



Amador County Public Schools
2016-17 Accomplishments

2016 – 2017 Accomplishments



Kaylee Austin
Argonaut High School Student Artist
Class of 2017

Amador County Public Schools
2016-17 Accomplishments

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I. Introduction

Dear Staff and Community:

Congratulations to Amador County Public Schools for a successful 2016-17 school year!

While there have been many exciting challenges, it is very clear that there's a deep commitment on the part of the teachers, principals, central office administrators, support staff, classified staff, parents, students and Amador County citizens to the success of each of our students and schools. Each time I visit a school, I clearly see that our community is taking on the challenge of promoting students' social-emotional well-being and increasing student achievement with creativity, innovation and passion.

I want to express my appreciation to the Board of Trustees and to the Amador County community for your warm welcome and willingness to move forward with the important work of educating our students. With your help and support, great progress is being made. Together we've set a firm foundation for even more student success in 2017-18.

This Accomplishments Report provides a sampling of the countless efforts of teachers, staff, principals, parents, administrators and community volunteers to make extraordinary things happen for our students. As you read them, I hope that you will join me in communicating your appreciation to everyone who has worked so hard to make these accomplishments possible.

Sincerely,

Dr. Amy L. Slavensky
Superintendent

Board of Trustees

Mr. Bob Laurent, Board President
Mrs. Kandi Thompson, Board Clerk
Mrs. Rose Oneto, Board Member
Mrs. Susan Ross, Board Member
Mrs. Janet White, Board Member

Administrative Cabinet

Amy L. Slavensky, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools
Jared Critchfield, Assistant Superintendent, Business Services
Sabrina Greiten, Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services
David Vicari, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources & Employee Relations
Mitzi Faulkner, Assistant Superintendent, Special Education/SELPA
Scott Nolan, Chief Technology Officer

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II. Overall Highlights

- With over 50 stakeholders county-wide, collaboratively developed a three-year Strategic Plan including the mission, beliefs, objectives, strategies, and action plans
- Facilitated a broad-based, collaborative process throughout the community to develop the three-year Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), aligned with the Strategic Plan
- Provided top-quality, standards-aligned professional learning opportunities through collaborative cohorts and instructional coaching to support TK-12 reading and writing across all content areas, mathematics, science, and history-social science teaching and learning
- Responded to students' social-emotional learning needs through a variety of school-wide programs (i.e., Breaking Down the Walls, Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports, etc.), counseling, and family supports
- Piloted new State Board of Education approved English language arts textbooks and instructional resources and recommended Benchmark Education's *Advance* curriculum for Board of Trustees approval for all elementary classrooms
- Renovated and repaired the stadium fields at Amador High School and Argonaut High School
- Began implementation of the Board approved Amador GOLD Energy Conservation and Sustainability Project, in collaboration with OpTerra Energy Company, designed to enhance learning environments through new heating/cooling systems, solar energy savings, new lighting, and STEM education, and thereby save the school district over \$17 million during the next 20 years

III. School Highlights

Of the many great accomplishments at our schools this year, when asked to tell us about one highlight, this is what our principals said:

Ione Elementary School ~ Principal Jeni DeWalt

Our 5th grade Safety Patrol team took a very strong leadership role, beginning each day welcoming students to school and opening doors. When new students start school, they help show students around the campus. For the second year in a row, an Ione 5th grader, Lillian Fawver, won the AAA Safety Patroller of the year for Northern California, Oregon and Nevada. This includes a monetary prize to help support efforts to keep our school a safe and helpful place to be. The Safety Patrollers also won awards for their recycling efforts.

Jackson Elementary School ~ Principal Barbara Magpusao

The professional development our teachers received greatly empowered them to have conversations about and implement best practices to help our students be even more successful! They are leading learning at our school!

