

- Which stories?
How do I find them?
How do I tell them?

Getting the story



Scan for all the goods

James Skorburg • Parkway Schools
Digital Communications Specialist

— Getting the Story

My story

- Where I started
- Where I am now
- What does that mean to you?



— Getting the Story

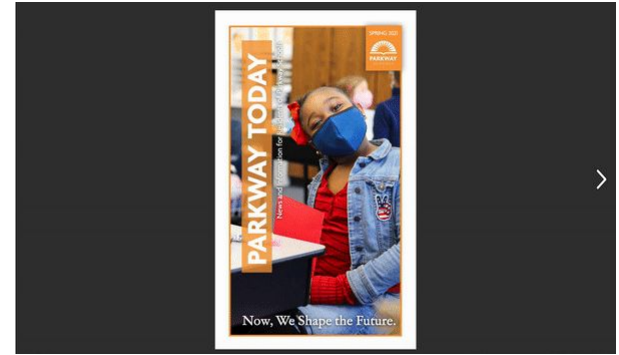
You: What are we doing for the next 50 minutes?

- Focusing on the right stories
- How to find them
- Best practices for telling them
- Examples of what it looks like

Graphic Design



Publications



Video



Why do we share stories?

How do we share stories?
Where does our community find stories?

Not so breaking news:

We're Busy

**When we are storytelling it's critical
to invest time in the right things**

The mission statement is the key to a district's strategic communication

Every mission statement is unique. We are all in education, so our districts have similar goals and objectives.

Parkway School District's Mission Statement:

The mission of the Parkway School District is to ensure all students are capable, curious, caring and confident learners who understand and respond to the challenges of an ever-changing world.

There are a lot of stories to tell

- Is this story relevant?
- Support the values and objectives of our district

Build a Story Reference Sheet

- Ensure you are focusing on the right things
- Do your job with intention

Key Messages

Create key messages using your mission statement

(i.e. ensure all students are capable, curious, caring and confident learners)

In my role I use these key messages to develop and identify stories the district wants me to tell.

Strategic Communication Parkway District Goals

Goal 1

Our students are learners who positively engage in an ever-changing world

STUDENTS
80%

Goal 2

We attract, employ, develop and retain exceptional staff dedicated to and representative of its diverse community

STAFF
10%

Goal 3

We responsibly and efficiently allocate resources including, finances, facilities, personnel and time

RESOURCES
10%

Key Messages + District Goals = Targeted Stories

Goal 1: Students – 80% of the stories we tell:

- **We Develop Capable Students (20%)**
Story/message examples: College and career readiness, best high schools, excellence in academics, AP exam scores
- **We Develop Curious Students (20%)**
Story/message examples: Experiential learning, Spark!, creativity, real-world solutions, technology integration, robotics
- **We Develop Confident Students (20%)**
Story/message examples: Perseverance, keeping kids safe, social-emotional development, outdoor school
- **We Develop Caring Students (20%)**
Story/message examples: Character recognition, community service, anti-bullying efforts, diversity and inclusion, making a difference

- Getting the Story • Which stories & why

Story Subject: Staff

Goal 2: Staff – 10% of the stories we tell:

- **Exceptional staff**

Story/message examples: caring staff, professional development relating to student growth, employee wellness, employee safety

Story Subject: Resources

Goal 3: Resources – 10% of the stories we tell:

- **Good stewards of our resources**

Story/message examples: Financial awards, recognition, resource savings, creative new revenue strategies, sustainability - energy efficiency, grants, sports marketing

