

Golden Achievement Award Submission: Community Connections Campaign

Elmhurst CUSD 205

Summary

The *Community Connections* campaign was created to strengthen engagement, improve transparency, and celebrate all the great things happening across District 205. After talking with the Board of Education, Communications Team, and District Leadership, one thing was clear—families, staff, and community members wanted updates that were more accessible, engaging, and easy to follow. The goal? To tell the story of District 205 in a way that truly connects with people.

This campaign is also a big part of our strategic plan, which focuses on making sure we're reaching the entire community—not just families with students in the district. And it's not just a printed newsletter. *Community Connections* uses a mix of print and digital formats, video, photos, social media, and the website to share what's happening. By using different platforms, we can connect with more people in more ways, making sure everyone stays informed and engaged with the work being done to support students and strengthen education in Elmhurst.

Research

From the start, we knew we needed to better understand the community's communication needs. Back in 2021, when Dr. Campbell, our Superintendent, began her tenure, we conducted research that provided clear insight—our entire community wanted to feel more informed and educated about District 205's successes and opportunities. Through feedback, it became clear that families and staff weren't just looking for information; they wanted materials that were engaging, visually appealing, and easy to access. There was also a growing demand for more frequent updates on district projects, student achievements, and strategic initiatives.

Beyond just sharing updates, we saw an opportunity to strengthen connections with the broader community. Showcasing initiatives like assistive technology, partnerships with local organizations, and the diverse pathways students are taking after graduation helps paint a fuller picture of education in District 205—one that goes beyond the classroom and highlights the incredible impact of our schools.

Planning

With the needs of parents, students, staff, and community members in mind, we take a strategic approach to content and distribution. Storytelling is at the heart of *Community Connections*, featuring in-depth pieces on key district initiatives, from academic transitions to arts programs and educator recognition. Each issue is designed to be visually engaging, incorporating professional photography, infographics, and student spotlights to enhance readability.

To ensure accessibility, the newsletter is available in both print and digital formats, with QR codes linking to video interviews, school presentations, and event recaps. This multi-platform approach makes it easy for people to engage with the content in a way that suits them best. The campaign highlights major community partnerships, including the Elmhurst Public Library collaboration, the Foundation 205 Showcase, and the District 205 Board's recognition for governance excellence.

The goal is not just to inform but to create a publication that reflects the pride and progress of District 205.

Implementation

With a structured timeline and clear deliverables, *Community Connections* launched as a quarterly publication, offering consistent updates to the community. Each edition is thoughtfully curated to ensure coverage of major district initiatives, such as construction progress, curriculum updates, and strategic planning efforts.

The storytelling approach is at the forefront, with feature-driven articles like *Assistive Technology in D205*, *the SAT to ACT transition*, and *Celebrating the York High School Class of 2024*. These stories provided a deeper look into how the district was evolving and what that meant for students and families.

The newsletter is distributed through multiple channels, including social media and the district website, to maximize visibility and accessibility. By focusing on high-quality content, a clear distribution plan, and ongoing engagement, *Community Connections* is a key tool for strengthening district transparency and community involvement.

Evaluation

Measuring the impact of *Community Connections* is essential to ensuring its continued success. Social media showed that posts promoting the newsletter generated good engagement. Additionally, attendance at district events, such as the State of the District Address and the Churchville Auditorium Grand Opening, saw increases, demonstrating that the newsletter is effectively driving awareness and participation.

At its core, the *Community Connections* campaign represents what happens when thoughtful planning, research-based decision-making, and a commitment to transparency come together. By prioritizing engaging storytelling, strategic outreach, and continuous improvement, the campaign has helped strengthen relationships between District 205 and its stakeholders. As we look ahead, *Community Connections* will continue to evolve, ensuring that every family, student, and community member stays informed, engaged, and connected.

Previous Editions of Community Connections

- [10th Edition](#)
- [9th Edition](#)
- [8th Edition](#)

Social Media Posts

- [Facebook Advertisement](#)
- [Assistive Technology](#)

[Feature Video Playlists](#)

[Excellent Educator Video Playlists](#)