Pine Grove STEM Elementary School ~ Principal Amanda Avila

We made great progress in all areas of STEM education, including hosting our first Science Saturday STEM Fest, winning the regional Nature Bowl competition, placing in the UC Davis Robotics competition and a very successful year 1 roll-out of Project Lead the Way. Science, technology, engineering, and math learning is at its best at our school!

Pioneer VAPA Elementary School ~ Principal Laurie Carson

Our teachers and staff showed great growth in learning more about, practicing, and moving forward with Common Core reading, writing, and math shifts in teaching and learning. Our students and classrooms are glowing! At the same time, we continued to explore and celebrate our visual and performing arts learning across each school day.

Plymouth Elementary School ~ Principal Donna Custodio

We are celebrating how we are working together to support our school community through family education and engagement. We offered family math night, family code night and an English language learning adult education class. In 2017-18, we will continue this work and expand the offerings to Zumba family fitness classes and Hispanic culture dance classes. Our teachers have taken advantage of all the professional development opportunities and have implemented the Common Core State Standards shifts in their classrooms with great success!

Sutter Creek Elementary/Primary School ~ Principal Sean Snider

As a whole staff, we collaboratively used our assessment data to create a shared school goal that everyone worked toward achieving. This work included staff-created "look fors" for classroom walk-throughs, coaching conversations, and professional learning. Data was collected and shared at every staff meeting and our overall progress toward the shared school goal was monitored and openly discussed to determine next steps and strategies to enhance student learning.

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Ione Junior High School ~ Principal Jessica Dorris

Our greatest accomplishment was the professional collaboration, shared learning, and thoughtful planning that took place in order to successfully implement the block schedule, AVID, and many new course offerings. Our team came together and became unified in moving the school forward to provide a richer educational experience and connected school community for students.

Jackson Junior High School ~ Principal Janet DeLeo

Through professional learning about state standards and positive social emotional learning strategies, we are celebrating bringing students together for even greater success! At the same time, this work helped us greatly increase our 8th grade promotion participation rate. We are so proud of our students and JJHS family.

Shenandoah Valley Charter School ~ Principal Tia Peters

We are so excited about implementing more project-based learning electives for all students including maker-space, gardening, welding, drama/theater, and visual arts – all integrated with reading, writing, mathematics, science, and history/social science!

Amador High School ~ Principal Jared Critchfield

Amador High is proud of its many accomplishments as we unceasingly strive for excellence. For annual state testing, we achieved the highest English language arts and mathematics scores in the Mother Lode League. In athletics, Amador won three CIF Sac-Joaquin Section Championships in Girls Cross Country, Girls Soccer and Football, with the football team winning the Northern California Championship.

Argonaut High School ~ Principal Kelly Hunkins

One of the most significant accomplishments at Argonaut High School was the intentional focus and dedication to literacy proficiencies by teachers and staff that resulted in considerable improvement in student achievement. Students rose to the challenge of improving their academic skills in all areas of literacy including reading, writing, listening and critical thinking across all content areas.

Independence High School & Educational Options ~ Principal Butch Wagner

Overcoming our Western Association for Schools and Colleges (WASC) accreditation probationary status was a great accomplishment for Independence High School. Through hard work, collaboration, and a very successful WASC visit, our team and students really shined! As part of this, we're proud of our overall increase in students' GPA and credit earning through Project Based Learning which engaged our students in relevant curriculum. The new three-year Career Technical Education (CTE) plan will also engage many more students in this way including adult learners, students using the independent study option, and others.

IV. Board Governance and Policy

The Board of Trustees and the Superintendent comprise the governance team for the Amador County Public Schools, which includes the Amador County Office of Education (ACOE) and the Amador County Unified School District (ACUSD). From July 1, 2016 through April 12, 2017, there were two superintendents, one for each entity. On April 12, 2017, the ACOE Board of Trustees appointed Superintendent Amy Slavensky as the ACOE Superintendent, and on April 19, 2017, she was sworn into the elected office by Superior Court Judge Hermanson, thereby returning the agency to a unified system. The report that follows reflects a bifurcated system for most of the school year and a unified system for the last quarter of the school year.