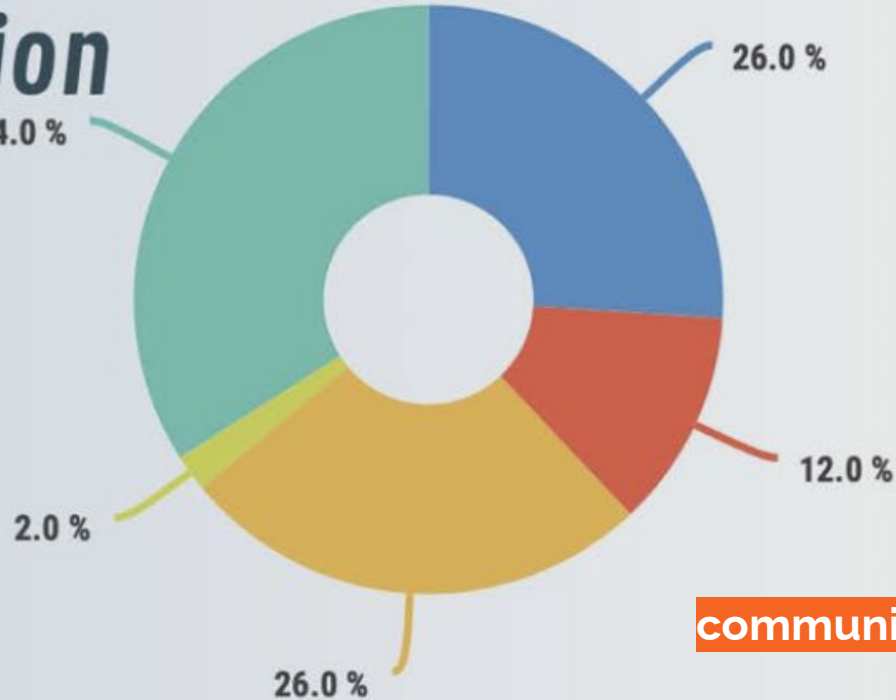
- Which & Why

Communications Report



Mission

34.0 %



64%
stories
related to mission

Measuring: Keeping communications accountable and focus properly

● Goal 1: Capable & Curious ● Goal 1: Confident & Caring ● Goal 2 ● Goal 3 ● Informational/Other

— Getting the story • How do I find them?

How do I cover all these stories on my own?

Spoiler: You don't have to

Getting the story • How do I find them?

Leverage the network

Build relationships

Reshare content

Empower staff and students

Getting the story • How do I find them?

Build relationships

- In your department
 - In Schools
 - Community partnerships
-

Getting the story • How do I find them?

Productive Scrolling

- Make time to review what schools are sharing
 - Reshare or follow up
-

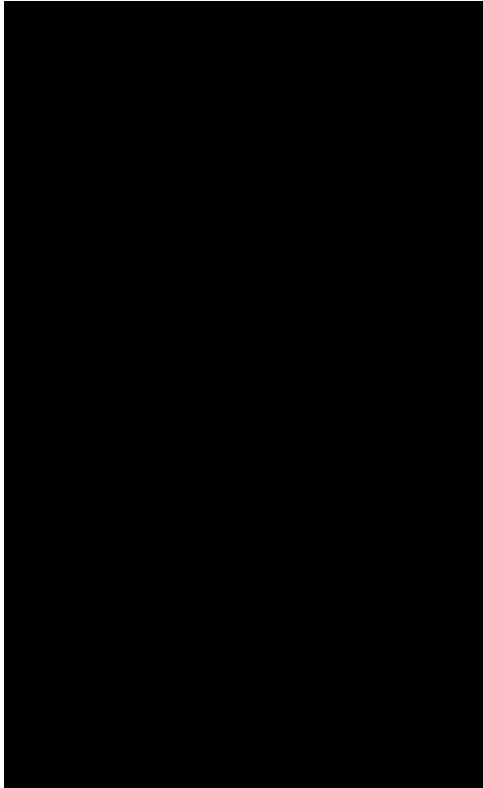
Getting the story • How do I find them?

