

# Santa Rita Communications Guidelines For Committee Chairs/ Assistants to the Principal

## Background

Primary Objective - Inform Committee Chairs/Assistants to the Principal of the communication vehicles available to them, recommended guidelines for use and recommended event marketing/communications plan.

## Communication Vehicles

- General Communication Vehicles
  - Bobcat Tracker (electronic school newsletter)
  - Santa Rita website
  - Marquee
  - Display Cases
  - Banners, posters, signs and flyers
  - Sign Board
- Email Communications
  - All-school email (must be approved and sent by Principal)
  - Grade level email
  - Class emails
  - Direct email to volunteers
- Community Postings
  - Los Altos School District (LASD) School and Community News (this is an URL under the title of “School & Community News Link” in the Bobcat Tracker)
  - Los Altos Town Crier newspaper
  - Other community postings (e.g. flyers in stores and/or banners in downtown Los Altos)

## Bobcat Tracker

- Purpose: Weekly electronic school newsletter to inform families of news and events
- Guidelines
  - All communications that are generally applicable and relevant to all students and families including
    - All school events
    - General announcements
    - Principal’s message
    - Newsworthy events
    - Announcements and newsworthy articles from school clubs and committees
  - All articles must be submitted by 5pm Monday to Santa Rita School Secretary and copy Principal
  - Santa Rita Principal reviews articles and modifies as necessary. All information is subject to being approved and reformatted based on space availability
  - Announcements: No more than 50 words in length. Details associated with announcements should link back to a webpage/flyer on our Santa Rita website. An example of an announcement - **Parent Ed Events Girls Leadership Institute Workshops start in January 2010.** Being held at Santa Rita for girls and their parents: Tuesdays, January 5, 12, 19, 26 - Grades 2, 3 from 6-7:30pm and Wednesdays, January 6, 13, 20, 27- Grades 4, 5, 6 from 6-8:00pm. More info is located on our [Parent Education](#) page.

## Santa Rita Website - <http://www.santarita.losaltos.k12.ca.us/>

- The purpose of the school website is twofold
  - To provide a platform for communication for the vision, events and accomplishments of Santa Rita and its students
  - To provide an interactive tool for families to facilitate communications, sign-ups, forms and payments associated with school
- Guidelines: follows Bobcat Tracker guidelines with the addition of extra security
  - Since this communication can be seen by anyone anywhere, a higher level of security must be applied
    - No children or family names or photos posted without permission

- Process
  - Relevant material and articles from Bobcat Tracker will be selected and posted by Principal & Webmaster
  - Flyers and announcements can be sent to the Webmaster for posting
  - All flyers and announcements must be submitted by 5pm Monday to the Webmaster for posting to the website on the following Thursday
  - Format of flyers/announcements preferred - Microsoft Word or Acrobat pdf

## Marquee, Display Cases, Banners, Posters, Signs, Flyers and Sign Board

- Marquee
  - All school events and dates
  - School Secretary & 6th Grade Leadership responsibility
  - See Principal if you need something on Marquee
- Display Cases
  - 4 permanently assigned cases
    - Library, Character Counts, Student of the Week, International
  - Seasonal Events: Check with Principal on advertising in Display Cases.
- Banners
  - Paper banners are acceptable and subject to Principal's approval
  - Vinyl banners – limited use and subject to Co-Presidents' approval. Plus, must fit within your event budget.
- Posters, Signs and Flyers
  - Posters, signs and flyers can be taped onto poles in front of school by drop off curb with permission of Principal.
  - Must use blue painters tape only
  - Must be taken down 24 hours after event
  - Best results if hung less than 1 week prior to event
- Sign Board
  - One Sign Board, which can be used in front of school in drop off area, near crosswalk crossing.
  - Two 22x34 posters should be used on Sign Board – one poster in front and one poster in back.
  - Posters can be either homemade or made from a flyer. To make a poster from a flyer, please work with 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President. And if posters need to be laminated to protect from weather, work with 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President.
  - Format guidelines – large font size and general details of event/program (date, time, location, etc.). For example:

Santa Rita presents the  
 Witches' Delight Carnival and  
 Spooky Silent Auction  
 Fri, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009, 3pm – 8pm  
 Get Involved:  
 Sponsor, Donate, Volunteer and/or Spread the Word  
 More Info – Go to Santa Rita Website

## School Communications Policies and Guidelines

There are four types of Events at Santa Rita:

- All school events (Bobcat Chase, Witches Delight, Science Fair, etc.), programs (Hot Lunch, Character Counts, Enrichment, etc.) or committee/offering (Lost and Found, Spirit Wear, etc.)
- Multi-Grade event/program (Holiday Music Concert, Junior Olympics, etc.)
- Grade(s) level event/program (Kindergarten Social, Sixth Grade Activities, etc.)
- Class level event/program (parties, field trips, etc.)

## Email Communications

- All-school email (approved and sent by Principal)
  - Reserved for urgent and high priority messages regarding key events
    - Change in status (date, time, place)
    - Reminders about key major events or deadlines
    - Urgent messages regarding the security of Santa Rita campus or students
  - All other events and announcements should go through Bobcat Tracker
- Multi-Grade emails
  - Must be pertinent to 2 or more grades (e.g. 4, 5 & 6<sup>th</sup> grades)
  - Reviewed, approved and sent by Principal
- Grade Level emails
  - Must be pertinent to a single grade only
  - Reviewed, approved and sent by Principal
- Class emails
  - Sent by teacher or room parent
  - Subject matter is specific to an individual class only
    - Field trips
    - Parties
    - Class calendars for a typical week/month
    - Homework
    - Volunteer opportunities
    - Labs, library and other special curriculum needs

## Community Postings

- LASD news postings (called “LASD School and Community News”) email to Marcie Birnie at: [mbirnie@losaltos.k12.ca.us](mailto:mbirnie@losaltos.k12.ca.us)
- Los Altos Town Crier newspaper (called “School Briefs”) to Traci Newell at [tracin@latc.com](mailto:tracin@latc.com).

## Recommended Tools

- Google Documents ([docs.google.com](http://docs.google.com))
  - Document sharing tool to allow multiple people to edit a document.
  - Can be used for volunteer sign ups like field trip drivers, class party needs, committee communications, etc.
  - To learn more about Google Docs, go to <http://www.santarita.losaltos.k12.ca.us/parent/forms.html> and check out “Using Google Docs”
- Google Calendar ([calendar.google.com](http://calendar.google.com))
  - Can be used for class, grade and school calendars
  - Uploads from iCal

## Recommendations for Event Marketing/Communications Plan

### All School Event

#### Bobcat Tracker

- 30 days prior to Event – put a “Save the Date” article in Tracker. In article include the following information:
  - Background of Event/Program (1-2 sentences)
  - Date
  - Time
  - Location
  - Price (if applicable)
- 3 weeks prior to Event – put an “Announcing/Announcement” article in Tracker. In article include the following information:
  - Background of Event/Program (1-2 sentences)
  - Date
  - Time
  - Location
  - Price (if applicable)

- Additional information about event/program (i.e. for 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Jubilee Party, information included: attire, format of evening, silent auction, where to buy tickets, referred them to the Santa Rita website for more information under “Events”)
- 2-3 weeks prior to Event – put an “Announcing/Announcement” article in Tracker with request for volunteers and be sure to include URL to website for more information and a URL to a Google Doc for volunteers to sign up. This announcement may not overlap with another all school event recruitment timeframe. For example, Witches Delight must wait until Bobcat Chase volunteer recruitment is closed before advertising for volunteers.
- 2 weeks days prior to Event – put an “Announcing/Announcement” article in Tracker with Event/Program Details and be sure to include URL to website for more information.
- 1 week prior to Event – put an “Event” announcement in Tracker with a URL pointing to page with flyer on Santa Rita website (for all school events). Include information from “Announcement” article and request for volunteers.