The ACUSD Board of Trustees engaged in a variety of professional development and governance team-building activities including the following:

- Self-evaluation and reflection process facilitated by Interim Superintendent Frank Porter at a Board Retreat
- Three-part governance team training workshop with Superintendent Amy Slavensky, facilitated by Sally Frazier and Rich Fischer of Leadership Associates
- Professional learning and Brown Act training provided by the California School Boards Association (CSBA) at several conferences and workshops
- Board workshop provided by School Services of California regarding the organization study report and recommendations
- Board workshop provided by an external consultant to consider, have discussion about, and participate in the development of the Strategic Plan
- Board subcommittee developed and the Board approved a Governance Handbook to deepen clarification and understanding related to roles, responsibilities, principles, and protocols.
- Board subcommittee and Cabinet review and revision of all Board Policies and Bylaws for Board of Trustees approval during fall 2017

V. Superintendent

Superintendent Amy Slavensky developed goals based on priorities set by the Board of Trustees at a fall governance team workshop. The goals are SMART goals with each letter of the acronym standing for sustainable, measurable, attainable, results-driven, and time-bound. Highlights are indicated below:

- ✚ By June 30, 2017, **feedback loops and two-way communication strategies** will be consistently implemented as measured by the School PRPro communication checklist and survey.
 - A variety of action steps included feedback requested through email and webpage, student listening circles at Jackson JHS, Ione JHS, Argonaut HS and Amador HS, monthly district newsletter and all staff messages from the Superintendent, monthly meetings with labor leaders, LCAP stakeholder meetings facilitated at every school, monthly site coaching visits to schools, quarterly management team meetings, monthly principals' and instructional leadership team meetings, and five video messages completed and posted

- ✚ By June 30, 2017, all stakeholder groups will have the opportunity to participate in a district-wide survey in order to report **satisfaction with communication and trust levels** in the system, and to create baseline data for comparison in spring 2018.
 - Communication/satisfaction survey was sent to all stakeholders in April/May. Summary of results is on pages 15-16 of this document.

- ✚ By June 30, 2017, all students in grades 3-8 and 11 will show a 3 percentage point increase in meeting/exceeding standards evidenced by California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) **reading growth** from 38% to 41%.
 - Good progress was made with the goal exceeded including a 6 percentage point gain from 38% to 44% of all students meeting or exceeding standards.

- ✚ By June 30, 2017, all students in grades 3-8 and 11 will show a 3 percentage point increase in the meeting/exceeding standards evidenced by CAASPP **mathematics growth** from 28% to 31%.
 - Progress was made; however, the goal was not quite met with a 2 percentage point gain from 28% to 30%. This will continue to be an area of focus.

- ✚ By June 30, 2017, **suspension rates** will decrease by 5% and the **high school graduation rate** will increase from 88% to 90% as measured by Aeries and DataWorks data.
 - For all students, the suspension rate decreased by 1.3%; and for socioeconomically disadvantaged students, the rate decreased by 1.8%.
 - For all students, the graduation rate increased to 94.8%; and for socioeconomically disadvantaged students, the rate increased by 3.4 percentage points to 93.2%.

- ✚ By June 30, 2017, the **CA Healthy Kids Survey** (CHKS) will be administered to all students in grades 5, 8 and 11 to establish baseline data for comparison in 2018, as measured by CHKS data.
 - The survey was completed by all students in grades 5, 8, and 11, and by parents who responded to the online survey. This establishes baseline to determine areas of focus and to measure growth. A report will be made to the Board of Trustees during the month of September 2017.

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- ✚ By June 30, 2017, estimated actuals reporting will include an **ending fund balance** that reflects no deficit spending.
 - On June 28, 2017, the Board of Trustees adopted the 2017-18 budget which includes an ending fund balance that reflects no deficit spending.