Empower staff and students

Leverage the network of your district

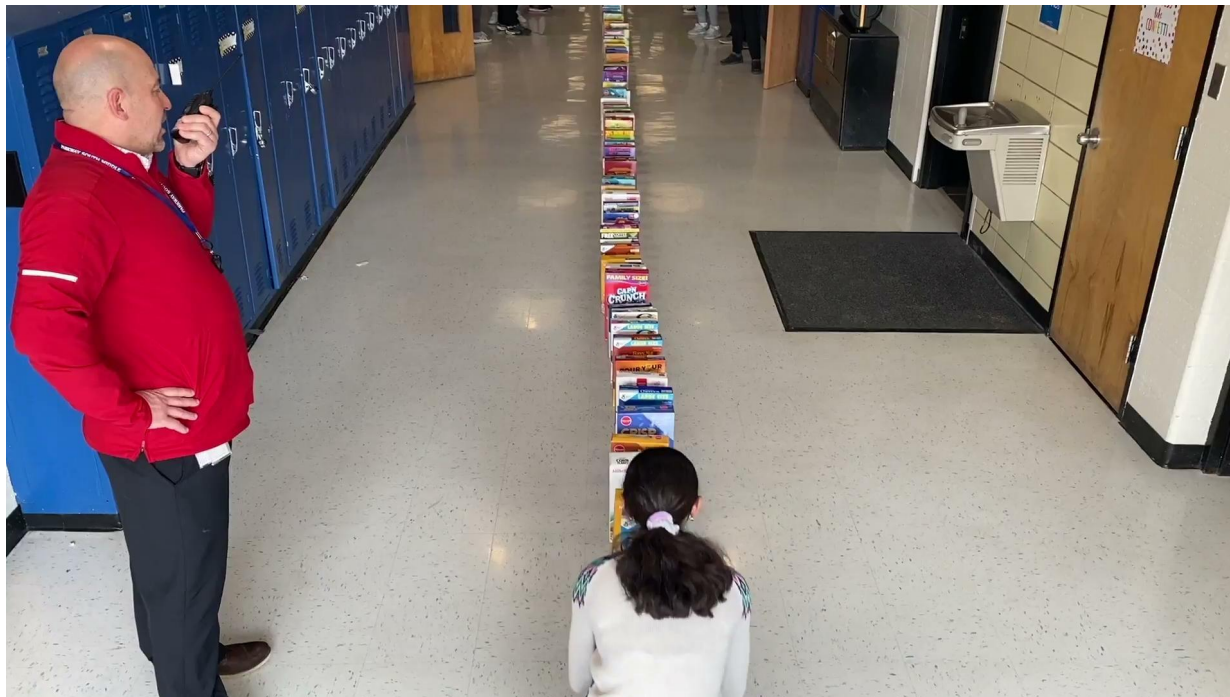
- School Newspaper, Yearbook and Journalism classes
 - Instagram Takeovers
 - Coach them up
 - Interns?
-

Instagram Takeovers



- Student Voice and perspective
- Getting communities comfortable using social media

In the last two weeks, the South Middle community donated nearly 1000 cereal boxes to the Parkway Food Pantry. Check out their celebration!



Example: Coach them up

— Getting the story • How do I find them?

The ask

- What is in it for them?
- Be specific

"YOU MISS 100% OF THE SHOTS YOU DON'T TAKE. -WAYNE GRETZKY"

-MICHAEL SCOTT



Hi Jenn,

The Communication's Department would like to feature South High on social media! We find that our audience particularly enjoys stories about students:

- finding community from a before or after school activity;
- Going above and beyond to care about a fellow student or staff member
- using a district opportunity to follow something they are passionate about;
- overcoming adversity or finding their stride through relationships or applying school resources

This is an excellent opportunity for communications to help you highlight your school, teachers and students.

I understand that you may be busy so feel free to forward this to others. Some schools have found that reaching out to their department heads, athletic directors or club sponsors helpful to uncover new stories. Can you or someone from your school share a couple of leads by Friday morning?

Looking forward to talking to you soon!
James

— Getting the story • How do I find them?

It can be this easy

"YOU MISS 100% OF THE
SHOTS YOU DON'T
TAKE. -WAYNE GRETZKY"

-MICHAEL SCOTT



Hi Jane Doe, (Principal or AP)
cc: (Principal's Secretary)

We would like to spotlight your school on our district's social media account!

We are looking for a story about a student who is pursuing an interest or solving a real-world problem in the classroom.

I have some time next week to cover it! Please share a couple of leads with me by Friday so I can schedule a time next week for you all. Feel free to forward this to others too!

Thank you,
(your name, preferably..)

— Getting the story • How do I find them?

What makes a great story?

Hint:

What makes a piece of content i.e. a photo, video or article worth sharing with a friend?

What makes a great story?

- Relevant to audience
- Relationships
- Evokes emotion
- We can show that we're enabling our students to live their best lives

What adds even more value?

