<p>Message: Is your message based on the audience's core concerns? Does it overcome—not reinforce—their barrier? Is “the ask” in the audience's comfort zone? If not, does the offered benefit outweigh the risk? Does the message offer a vision or emphasize a personal reward? Does it convey hope toward success? Is it consistent with the theme throughout?</p>				
<p>Using your own personal device will help you reach your academic goals.</p> <p>How to use the device to advance your learning</p> <p>Your responsibilities/expectations</p>	<p>This device/tool will help your child reach their academic goals.</p> <p>This tool is essential to their learning.</p> <p>Your student's [type of device] will help us increase your child's academic success!</p> <p>Your responsibilities/expectations</p>	<p>These devices/tools will help students and teachers fulfill our mission.</p> <p>Your responsibilities/expectations</p>	<p>These devices/tools will open up the world to your students and provide new and relevant learning opportunities.</p> <p>We need you in order to make this roll out successful.</p> <p>Your responsibilities/expectations</p>	

STEP FOUR: COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES

Your communications strategy starts coming together as you identify tactics, plot them on a timeline, and assign key tasks to the people who will help implement your strategy. Below are some example tactics. This list is not exhaustive.

Audience	Students	Parents	Staff	Teachers
Tactics	<p><i>In-person meeting/distribution of devices</i></p> <p><i>Student-friendly handbook</i></p> <p><i>Email of important dates/info (for older students)</i></p> <p><i>Waiver/Device release</i></p>	<p><i>In-person meeting/distribution of devices</i></p> <p><i>Parent-friendly handbook</i></p> <p><i>Email of important dates/info</i></p> <p><i>Social media posts</i></p> <p><i>Text messages</i></p> <p><i>Waiver/Device release</i></p> <p><i>FAQ</i></p> <p><i>Postcard in the mail with QR code to website link about program</i></p> <p><i>Video about how the device pickup process will go (website and/or email)</i></p>	<p><i>Email of important dates/info</i></p> <p><i>FAQ</i></p> <p><i>Copy of the technology handbook</i></p> <p><i>In-person meeting to discuss responsibilities</i></p>	<p><i>Poster/flyers in schools/teacher boxes</i></p> <p><i>Email of important dates/info</i></p> <p><i>FAQ</i></p> <p><i>Copy of the technology handbook</i></p> <p><i>In-person meeting to discuss responsibilities</i></p> <p><i>In-person training/PD on how to use the devices in their classroom</i></p>
Timing	<i>Identify the timeline for the tactics that you identified. Remember, students need to receive the devices, use them during the school year, and then likely turn them back in at the end of the year. You need to have communications tactics for each of these phases.</i>			
Assignments	<i>Who is responsible for each tactic? In some cases, it might be more than one person. Make sure everyone is aware of their responsibilities.</i>			
Budget	<i>How much will each tactic cost? Think printing costs, social media ads, time to produce materials, etc. You want to make sure you can execute your strategy within the budget you are provided.</i>			

STEP FIVE: MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS

The measures of success should be a mixture of outputs and outcomes. Think of outputs as measures of your efforts—the things you are doing to move your strategy forward. Outputs can include generating a specific number of email or text messages to parents, creating a video message from your superintendent for your website, or writing a student handbook. Outcomes are the changes that occur because of these outputs. If you generate a specific number of emails and text messages to parents, it is more likely they will attend the device pickup day. The purpose of your communications strategy is to ensure that your messages are getting to the right audiences and that those audiences are doing what you want. Below are some examples. This list is not exhaustive.

Audience	Students	Parents	Staff	Teachers
Outputs —These need to be very specific, including numbers/metrics.	<p><i>Signed release from every student.</i></p> <p><i>Give every student a copy of the student handbook.</i></p>	<p><i>Signed release form from at least one parent/guardian per student/device.</i></p> <p><i>Send two emails to all parents with the technology handbook prior to the pickup day.</i></p>	<p><i>Send one email to all staff with specific responsibilities and attach the technology initiative and handbook.</i></p>	<p><i>Host two in-person 1-hour professional development sessions to train teachers on devices and troubleshooting.</i></p>
Outcomes	<p><i>Every student will have a device and know how to use it and protect it.</i></p>	<p><i>Parents will make sure their students have a device, they are using it properly, and protecting it.</i></p>	<p><i>Staff members will know their individual responsibility for rolling out the one-to-one technology initiative.</i></p>	<p><i>Teachers will know how to use the devices to further their instruction.</i></p> <p><i>Teachers will be able to answer basic troubleshooting questions for parents and students.</i></p>