- ✚ By June 30, 2017, a 3-year board approved **facilities and deferred maintenance timeline** will be established with implementation on track, as measured by supporting documents and observed work in progress
 - On June 14, 2017, the Board of Trustees received a facilities and deferred maintenance timeline. Implementation of most planned projects are on track. The Assistant Superintendent of Business Services is closely monitoring and ensuring the timely completion of all projects.

Other Superintendent Highlights:

- Successful relationship building and communication process to return Amador County Public Schools to a unified system including the Amador County Office of Education and Amador County Unified School District

- Successful collaboration with School Services of California to complete and report to the Board of Trustees the Organizational Review Report and Recommendations

Sampling of Events Attended by the Superintendent:

- Big Red Barn Strike Up the Band Fundraiser Event (Saturday, September 24, 2016)
- Sutter Creek Chili Cook-off & Car Show (Saturday, October 9, 2016)
- Amador Association of University Women Tech Trek Event (Saturday, November 5, 2016)
- Amador Community College Foundation's 4th Annual Gala (Saturday, November 5, 2016)
- Amador HS & Argonaut HS Football and Basketball Games (October-December 2016)
- Strategic Planning Team – Very diverse group of stakeholders (March 30-31, 2017)
- State Assemblyman Bigelow Visit at Argonaut HS (April 21, 2017)
- Secretary of State Alex Padilla Visit at Argonaut HS and Amador HS (April 24, 2017)
- Pine Grove STEM School Science Day (Saturday, May 6, 2017)
- Miss Ione Scholarship Pageant Judge (Saturday, May 6, 2017)
- Amador GOLD Groundbreaking Ceremony (May 8, 2017)
- Sutter Creek Savor Amador Fundraiser (May 12, 2017)
- Open Houses at Ione ES, Jackson ES, and Jackson JHS (May-June 2017)
- Senior Breakfasts at Independence HS, Amador HS and Argonaut HS (June 2017)
- Graduations/Promotions at North Star, Jackson JHS, Amador HS (June 2017)

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VI. Educational Services

- Five minimum day professional development sessions offered
- 60 days of professional development offered
- Three-year professional development plan created for:
 - Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) TK-12 Cohort
 - English Language Arts (ELA) TK-6 Cohort & 6-12 Cohorts
 - Math TK-6 Cohort and 6-12 Cohort
 - History Cohort beginning 2017-2018 school year
- Extensive English language arts pilot process and adoption of new TK-6 materials
- National Literacy Conference in Ohio, January 2017
- Mindfulness training
- Advanced Placement training
- K-12 Project Lead the Way training
- School Visitations: Edison High, Toby Johnson Middle School, Mariemont Elementary

Instructional Leadership Team (ILT)

ILT consisting of TK-12 teachers and principals met monthly to establish a district-school collaborative instructional leadership team

- Interim assessments for grades 3-12 collaboratively developed
- Book Study: *Pathways to the Common Core*
- Book Study: *Using Data to Close the Achievement Gap*

Principal Leadership Team

- Book Study: *Pathways to the Common Core*
- Book Study: *Better Learning*
- Book Study: *Framework for Understanding Poverty*
- Workshop: Title 1
- Workshop: Single Plan for Student Achievement and using Data to Develop SPSA Goals
- Workshop: Six E's of Leadership
- Coaching: Monthly Principal Coaching Sessions
- Learning Focused Supervision National Conference

Parent and Community Outreach

- Monthly Amador Parent Advisory Committee meetings
- LCAP Parent and Community Outreach meetings
- ACUSD Monthly Newsletter

Student Services

- Coordination with County Office of Education counselors to build unified K-8 system
- Hiring of two additional K-8 counselors
- Administration of California Healthy Kids Survey
- Offering of Trauma Informed Practices Training
- Parent University Training for 2017-2018

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Extended Learning Program (ELP)