- Visual
- Timely
- A fresh voice

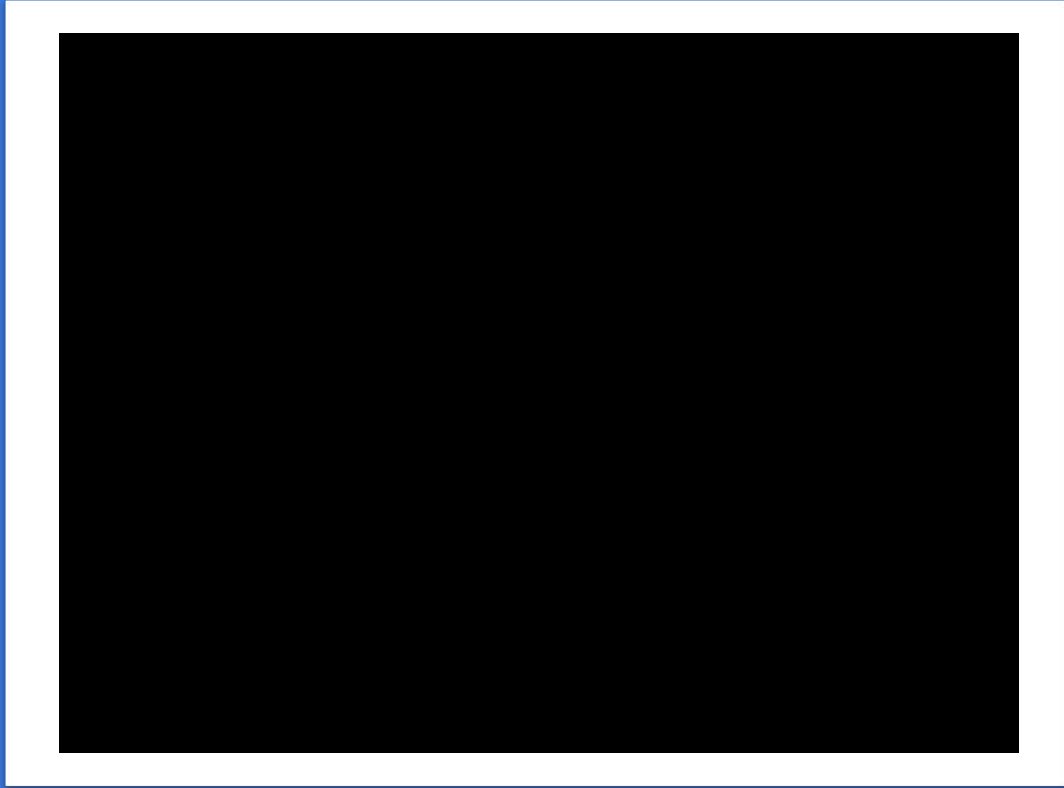
— Getting the story • How do I find them?

What makes a piece of
content **successful?**

Engagement & Shareability

- Entertaining
- Interesting – Informational and expands knowledge
- Creative or unique
- Relatable
- Fills them with pride

Parents woke up extra early to surprise their staff with a warm welcome.



Example: iPhone 1.5 million reach

Why?

- Concept is simple
- Short
- Caring – Relationship
- Fills them with pride
- Relatable – an idea worth recreating

When something goes viral its a compound effect of some or many of these

— Getting the story • How do I tell them?

Out in the field
Let's make a video!

1. The Visuals – Video

Ideally, your content should be able to communicate without sound

Have a visual “shot list” before you arrive when possible.

- Visualize what brought you to the story
- Get more than what you need vs. Overshooting 🙋
- Be on the lookout for good interview candidates
- Visual Oreo: Visuals | Interviews | Visuals

2. The interview

Make it a priority to ensure that your subject is comfortable.

→ **Have questions prepared.**

Who, **what**, when, where, **why** and **how**.

→ **Ask open-ended questions**

Avoid questions that give you a 'yes' or 'no' response

→ **Leading and follow-up questions**

"Can you tell me more about that?" • "...Do you agree."

→ **My favorite questions**

Ask how it makes them feel and if something surprised them

What started as an idea at a staff meeting quickly led to a school collecting 850,000 pennies for a teacher in need. #ParkwayCares



Example: All done with an iPhone

3. Putting it all together

It should flow: there's a beginning middle and end

Your caption sets the scene for your content

- **Lead with what moves you**
Leading with emotion will engage your audience
- **Include multiple perspectives**
Ensure your audience is "seen" and stretch their point of view
- **Why, how, what**
- **Revisit Why**
Leave your audience with something that will cause them to return

