Marketing/Branding NSPRA Awards Entry:

Yolanda Stephen
Director of Public Relations
Troup County School System
100 North Davis Rd., Bldg. C
LaGrange, GA 30241

706.812.7900 ext. 1125
stephenyk@troup.org
www.troup.org

Two Public Relations Staff Members
**Director
**Administrative Assistant

PreK -12 District: 12,000 students

Entry Title:
Branding the District

Special Note: Within the following text, items in blue text are hyperlinks

**Please consider this entry for a Golden Achievement Award

TROUP COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM will provide educational opportunities that inspire learners to be independent, successful, and happy.

www.troup.org
Situational Analysis

Troup County School System (TCSS; System) is an AdvancED Accredited PreK-12 public education system in Georgia.

TCSS is located in Troup County. It is just south of Atlanta and directly on the Georgia and Alabama state line. With a population of over 69,700 residents, the county boasts a high quality of life that is located just minutes from the famed West Point Lake and only a few hours from the Florida panhandle beaches.

In 1993, the first of three city school systems merged to eventually create Troup County School System. During this merger, the three systems – Hogansville, LaGrange, and West Point – closed schools and combined campuses due to major budgetary setbacks. The students, parents, and Troup County community-at-large were left with feelings of anxiety and resentment because they believed the traditions in smaller neighborhood schools would be lost in a larger, combined school system. To abate this perception, a new logo and tagline were created in 1994 to unite the new System.

Today, with nineteen new or recently renovated schools, TCSS houses approximately 12,000 students in eleven elementary schools, three middle schools, three high schools, one college and career academy, and one alternative learning center.

The mission of TCSS is to educate all students in a challenging and safe learning environment, so they will become productive citizens in a diverse and changing world.

However, over the past eight years, this mission has been tested. The System has witnessed several key setbacks, including:

- Closing four neighborhood schools.
- Waning community trust and partner in education support.
- Decreasing student enrollment of 100-120 students per school year.
- Crippling budget cuts that amounted to over $22.5M over eight years.
- Fluctuating test scores and literacy rates viewed as subpar compared to surrounding districts.
- Declining employee morale with both veteran and younger skilled professionals exiting the System.

The System's reputation was, quite simply, in a bad place. And, from a visual imagery standpoint, the 25-year-old logo and tagline were still in use. Both the employees and community were eager for something new that made a bold statement of success for the System.

Problem Statement

The problem this program was created to address is: Troup County School System performs below standards and offers no quality programs to help students or teachers succeed.

Synopsis

In light of these elements, TCSS’s Leadership sought to introduce a branding campaign to the TCSS community with the sole purpose of creating a sense of pride and belonging to the school district and each school under its umbrella.

Recognizing that each of the 19 locations have a culture that permeates throughout the building, there was a need for a project at the district level to bring cohesiveness to the look and feel of the overall System; something that would connect each employee, student, business partner, and community member together.

Internally, there was a realization that TCSS has evolved; the way students learn has progressed and the classroom atmosphere has advanced to include student-centered learning, added school safety features, one-to-one technology, and critical thinking elements. These essential components, and more, have fundamentally transformed TCSS.
Synopsis Cont.

In order to meet TCSS District Goal 3 of: Engaging all students, staff, families, businesses, and the community in the educational process, the Executive Cabinet included Brand the District in the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) as a major initiative to accomplish this goal. In addition, TCSS also incorporated three key priorities into the CSIP in which each department would contribute to:

- Creating a Culture of Success
- Increasing Literacy Level of all Students
- Incorporating a Rigorous and Relevant Learning Environment

Brand the District is the principal Communications project under the priority of Creating a Culture of Success. The creation of a Brand the District statement of work plan aided in the research, approval, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the initiative.

Research

October 2016: Enlisted International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE) to provide research on the top 25 school districts in the nation's branding efforts.

November 2016: Conducted a SWOT Analysis of internal and external perceptions that included research from public and private school districts within a 100-mile radius of Troup County.

December 2016: Reviewed student, parent and community online surveys conducted by ICLE and the Georgia Department of Education.

January 2017: 1. Partnered with Troup County Chamber of Commerce to add questions to a county-wide workforce development survey. 2. TCSS PR and School Improvement Depts. conducted one-hour focus groups of more than 900 internal and external stakeholders. Sample questions included:

- What do you think/feel when interacting with TCSS?
- What does TCSS currently look like?
- What do we want TCSS to look like?
- What attributes do we want our students to have once they graduate?