- 294 students participated
- Further developed kindergarten curriculum to include science, technology, fine and gross motor skills, and art to further enhance extended learning and enrichment
- 90% of billing statements paperless and emailed
- Newsletters provided in Spanish and English
- Collaborated with ATCAA to provide a literacy program for all summer ELP students
- Supervised five Workability high school students to provide Child Development job related skills

California State Preschool Program (CSPP)

- Four classrooms located in Ione, Jackson, Plymouth, and Pioneer
- Focus on science, technology, engineering, art and math (STEAM) lessons
- Focus on social/emotional development providing a balance between academic skills with learning how to work with others
- Focus on “teaching through play” applying academic lessons through play opportunities
- Positive feedback from the State regarding the teachers’ and staff’s care, compassion and attention to students
- Highest enrollment year with all four sites full through most of the school year
- Received a State grant to expand the program with an afternoon class in Ione, combining general education students and students with special needs
- Collaboration with First 5 in professional development opportunities
- Involved in a State Program Review Assessment indicating areas of success and improvement
- 100% of families responded with “very satisfied” with the overall preschool program

Child Care Council

- The mission is to continue to work with community partners, educators, local child care providers, business and civic leaders to coordinate efforts to expand the availability of early childhood care and education
- Engaged in several community events to promote and support early childhood education
- Updated the Council’s Strategic Plan, involving input and information from community partners resulting in the conclusion that quality and affordable early child care and education is a critical area of need for our families
- Promoted and coordinated professional development opportunities for early childhood educators
- Organized “Celebrate Our Children,” promoting our county’s services and dedication to early childhood learning while honoring Week of the Child with over 30 vendors and 300 attendees

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VII. Special Education/SELPA

- Increased foster youth collaboration between Amador County Public Schools and the community partners/agencies
- Created a Foster Youth Executive Advisory Board consisting of Amador County Schools and multiple Amador agencies
- Developed and implemented MOU with Child Welfare Services allowing Amador County Public Schools access and input to confidential information to better serve students
- Worked towards becoming trauma informed schools through Trauma Informed Practices Schools (TIPS) professional development and a TIPS trainer of trainers training
- Counselors and School Psychologists received training in mental health/suicide prevention
- Provided in-house training for 18 staff members in Pro-ACT and continued providing para-educator professional development
- Administrative staff participated as part of the California Autism Professional Training and Information Network (CAPTAIN) conference in a continued attempt to bring evidence based practices into our classrooms
- Staff participated in research by the UC Davis MIND Institute regarding best practices for students with ASD transitioning between schools in a rural county
- Counselors worked to provide social thinking curriculum at the elementary level to all students
- Special Education Administration and staff worked as a cohesive team in order to positively support and sustain sound special education programs and services, while maintaining 100% compliance as measured by the California Department of Education on compliance reporting through the California Special Education Management Information System (CASEMIS)
- Administrators attended training from U.C. Davis on neurodevelopmental disorders from research to practice.

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VIII. Human Resources and Labor Relations

- Processed and updated 1,002 classroom volunteers
 - Recruited, processed and hired 71 new substitute teachers and substitute classified employees
 - Successfully negotiated collective bargaining agreement updates for four bargaining units
 - Created/edited 10 new job descriptions for Board approval
 - Queried and downloaded personnel data from the QCC Personnel Database for approximately 55 data driven employee reports and spreadsheets for government agencies, auditors, collective bargaining units, and administrators
 - Implemented new AESOP Employee/Substitute tracking system in July 2016
 - Amended three salary schedules
 - Processed 213 Requests for Personnel for employee new hires, transfers, promotions and FTE changes
 - Recruited for and coordinated 135 interviews, hired 29 new certificated employees and 18 new classified employees for the District; hired 17 new certificated employees and 11 new classified employees for the County, with 75 total new employees (6.6% of total employees)
 - Issued 219 Changes of Status (COS) to payroll to document employee changes
 - Updated and “rolled over” the backbone database for the Personnel and Business office, the QCC database, to the 2017-2018 school year
 - Coordinated, assembled and presented Personnel Consent Agendas and additional Personnel agenda items for the Board
 - Generated 209 annual teacher contracts and credential/status verification letters
 - Recruited, processed and hired coaches for three athletic seasons
-

