

A Guide to ACA Communications

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Director of Communications

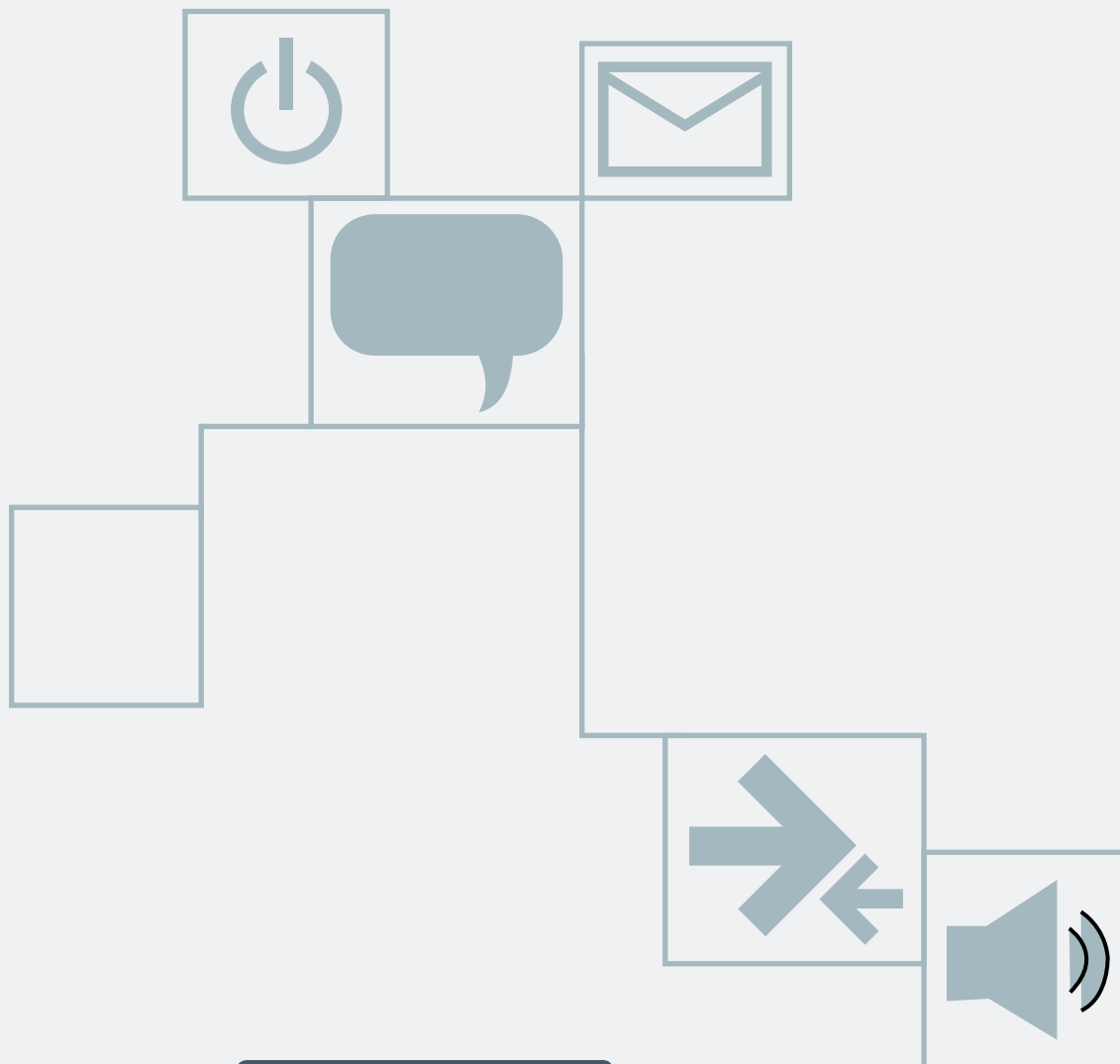


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Purpose and Rationale

ACA's past communication strategies have been anything but strategic. Our way of doing things has led to a fragmented communication system in which the creation and distribution of a message is governed by little more than the habits and preferences of the sender. Our constituency is often frustrated by a feeling of not knowing where to get information. It is time for us to get on the same page.