April 2017: Compiled responses and created a word bank of top eight words used in focus groups. Words were then developed to create four vision statements and three taglines for vetting with same stakeholder groups. The top eight words were (in order):

1. Successful 5. Trustworthy
2. Independent 6. Service-minded
3. Confident 7. Prepared
4. Compassionate 8. Happy

May 2017: Enlisted the help of TCSS high school students to begin visually concepting marketing materials. Over 30 logos, taglines, and other design elements were submitted. During the summer, PR shared the top two student designs with a graphic artist who added a polished look for final potential logos.

October 2017: Presented vision, logo, and tagline to different focus groups before conducting a four-question online survey that was completed by 769 stakeholders. The four questions were:

- Are you a TCSS employee (or student or community member/parent)?
- Which vision do you feel best represents ALL TCSS students?
- Which logo do you feel best represents TCSS?
- Which tagline do you feel best represents TCSS?
January 2018: Compiled findings to begin building collateral materials and preparing for an April 2018 Brand the District roll-out.

Findings included 769 total respondents. Of the respondents:
- 11% community members/parents
- 12% students
- 77% employees

The vision statement that resonated most with respondents (39.3%) was: TCSS will provide educational opportunities that inspire learners to be independent, successful, and happy.

The tagline that resonated most with respondents (42.5%) was: Your Future Starts Today

The logo that resonated most with respondents (38.5%) was:

Research Snapshot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Primary (P)</th>
<th>Qualitative (L)</th>
<th>Formal (F)</th>
<th>Formative (F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TCSS work with ICLE on National Survey of Top 25 Schools in Nation – Branding &amp; Impact</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCSS partners with Troup County Chamber of Commerce – Avalanche Workforce Development Study</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWOT Analysis</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of existing company branding material</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct/evaluate community online surveys</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus group w/450 community members to assess attitude/feeling/connection to TCSS</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus group w/250 employees to assess attitude/feeling/connection to TCSS</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus group w/250 employees to assess attitude/feeling/connection to TCSS</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test print material messaging and visual</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Goal

TCSS had significant name recognition and awareness, but the internal and external attitude and connection to the TCSS brand did not create a sense of belonging or personal ambassadorship. In this vein, the Executive Cabinet and the Public Relations Director set this goal for Brand the District:

TCSS will bridge a connection between the organization and its audiences so they will become brand ambassadors and begin to share positive comments and stories through digital media and in their sphere of influence.
Objectives

To achieve the stated goal, the Executive Cabinet and the Public Relations Director set the following objectives in January 2017:

- TCSS will create consistent branding across 100% of district marketing materials and district building by March 2019. (Stretch goal is January 2019)
- TCSS will increase digital media engagements by 50% by January 2019. (Stretch goal is 60%)
- TCSS will increase the number of positive media placements in regional news publications by 20% by January 2019. (Stretch goal is 30%)
- TCSS will create 15 shareable video vignettes that highlight positive messages about Troup County School System students, employees, partners, and/or programs by March 2019. (Stretch goal is 20)
- 65% of TCSS employees will, by January 2019, state they ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the Stay Survey Question that asks: I am happy to work for TCSS and would recommend others to work here by March 2019. (Stretch goal is 70%)

Audience Identification

Keeping inline with District Goal 3: Engaging all students, staff, families, businesses, and the community in the educational process, the team realized ‘all’ is a daunting audience. With this in mind, two categories of publics were created - primary and secondary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Audience</th>
<th>Secondary Audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TCSS Employees</td>
<td>Community Business Partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCSS Parents</td>
<td>Faith-Based Community Partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCSS Students</td>
<td>Realtors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Messaging

In an effort to streamline communication to our publics, four key messages were created using data from the focus groups, surveys, and SWOT Analysis. They are:

- Branding is more than a logo. It’s a powerful visual and written statement about who you are and what you stand for.
- We stand for independent, successful, and happy students and staff.
- Your Future Starts Today!
- Education looks different. Student and teacher needs are changing. And we are changing with it.

Budget

Due to budget constraints, the project research, planning, implementation, and evaluation was delivered over a three-year budget period. The Executive Cabinet and PR Director felt this budget approach was necessary for several reasons:

- To meet the stated objectives of the plan and see success upon evaluation.
- To allot adequate time for the two-person PR team to provide successful implementation.
- To keep branding a top system priority for identified audiences even though budget allocations were small.
- To assuage primary and secondary audience perception that thousands of dollars were spent on branding in one budget season.
Implementation

Implementation of Brand the District was an entirely collaborative effort - even during the research and pitch phase of the plan. This was important because the organization was seeking to build trust with our primary and secondary audiences to build brand ambassadors. If we locked them out of the program objectives, we would have been defeating the purpose of branding from the onset of approval.

