



## **District Accountability System Goal 3, Objective B Positive Media Impressions Superintendent's Note SY 16-17**

Goal 3, Objective B of the District Accountability System is to increase positive and targeted communication to stakeholders that creates awareness and enhances school pride. This is the first report on Positive Media Impressions. The numbers gathered for the 2016-17 school year will serve as the baseline and be used to determine a target for SY 2019-20.

This performance measure will be based on information provided through all communication channels including broadcast, print media, the district website, social media feeds and any other media outlets that reflect positive impressions of the district and/or our schools. Tracking this measure will provide an important indicator of stakeholder's exposure to and awareness of the efforts, events, and achievements that help to build positive perceptions, awareness, and pride within the schools and community.

It is this awareness that can help to change the community impression of the public school system. It can take time to change the community outlook towards the positive, just as it took time over the years for the public to form an opinion. A positive public perception will grow community support for our schools and our programs in a way that will help to support the needs of the school district.

The good news from the district is shared directly with our public stakeholders through a number of Internal or District-controlled media channels. Press releases are sent out to all local media outlets and community stakeholders who have requested notifications. Stakeholders include print, radio and television broadcast media, the County government, City government, Live Oak Public Libraries, and emergency management agencies. The Press releases are, in many cases, invitations for the media to cover an event. In other cases, the Press Releases are sent as advisories – such as the graduation rate, CCRPI scores, and school or district accolades. Though the pace of newsworthy items can ebb and flow depending on the time of year, the Communications Office sent out an average of thirteen releases each month during the 2016-17 SY – just in Good News. That number, and the numbers reflected in Table A below, does not reflect the regular meeting releases or breaking news type advisories – for instance, a weather closure or cancellation.



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In many cases, the media will request additional information on district advisories and request the opportunity to speak with someone or record some video related to the subject matter. One example spans from the Summer of 2016 when all three of the four local television stations did stories on the district's "Alternative Pathway to Teaching Program" as a way to bridge the teacher shortage affecting districts across the nation. A press release on the program was distributed with information about the number of teachers the District was seeking. The story was picked up by at least one of the television networks for their affiliate news feed and received air time in cities across the nation. Human Resources reported a big boost in potential employee interest from many regions they had not previously targeted.

Of course, most of the time, the news reports stay local. For larger events, at least two if not all local media outlets will usually have reporters on scene for coverage. News items like our first induction ceremony for the Junior Police Academy in January 2017, and the Ribbon-cutting for the new Brock Elementary attracted reporters from television and print. Even without an event or interview/video opportunity, district press releases are often converted into website stories for local media outlets. Our rising graduation rate, honors bestowed upon Woodville Tompkins Culinary Arts Instructor Carl Dyson-Bosier, and the rising number of our students participating in the Duke Tip Program are just some of the items a Google search will turn up on the websites of area media outlets because of information provided by an SCCPSS press release.

Of course, those Good News stories are also posted to the district website, complete with photo galleries when possible. This enables someone who doesn't live in the area, but may have an interest in our schools, to find out about our latest Good News stories that reflect the best of our district. This is particularly helpful when you consider a family planning to move to the area, going to the district website to find out about what our schools can offer their children. The Communications Office posted an average of 19 Good News stories to our website per month in the 2016-17 SY.

One of the most pro-active methods of getting information directly to the public is through our social media channels. In the 2016-17 School Year, SCCPSS used both Facebook and Twitter – though the Facebook page was not published for the public until October of 2016. The District's Twitter page has been in existence since 2011. Placing the District's good news stories on Social Media takes the news to our parents



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and other community stakeholders where they are – rather than making them visit our website to find it. During the 2016-17 SY, the Communications Office published an average of 35 posts per month to our Facebook page, and 26 posts to our Twitter Feed.

The social media posts provide an outlet for more good news provided to the public – sometimes posting a simple picture or video from an activity in a school, may not warrant a press release, but is something that reflects positively on our schools and students and is great content to share with the community. The benefits garnered target the desire our parents have to share the good news about their children or their children's school, along with our staff's desire to share good news about their student's or their co-worker's accomplishments, leads to those posts and tweets then being shared with others. This in turn, increases our followers and extends our good news reach even more. During the 2016-17 SY – the district Facebook page grew from zero followers to 1,352. The Twitter page also showed large gains – going from approximately 1,112 followers on July 1, 2016 to approximately 1,915 followers by June 30, 2017.

Those internal efforts to make sure good news gets the attention it deserves, is aided several times a year by the purchase of space in external news sources to get our news in front of more community members at strategic times. During the 2016-17 SY, SCCPSS purchased informational ad space in Savannah Magazine, the Savannah Morning News and the Chamber Relocation Guide. Those ads were in "Back to School" issues of the magazine and newspaper, the Chamber Relocation Guide available to area newcomers for the entirety of 2017, and a January ad in Savannah Magazine promoting our Choice programs as the Choice application process got underway. In addition, the Communications Office published "Education Inserts" twice during the school year – in October and April. The publications feature news articles written by the Communications staff and highlight the Best of the Best good news stories about the district in the spring and fall, as well as promotion for upcoming events. In addition, the Communications Office worked with the Savannah Morning News in September 2016 to publish an additional insert on the history of Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools as we approached our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary.



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The following tables provide data representing the frequency for which information was disseminated to obtain positive media impressions throughout the 2016-17 SY.

**TABLE A:** District Media Channels SY 2016-17 Posts by Month

- Note, though the District Facebook Page did not go live for the public until October 2016, content was being published to the private page when possible in September and October in order to populate the page and ready it for its public release.*

Media	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June
Press	4	18	16	10	18	5	6	13	9	24	17	11
Web	13	27	21	17	26	16	20	18	16	22	20	15
FB	0	14	24	35	45	18	36	39	45	56	57	16
Tweets	9	37	26	16	32	10	24	32	22	39	53	13

**TABLE B:** External Media Channels SY 2016-17 Buys By Month

Media	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June
SMN-Ed. Insert			X-150 <sup>th</sup>	X						X		
SMN Ad	X		X									X
Savannah Magazine Advertise	X						X					
Chamber Relocation Guide							X					