To this end, "A Guide to ACA Communications" is designed to paint a clear picture of the school's communication system. It is meant to describe the tools available to the community as senders and receivers of communication, provide a process for accessing these tools to send a message, and establish some basic guiding principles for how to use our communications system effectively and efficiently.



Communication Tools

Websites

ACA Website

Description

Arrowheadchristian.com is the official school website. This site behaves like other traditional websites whereby the information is not personalized to each family or student, but is meant for a broad audience. This site is accessible to the world and contains news and information about what is happening at ACA.

Function/purpose

To tell the story of our students, teachers, and community; to promote and market ACA, and to provide general information to a broad audience. The website is where people can learn about our school through reading press releases, latest news, sports results, etc. It is also the place for getting information about upcoming events like Family Night and Cirque du ACA. The website contains: links to our publications, master calendar, photo galleries of recent events, online scrip ordering, secure online donating, volunteer opportunities, and much more.

Administrator

Mark Leonard



ParentsWeb/RenWeb

ParentsWeb is the school portal that is linked to our databases. ParentsWeb behaves less like a website and more like a database in many ways. It is accessible only to current families with a login.

Functions as a link between current families and school faculty. Grades, assignments, announcements, and downloadable school documents and forms are all accessed on ParentsWeb. Come here when you are looking for class specific information, internal announcements, or if you would like to update your family or student contact information.

Betty Crocker and Mark Leonard

HighSchoolSports.Net

Highschoolsports.net is a website service dedicated to our athletic programs. The site allows users to subscribe to updates, see several customized views of the athletic calendar, get team specific information and announcements, and get driving directions to events.

To inform parents, players, and fans of ACA's athletic teams.

Richard Yaross



Publications

Threads Quarterly News Magazine

Threads is the quarterly print newsletter of both RCS and ACA. It is mailed to current families, alumni, donors, and friends of the schools.

To provide updates, news stories, and information to all of our stakeholders on a quarterly basis.

Mark Leonard

Screaming Eagle Monthly E-Newsletter

The Screaming Eagle is a free monthly e-newsletter delivered to your e-mail inbox. Subscribe on the home page of the website (www.arrowhead-christian.com).

To provide brief updates and information on the month's upcoming events, and to highlight activities and stories from the school.

Mark Leonard

This Week at ACA

This week at ACA is a weekly list of school activities and reminders for students and parents. It can be accessed from the website (www.arrowhead-christian.com), ParentsWeb, or by picking up a copy in the office.

To provide brief reminders of the week's upcoming calendar events and activities with dismissal times and pickup times for the week.

Mark Leonard

Daily Announcements

The Daily Announcements are a list of announcements and reminders read to students in their first period classes. They are taken directly from This Week at ACA and last minute announcement submissions.

To provide brief reminders of the upcoming events, deadlines, and activities.

Cyndi Aldaco

Other Tools

Facebook

Facebook is a social media site in which users can obtain information, create content, and connect with each other through online conversations. The Official ACA Facebook page is a fun and easy way to put an ear on the community buzz.

To connect the various groups of our constituency—alumni, parents, students, teachers, etc. You can find announcements about upcoming events, school highlights, and conversations between members of our community.

Mark Leonard



Special Email Blasts

Special email blasts are sent occasionally when important information must be distributed immediately to a targeted group of people (seniors, juniors, current parents, etc.).

To distribute a single message quickly when all other methods have been deemed insufficient.

Mark Leonard

Special Mailing

Special mailings are used in a variety of situations by several departments to provide information or invite the community to action.

To inform our community or call it to action.