From the initial conversation and data presentation with Executive Cabinet, the PR Team considered our actions, customer service, and planning an integral part of the implementation process.

In preparation for the Brand the District announcement, we held employee meetings to advise the official date of announcement. We posted a dedicated webpage with branding information and links so primary audiences could become familiar with the new look and feel before the release date.

This program contained a large social media push, advertising, and hosting of events in-person and on Facebook, which was our identified social media platform. The timeline for launching Brand the District - April 2018 through February 2019 - was deliberately written to take place over a 10-month period to account for two budget seasons and to host events that brought continuous excitement around the new brand.

Implementation Activity Snapshot

*Host TCSS Tailgate to Invite Partners inviting partners and parents

*Host Student Art Event - Arts & Apps to Brand District Walls

*Create Branding Webpage

*5 Reasons Social Media Campaign

*Graduation Rate Campaign

*Employee Highlights

*Board of Education Presentations

*Create 'Your Future Starts Today' Newsletter

*Mediation Relations Blitz

*Grassroots Registration and Day 1 school visits - F2F

*Provide swag bags to all principals, board members, school media personnel for giveaways

*Billboard Advertisement

*Host Employee Information Meetings

Budget Snapshot

FY2017

In-kind - Research Consultants
In-kind - Avalanche Consultants
$150 - Mission Card Design
$200 - Mission Poster Design
$350 - Logo Refresh Design
$400 - Style Guide Design
$400 - Recruitment Brochure
$850 - Graphic Designer

$2,350 - Total

FY2018

In-kind - Website Revamp
In-kind - 2pg Article Spread
$600 - Billboard by WP Road
$700 - Name Tags
$1211 - LaGrange Living Ad
$1517 - Business Cards
$1800 - Billboard by Parkway
$1930 - Mission Poster Printing
$5975 - Branded Swag

$14,333 - Total

FY2019

$375 - Branded TCSS Car Decals
$612 - Banner Display
$855 - Canvases for Arts & Apps
$1647 - Branded Bags
$2222 - Re-order of Swag
$2300 - Brd. of Ed. Bldg. Branding
$5523 - Branded Shirts

$13,534 - Total

Branding the District 3-year Total = $30,217

*Create Branding Webpage

*Host Employee Information Meetings

*Board of Education Presentations

*Create 'Your Future Starts Today' Newsletter

*Mediation Relations Blitz

*Grassroots Registration and Day 1 school visits - F2F

*Provide swag bags to all principals, board members, school media personnel for giveaways

*Billboard Advertisement

*Host Employee Information Meetings
Evaluation

Using the stated objectives, the PR Team used formative and summative evaluations to gauge if program outcomes were met or exceeded. It was through these evaluation that the team made adjustments to realize outcomes or celebrated when we saw successes.

Objective 1: By implementing Branding Guidelines and making budgetary concessions over three years, the team achieved this goal by providing materials such as name tags and business cards while working with each department and school over the summer months to update forms, website pages, and other materials. In addition, the team held a student-driven Arts & Appetizers event that provided artwork and materials for the district building walls to create an education-centered environment.

*GOAL ACHIEVED: February 2019

Objective 2: Our initial surveys showed that the majority of our audience was on Facebook, so we concentrated efforts on this social platform. Formative data highlighted high engagement posts and videos that the team emulated throughout the entirety of the program. We also began driving conversation to the district's Facebook page by using two-way communication and responding to questions and feedback. In addition, we hosted training sessions for representatives from our 19 locations who in turn built a social media presence.

*STRETCH GOAL ACHIEVED:*
Jan. 2017 - 5,208 Followers - Baseline
Jan. 2018 - 6,573 Followers - 26.2% increase
Jan. 2019 - 8,480 Followers - 62.9% increase

Objective 3: When the program began, the team began streamlining press releases, training school ambassadors to share student and teacher success stories directly with media, and capturing video interviews at events to share with broadcast news stations outside of our region. We saw a dramatic rise in year-over-year positive media placements.

*STRETCH GOAL ACHIEVED:*
Story Releases 2017: 95
January 2017 - December 2017: 1063 w/ 82% Positive
Story Releases 2018: 101
January 2018 - December 2018: 1024 w/ 91% Positive

Objective 4: The PR team purchased camera equipment and worked with the high school AV/Film instructor to provide a four-hour professional learning on video creation and storytelling. The team did not have this skill set, so they used in-house personnel to help train them. In addition, the team purchased simple video editing equipment to aid in the creation of compelling video.

*STRETCH GOAL ACHIEVED:*
Jan. 2017 - 1 video
Apr. 2018 - 5 videos
Mar. 2019 - 22 videos (440% increase in one year)

Objective 5: The PR team partnered with Human Resources to add one question to the employee stay survey. It was the first time the survey was administered. The information was used as a baseline to implement rewards and recognition programs for employees.