#### Flyers for Website – Translated to Spanish and Mandarin

- For All School Events – work with International Liaison Committee to get your flyer translated. Mrs. Dickson will distribute the flyer to English Language Learners (ELL) students.

#### Los Altos School District School and Community News

- 30 days prior to Event, submit Article (should be of community interest) to Marcie Birnie with LASD Office at: [mbirnie@losaltos.k12.ca.us](mailto:mbirnie@losaltos.k12.ca.us) Include the following information:
  - Background of Event/Program (1-2 sentences)
  - Date
  - Time
  - Location
  - Price (if applicable)
  - Contact Name with email address
  - Additional information about event/program (i.e. for 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Open House Celebration, information included: special guest speaker, food offering, general outline of evening, etc.)

#### Santa Rita Website

- All announcements/flyers should be sent to the Santa Rita Webmaster to get the Event posted in the appropriate areas of the website –
  - Upcoming Events calendar (Google calendar); this should be coordinated with the Principal/School Secretary
  - Announcements
  - Events/Traditions
- 30 days prior to Event – use the same “Save the Date” announcement from Tracker. In announcement include the following information:
  - Background of Event/Program (1-2 sentences)
  - Date
  - Time
  - Location
  - Price (if applicable)
- Create content for an event page to be posted on the website and update information as appropriate as the event approaches and post event. Be sure to have basic information (date, time, location, contact name and email address, etc.) on the page at all times.
- All flyers and announcements must be submitted by 5pm Monday to the Webmaster for posting to the website on the following Thursday.
- Format of flyers/announcements preferred - Microsoft Word or Acrobat pdf.

#### Marquee

- 6<sup>th</sup> grade Marquee Leaders will post the All School Events. To submit Marquee requests, please work with School Secretary.

#### Display Boards

- 6<sup>th</sup> grade Display Board Managers will update the school events’ display board to advertise the All School Events. To submit Display Board requests, please work with Principal.

### Banner, Posters, Signs and Flyers at School

- 2-3 weeks prior to Major Event - create a BIG banner to hang on building behind Marquee. This banner can be handmade by purchasing banner paper from Office Depot. Please make sure that banner advertising event doesn't go up during another Event's advertisement's period – e.g. Witches Delight can't put up a banner until Bobcat Chase has occurred.
- 2-3 weeks prior to Event - create posters, signs and flyers. Posters can be handmade by purchasing poster paper from Office Depot. Flyers can be made using Microsoft Word or PowerPoint. Any posters/flyers created by an outside company, must be approved by Co-Presidents prior to being created and ordered. Please make sure that poster/flyer advertising event doesn't go up during another Event's advertisement's period – e.g. Science Fair can't put up posters/flyers until Spellathon has occurred. Flyers/posters can be hung using blue painter's tape on school walls, columns, etc.

### Sign Board

- Check availability of Sign Board with 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President. Make two posters (22x34) for Sign Board. To make posters from a flyer and for lamination, work with 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President.

### Calendars

- The Master Santa Rita Calendar is online and accessible via the Santa Rita website under the tab *Calendar* at top of the page. School Secretary maintains this calendar and worked with the Principal to develop the 2009/2010 Event Calendar. If dates aren't on the Calendar, go to the School Secretary.

### Friday Assemblies

- 2 weeks prior to Event – arrange with Principal to speak at Assembly about your Event. Send her an email.

### Volunteers

- If you need help from Parents, advertise in the Bobcat Tracker and Santa Rita Website. If you still don't have enough volunteers two weeks prior to the event, please email our Co-Presidents and they will work with our Principal to send out a school-wide email (if appropriate).

### Email Communications

- To be used for communicating with your Committee Members about the details of the Event/Program.

### Tracking Volunteer Hours

- All hours spent planning and working on various events, programs, fundraisers and activities at Santa Rita should be reported. Committee members should report their hours to their Committee Chair who is required to report the total hours spent on the activity. Go to the Santa Rita website and access the "Volunteer Tracking Form" on Google Docs to report total volunteer hours for your Committee/Group. <http://www.santarita.losaltos.k12.ca.us/pta/committees.html>