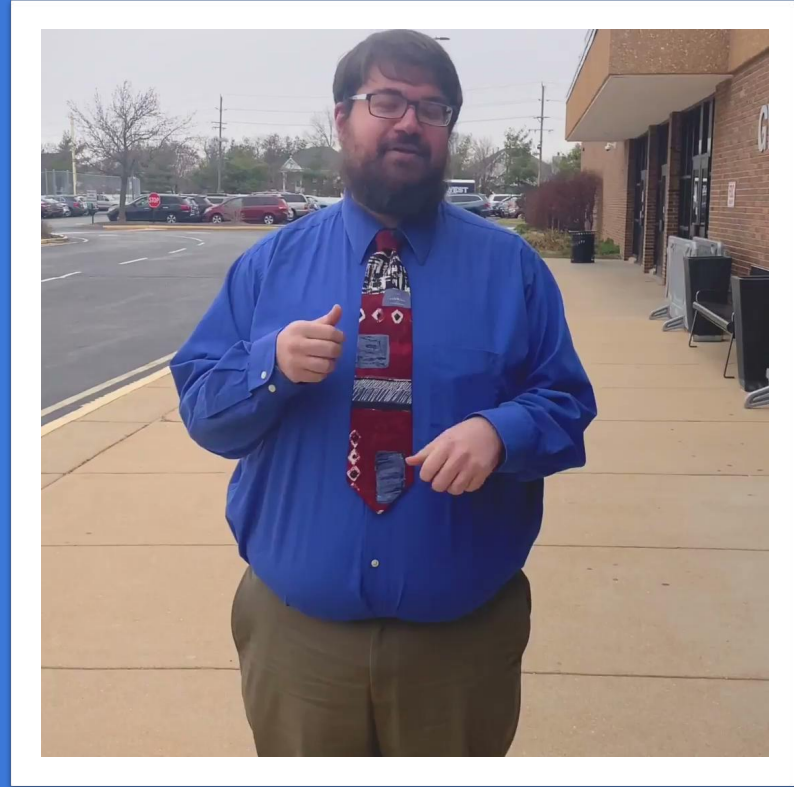
3. Putting it all together

Let's get real before we head for home

- **A story can be good and not be a production**
- **Practice makes progress**
- **We enjoy quick content**
Stories are best served in a minute or less – 1:30 tops
- **Lead with visuals or include them within 5-10 seconds**
Thanks TikTok
- **Captions are always necessary**
Comply with ADA and helps your content stand without audio

Zachary Jodlowski of West High was recognized as one of five Special School District teachers to receive an Emerson Excellence in Teaching Award.

Zach does remarkable work with West's students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. Additionally, he collaborates with staff throughout the building to ensure accommodations for all students.



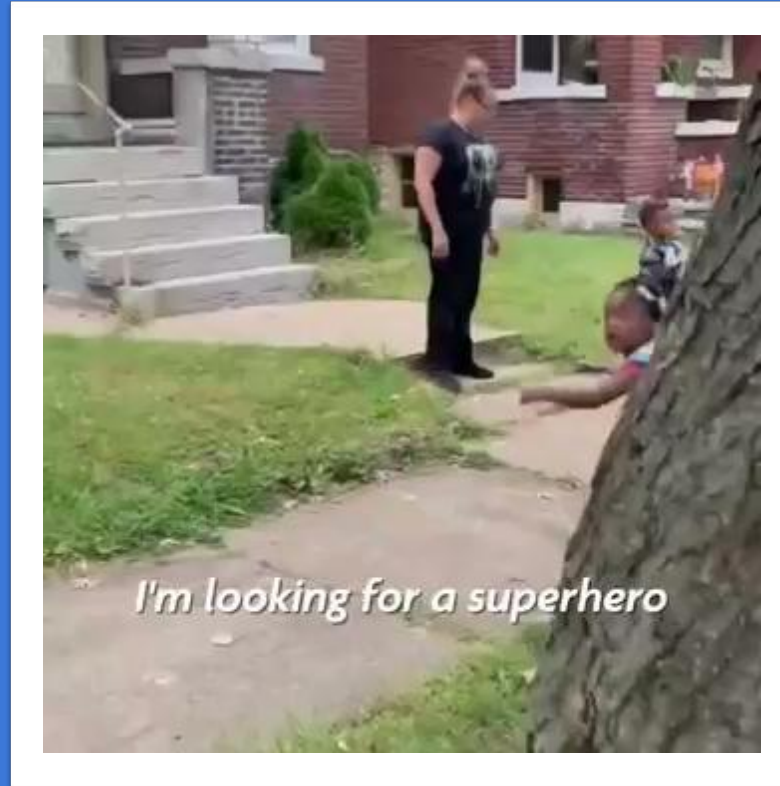
Example: iPhone and Captions

Our Spark! students co-founded a business and are prototyping a product to help kids manage anxiety and depression.



Example: High-quality production

Hanna Woods Principal Dr. Cartelia Lucas made a house call to a kindergarten student who wanted her to see him in his Halloween costume!



Example: iPhone POV of a Principal

- Which stories?
How do I find them?
How do I tell them?

Thank you for Coming



Scan for all the goods

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