*STRETCH GOAL ACHIEVED:*
70% of employees said they were 'happy to work for TCSS and would recommend others to work here.'

Challenges

1. Superintendent Resignation - Three days into the new school year, and after eight years on-the-job, the Superintendent quickly resigned. The PR team built a #TCSSuper communication plan as part of branding. With the swift resignation, the Executive Cabinet and PR team abandoned the plan until a new Superintendent is named.

2. Return on Investment - The PR team was asked to provide ROI throughout the plan. The team took this as an opportunity to educate audiences on Branding the District time frame, budget considerations, and communication practices as well as show areas of struggles and outcomes that were celebrated as successes.

3. Zone Change Timing - Brand the District was scheduled for public release at a time when the system began changing school zones. The team chose to continue branding release with the conversation shifting to how all schools provide quality education.

4. Me First Mentality - As schools began building a social media presence, information was shared on school pages vs. the district. The PR team educated Executive Cabinet about social media shares. The PR team also began to write more in-depth story releases as opposed to social media shares. This helped meet outcomes.
Research Examples

Research analysis included primary and secondary research conducted by the Chamber of Commerce, Georgia Department of Education, TCSS School Improvement Team, and TCSS PR Team. This research helped shape the ongoing efforts for the Brand the District plan.
Communication Plan Activities

The PR team created a plan of activities and timeline to ensure Brand the District stayed on target. A list of these activities included sending messages, creating a calendar of events related to branding, hosting photo shoots, and even ordering swag materials.
Implementation Marketing

For implementation, a press release was written, employee meetings and emails built anticipation, articles were written in local newspapers, billboard advertisements were placed around the county, and signs with the new logo and tagline were ordered for each school. School ambassadors took photos, shared on social media, and a video was created to welcome the new brand.
Old Logo vs. New Logo

The new logo and tagline was concepted by students.

The old logo was almost 25 years old. Feedback session attendees stated the seal with the crest was ‘dated’ and ‘made TCSS appear unapproachable’.

The feedback about the new logo stated it is ‘fresh, diverse, full of life’ and ‘makes TCSS look like they are thinking ahead and moving forward’.

Branding Guidelines

The team shared the Brand Identity Guide link and collateral materials such as letterhead and business cards. There were also items like umbrellas, Tshirts, pop sockets, and flash drives that were placed into logo’d swag bags for school personnel to give away to employees, students, and community members to help spread the conversation about the TCSS brand.
Old Collateral vs. New Collateral

A new mission poster was one of the first pieces created to place in all buildings and classrooms across the system. The new poster highlights the vision and new photography created for branded items and videos. All items feature TCSS schools and people.
Video Creation

Including the use of video media for engagement was a top priority for the team. It was a line-item in the communication plan. Videos were created to share information, create conversation, and make engagement with the public fun. All videos were created in-house with no additional budgeting. They included key messages, tagline, and new branding.
The Troup County School System graduation rate was the highest ever when the announcement was made in Sept. 2018. It was 6.1% higher than the prior year. In addition, the sub group graduation rate was greater. The team used this opportunity to connect with audiences and also congratulate the successes of the TCSS students and staff.
Employee Spotlights

Employees are an integral part to the way TCSS does business. After reviewing survey feedback, the PR team began incorporating employee highlights and spotlights in all aspects of communication planning. One employee was featured each month on the system’s digital platforms and in traditional media outlets.

Shannon Gipson
Long Cane Elementary
First Grade Teacher

Shannon Gipson joined Long Cane Elementary (LCE) seven years ago. Now, as a first grade teacher, she says she still knows the family atmosphere that she appreciates when she first arrived at LCE. “I’ve always worked with a small school system, and I enjoyed being a family atmosphere,” she said. “It’s like being at home.”

Gipson’s work experience includes years at Long Cane, where she enjoyed working with the staff and students. She changed her career path to teaching when she realized she could make a difference in children’s lives. “I love working with children,” she said. “I see them grow and change every day.”

