

Facebook: Improving Communication with Families & the Community

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Background That Led to Your Team's Inquiry:

After conducting the High Reliability Schools Level 1 Leading Indicator Survey with teachers and administration at South Central Elementary, we identified domain 1.7 as an area we could grow in. Domain 1.7 states that "the success of the whole school, as well as individuals within the school, is appropriately acknowledged." While we did already share many of our successes, we realized that was mostly happening within our school in our small community. We really did not have an avenue to share our successes with the community and outsiders other than weekly newsletters and our school webpage.

Knowing that many families do not always have the time to read our weekly newsletters or visit our website, we turned to Facebook. Our stakeholders were already embedded in Facebook, so it was an obvious tool that we could use to share the successes of our school. After all, we are A rated by the Indiana Department of Education.

Our leadership team also identified communication, in general, as an area that always has room for improvement. So, while working on the improvement of sharing our school successes, we concurrently worked on our communication skills. Facebook was something we knew could help.

Therefore, the purpose of our action research was to improve the celebration of successes within our school, while concurrently working to improve communication with all stakeholders.

Statement of Your Team's Wondering:

With this purpose, we wondered how using Facebook could improve the sharing of our successes and communication with our school families and with our community.

Methods/Procedures:

To gain insight in our wonderings, we upped our game on our school Facebook page. While the page had already been created, it hadn't been used to its fullest potential. At that point, we solicited all staff members to assist with posts to our page. It became a team effort, and teachers/staff would put together posts to highlight great things happening in their classrooms. After putting together a post, they would forward that to the principal to be posted on the actual Facebook page.

Data was electronically collected through Facebook. Facebook provides an "insights" page where a multitude of data was provided. Who knew? It's incredible and very informative. We would strategically post at certain times when we knew we'd have the most viewers checking out our page. We'd post pictures with EVERY post we made, to help grab people's attention. And we monitored the insights on the page to see how much of an impact we were having.

Our team looked at and analyzed many different data points. First and foremost, our page likes increased from 725 to 1,059 from August 1, 2016 through June 1, 2017. That was encouraging to us, and kept us on our path. We also looked at data regarding how many people our posts reached, and how many reactions we gained from viewers.

Stating Your Team's Learning and Supporting it with Data:

As a result of analyzing our data, three important things we learned include: stakeholders are viewing and "liking" our page, our posts with successes and information was "reaching" our stakeholders, and our posts gained reactions from people including teachers, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, community members, businesses, etc.

The number of "Likes" on our school's Facebook page increased from 725 on August 1, 2016 to 1,059 on June 1, 2017. It was evident to us that people sought out and shared our page and were interested in the information we were sharing. It was ALL positive information, whether it be a success from the school or a classroom or a particular student, or if it was just general information reminding parents about an event or something important coming up.

The number of people our page "reached" was astounding to us. While we certainly had our fair share of posts that would only reach 100 or 200 people, a majority of our posts were reaching over 1,000 people. To date, our largest number of reaches on a single post is 5,468.

We also looked at the number of reactions our posts were garnering from Facebook followers. Not a single post went without a reaction. The average number of reactions to a post was about 75, but our largest was 520. We had 520 people react to one post! That was huge for us, considering our small school in a rural community. We were impressed, appreciative, and encouraged to continue.

Providing Concluding Thoughts:

In general, our team learned that our parents, community members, and other stakeholders really value having information and successes continually share with them. Albeit via Facebook. That did not deter our effort or the communities response to our effort. We only garnered positive feedback regarding this endeavor and only received positive comments on Facebook posts.

In the future, our school will continue to market, share success, and communicate other various information via Facebook. Now having over 1,000 "Likes" and more and more people seeing and viewing our page, we hope to continue to increase that number and improve the number of posts we're making on a daily basis. Our goal was to have at least one post per day. We'd like to at least continue that, if not increase it to two posts, minimum, per day.

References:

N/A