Varies

Special Auto-dialer Blasts

Special auto-dialer blasts are sent occasionally when important information must be distributed immediately and redundancy is necessary.

To inform our community and incorporate a redundant communication channel.

Mark Leonard

News Releases

News Releases are used to inform the local media of events or stories from our school.

To tell the local community about the good things that are happening at ACA.

Mark Leonard



How to Distribute Your Message

We hope to give our constituents an easy and efficient way to communicate to the community. With this in mind, the process for sending a message is described below. Please remember that our goal is to plug your message into our regular publication schedule rather than distributing an isolated, independent message.

As a teacher:

Teachers and staff have direct access to some of these communication tools. FacultyWeb is a great way to post a message to students and/or parents in a particular class. Please use this method often to send progress reports, homework assignments, and other class related messages.

To send your message through one of our publications or other communication tools, follow these steps:

1. Consider the publications calendar and **plan ahead**. Try to get your message in early for the highest access to the publication chain (ie. quarterly-monthly-weekly-daily).
2. Send an email to Mark Leonard that includes the following information:
 - a. Advanced notice
 - b. Contents of your message-text, images, documents, etc.
 - c. Deadline or send date
 - d. Your preferred communication tool(s)
3. Submit a facilities/calendar request form if needed

As a volunteer

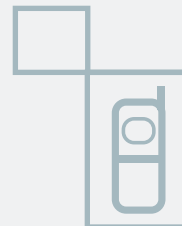
We encourage our volunteers to use the school's communication network to energize our community and provide needed information on upcoming events and opportunities to serve. We will work with you to distribute your message effectively and efficiently.

1. Consider the publications calendar and **plan ahead**. Try to get your message in early for the highest access to the publication chain (ie. quarterly-monthly-weekly-daily).
2. Send an email to Mark Leonard that includes the following information:
 - a. Advanced notice
 - b. Contents of your message-text, images, documents, etc.
 - c. Deadline or send date
 - d. Your preferred communication tool(s)

As a student

Our students are a huge part of our community. They are why we're here and we want to give them access to the school's communication system. Students must obtain the support and endorsement of a faculty advisor to send their message.

1. Consider the publications calendar and **plan ahead**. Try to get your message in early for the highest access to the publication chain (ie. quarterly-monthly-weekly-daily).
2. Send an email to Mark Leonard that includes the following information:
 - a. Advanced notice
 - b. The approval and endorsement of a faculty advisor
 - c. Contents of your message-text, images, documents, etc.
 - d. Deadline or send date
 - e. Your preferred communication tool(s)



As an alumnus

We love our alumni and we hope they continue to be part of the ACA community well after they walk across the graduation stage. To send a message about an upcoming reunion or other school related event, just contact Mark Leonard (mleonard@arrowheadchristian.com). We'll work together on the rest of the process.

Principles of Control

Why these principles will help improve our communications system

We cannot hope to improve the coordination of our communication efforts without some governing principles to guide our decisions. These principles are not meant to hinder our communication activities, but to make them more effective by providing some predictability and regularity in the way we communicate with our constituency. These principles are not hard and fast rules, but are designed to allow some flexibility in how we send messages while strengthening the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the school's communication system.

Guiding Principles

- **Establish predictable, regular communication habits – A regular schedule of communication will help people feel that they know where to find information.**
- Use our publications and websites for our communication before considering other tools. Special email blasts, special auto-dialer messages, and special mailings should be used sparingly and as a last resort, or for additional emphasis as required by circumstance.
- Recognize our constituents' desire to choose their preferred method of receiving communication and work to deliver that method in an efficient way.
- Carefully consider the distinguished functions of the school website and ParentsWeb and work to maintain a distinction in their purpose and use.
- Work to encourage stakeholders to use the school's communication system to deliver a message.
- School communications must advance the school's mission; eg. we will not use the school communication system to promote local girl scout events.