Derek Pitts
Principal, Gardner Newman Middle School

Leslie Battle brings life to her fifth grade students

Phyllis Platt
National School Lunch Week
District Chef

The Daily News
55°

Shannon Gipson Loves the TCSS Family Atmosphere

Employee Spotlights

Employees are an integral part to the way TCSS does business. After reviewing survey feedback, the PR team began incorporating employee highlights and spotlights in all aspects of communication planning. One employee was featured each month on the system’s digital platforms and in traditional media outlets.
Media Update and Coverage Spreadsheet

Tracking monthly media sentiment was a formative evaluation platform the team implemented to track district priorities, placements, and share of voice in traditional media publications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>Headline</th>
<th>Synopsis</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Tone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/1/2018</td>
<td>Hogansville Herald</td>
<td>Great Achievement</td>
<td>HGVES kindergarten students learn site words</td>
<td>LRSS</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/1/2018</td>
<td>Hogansville Herald</td>
<td>Are you filling your bucket</td>
<td>HGVES students are using the book Have you Filled a Buck Today?</td>
<td>LRSS</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/1/2018</td>
<td>Hogansville Herald</td>
<td>The Crayon Box That Talked</td>
<td>3rd grade students at CES worked on a team building activity</td>
<td>RRS</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/1/2018</td>
<td>Hogansville Herald</td>
<td>We All Scream</td>
<td>CES hosted ice cream social for CES families</td>
<td>Success</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/1/2018</td>
<td>LaGrange News</td>
<td>School Lessons</td>
<td>Students create space stations in Discovery Class</td>
<td>RRS</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/1/2018</td>
<td>LaGrange News</td>
<td>Yearbook Brings Back Memories</td>
<td>Former students reminiscing about her time at THS</td>
<td>Success</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/1/2018</td>
<td>LaGrange News</td>
<td>LCES hosted Back to School</td>
<td>LCES hosted bash for students &amp; families</td>
<td>Success</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/1/2018</td>
<td>LaGrange News</td>
<td>School Lessons</td>
<td>HGVES PreK students are learning Numbers and Shapes</td>
<td>Success</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/1/2018</td>
<td>LaGrange News</td>
<td>School Lessons</td>
<td>Family Liaison Baswell fills students buckets with kindness</td>
<td>Success</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/1/2018</td>
<td>The Times-News</td>
<td>Broadcast Team</td>
<td>WPES announces broadcast team</td>
<td>Success</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/3/2018</td>
<td>Troup County News</td>
<td>Fun At School</td>
<td>WRBI Meteorologist speaks to GNMS students</td>
<td>RRS</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/3/2018</td>
<td>Troup County News</td>
<td>Fun At School</td>
<td>HGVES study space stations in Discovery Class</td>
<td>RRS</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/3/2018</td>
<td>Troup County News</td>
<td>Fun At School</td>
<td>PreK students are working hard learning numbers &amp; shapes</td>
<td>RRS</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>Headline</th>
<th>Synopsis</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Tone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/29/2018</td>
<td>Google Alert</td>
<td>Markets Insider SAE</td>
<td>International Jet Toy sponsored competition for 6th graders from TCSS</td>
<td>LRSS</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/29/2018</td>
<td>Hogansville Herald</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>5th grade class at HGVES focus on Responsibility by setting goals</td>
<td>LRSS</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/29/2018</td>
<td>LaGrange News</td>
<td>Chromebook initiative</td>
<td>Placing digital technology in the hands of 6,000 students</td>
<td>LRSS</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/29/2018</td>
<td>LaGrange News</td>
<td>Discussing next steps</td>
<td>Qualifications for new superintendent</td>
<td>Success</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/29/2018</td>
<td>LaGrange News</td>
<td>Editorial</td>
<td>Learning Stop the bleed and safety first</td>
<td>Success</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Stories: 142

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>5+</th>
<th>4+</th>
<th>3+</th>
<th>2+</th>
<th>1+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Success</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Tone     | 141 | 1  |

| Tone Percentage | 99% | 1% |

| 5+ | 99% |
| 4+ | 1%  |
Media Update Emails and Evaluation

The team shared monthly updates with school ambassadors, principals, Executive Cabinet, and Board members. This sharing of information caused a friendly competition between schools to share more positive news each month. Stories were also shared across platforms from websites to social media and into traditional media.
Providing top-notch customer service helps TCSS build trust. We implemented new communication tools like a newsletter and Facebook Chats to create two-way conversation. We began to see an uptick in positive comments.
Outcomes and Next Steps

Showing outcomes for the PR team’s efforts was imperative to the success of the program. It was funded year-over-year due to the successes that were realized. Some of those efforts included a high employee satisfaction survey rating and an AdvancED Powerful Practice in stakeholder input through the Brand the District process. This program was in support of other district priorities and is continually evolving based on audience feedback and input. Next steps will focus on a Human Resources recruiting and retention program.

Recently, system personnel decided it was time for a new logo. The previous logo had used for many years and did not portray a forward-thinking image. Rather than hire an outside advertising company to develop a new logo, the opportunity was given to the students. Several options were considered, and a focus group provided additional input before the new logo was selected.