STEP SIX: FINAL REALITY CHECK

- Is the strategy doable?
- Are your choices consistent? Does the logic flow from one box to the next? (Tip: Try testing your decisions backward—i.e., by accomplishing these tactics using these messengers, we will deliver these messages, supporting this theme, tapping into these values, moving this target audience, and so forth. Does the logic work as well in reverse as it did when you worked through Smart Chart 3.0? By going backward, you are more likely to recognize faulty logic or disconnect between decisions and steps. If the logic doesn't work in reverse, go back and address the trouble spots.)
- Are you motivating the right people to take the right action at the right time?
- Are there any assumptions or guesses built into the strategy that require further research to confirm or correct?
- Will the tactics move you toward your objective? Will they reach the appropriate audience(s)?
- Are you using the best persuasion practices, such as respecting the audience's lifestyle, sharing hope, making them the hero, positioning the issue within the social norm, and so forth?
- Are there other objectives you need to add to the Smart Chart? Be sure you're taking a comprehensive approach to meeting your overall goals.
- Is there buy-in from your organization to implement the strategy?
- Can you measure progress?

If you answered YES to all these questions, you are ready to get to work! If you answered NO, go back and find your weaknesses in your strategy and update.

One-to-One Technology Initiative Communication Strategy Template

We created this template based on the [SMART CHART™](#) model from Spitfire Strategies. The SMART CHART will help you assess your strategic decisions and create a high-impact communications strategy. Complete this chart for the main three phases of implementation: 1) Initial implementation, including the “why” of the initiative, responsibilities of all parties, and device pickup; 2) Using devices to enhance learning during the school year; and 3) Device collection at the end of the year.

STEP ONE: PROGRAM DECISIONS

What are you trying to do? What is the big ambitious change you want to make? [This is where you list your goals.]
What concrete steps will you take to achieve these goals?
Who makes your objectives a reality?

STEP TWO: CONTEXT

Understanding your assets and challenges on the front end will help you streamline communications once you define your audiences and tactics. Think about access to resources, staff time, etc. Think of this as a quick version of a SWOT analysis.

Internal Scan	<i>Assess your organization's assets and challenges from a capacity perspective. Consider all the things you control that may impact your communications efforts.</i>
External Scan	<i>Take stock of what's happening around you that will affect your communications strategy.</i>

STEP THREE: STRATEGIC CHOICES

AUDIENCE: Who are the people who can help you achieve your objectives? Be specific. The “general public” is not an audience. You want to break down your audiences as much as possible so you ensure you are providing the exact information they need to know in order for you to reach your objectives. There is no limit on the number of audiences. For the purpose of this template, we are only identifying four: students, parents, staff, and teachers.

Identify Audience	Students	Parents	Staff	Teachers
Identify Core Concerns:	Example Values:	Example Values:	Example Values:	Example Values:
	Example Barriers:	Example Barriers:	Example Barriers:	Example Barriers:
Theme:				
Message:				

STEP FOUR: COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES

Your communications strategy starts coming together as you identify tactics, plot them on a timeline, and assign key tasks to the people who will help implement your strategy.

Audience	Students	Parents	Staff	Teachers
Tactics				
Timing				
Assignments				
Budget				

STEP FIVE: MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS

The measures of success should be a mixture of outputs and outcomes. Think of outputs as measures of your efforts—the things you are doing to move your strategy forward. Outputs can include generating a specific number of email or text messages to parents, creating a video message from your superintendent for your website, or writing a student handbook. Outcomes are the changes that occur because of these outputs. If you generate a specific number of emails and text messages to parents, it is more likely they will attend the device pickup day. The purpose of your communications strategy is to ensure that your messages are getting to the right audiences and that those audiences are doing what you want.

Audience	Students	Parents	Staff	Teachers
Outputs				
Outcomes				

STEP SIX: FINAL REALITY CHECK

- Is the strategy doable?
- Are your choices consistent? Does the logic flow from one box to the next? (Tip: Try testing your decisions backward—i.e., by accomplishing these tactics using these messengers, we will deliver these messages, supporting this theme, tapping into these values, moving this target audience, and so forth. Does the logic work as well in reverse as it did when you worked through Smart Chart 3.0? By going backward, you are more likely to recognize faulty logic or disconnect between decisions and steps. If the logic doesn't work in reverse, go back and address the trouble spots.)
- Are you motivating the right people to take the right action at the right time?
- Are there any assumptions or guesses built into the strategy that require further research to confirm or correct?
- Will the tactics move you toward your objective? Will they reach the appropriate audience(s)?
- Are you using the best persuasion practices, such as respecting the audience's lifestyle, sharing hope, making them the hero, positioning the issue within the social norm, and so forth?
- Are there other objectives you need to add to the Smart Chart? Be sure you're taking a comprehensive approach to meeting your overall goals.
- Is there buy-in from your organization to implement the strategy?
- Can you measure progress?

If you answered YES to all these questions, you are ready to get to work! If you answered NO, go back and find your weaknesses in your strategy and update.