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IX. Business Services

Started the use of Chalk Schools online forms with plan to expand the numbers of forms available for use by employees

Affordable Care Act 2016 IRS reporting was completed in house and on time with no errors resulting in savings of \$15,000 for the District

Implemented the State's Clean Energy Bond with the contract with OpTerra and secured funding of \$6.958 million for the project

Engaged a new audit firm, Crowe Horwarth

Provided oversight on installation of new playgrounds, a Challenge Course and the repair and renovation of the stadium fields at Argonaut and Amador High Schools

The Business Office:

- Issued 5,274 accounts payable checks
- Processed approximately 8,200 Reports of Absences
- Issued 1,489 Purchase Orders
- Managed H&W for 419 employees
- Issued 4,765 End of Month and 4000 Supplemental Payroll checks
- Processed 300 plus employee conferences

Promoted or hired three employees for Business Office positions who had been in their new positions less than three months.

Selected and hired a new Assistant Superintendent of Business Services

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X. Technology Services

- Exchange to Gmail Migration completed
- Illuminate Software integration with Aeries completed
- New game development and graphics lab installed at Independence High School
- New game development and graphics lab installed at Argonaut High School
- LanSchool rolled out to various sites to monitor student computer/online activity
- Reimaged and provided component replacement for labs at PIO/IES/SCE/SCP/PGE
- Robotics laptop lab installed at Jackson Junior High School
- Smartboards installed at various locations
- ATT circuit upgrades completed and routers reconfigured
- E-rate submission for Category 1 and Category 2 funding, Category 1 for broadband services, Category 2 for network infrastructure upgrades

XI. Food Services

- Served 198,000 lunches and 126,000 breakfasts
- For the first time, received \$1,033,038.15 in federal and state reimbursements
- Successfully transitioned from pre-done food products to items made from scratch
- Introduced catered meals for staff trainings
- Planned 2017-18 second chance breakfast for all elementary schools, with a goal of increasing breakfast participation by more than 125 students per day for a total increase of 22,500 students per year
- Planning a 2018 summer meal program for the summer of 2018

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XII. Maintenance and Operations

- Facilitated the installation of new playground equipment structures and borders at Sutter Creek Elementary and Sutter Creek Primary Schools. Began preparations to install new play structures at Jackson Elementary and Pioneer Elementary Schools
- Worked closely with Delta Blue Grass and Armstrong & Sons to repair and renovate stadium fields and irrigation at Amador High School, Argonaut High School and Ione Junior High School (the latter still in progress)
- Helped facilitate surveys and data gathering to implement energy conservation projects with OpTerra Energy Services
- Installed donated building at Argonaut High School to consolidate Maintenance & Operations, Technology Services, and Food Services Departments into one building to improve efficiencies and collaboration
- Completed 1,431 work orders throughout the school district and county office of education

XIII. Transportation

- Ended the year under budget by \$100,000 after paying the yearly lease payment of \$179,000 and \$84,000 for new school buses
- Ongoing vendor competition for supplies with purchase orders based on price and vendor performance
- Bus ridership increased due to no bus fees charged
- Acquired nine new school buses serving students with special needs, smaller and lighter with gasoline engines and holding the same capacity as the older diesel school buses they replaced, thereby reducing fuel and maintenance costs
- Ongoing recruitment and training of new school bus drivers resulting in the addition of eight new substitute school bus drivers
- Doubled water samples and cleaned the bus yard three times to remove petroleum build-up, thereby removing the status from the tier 1 category (documented polluter) and returning it to the baseline testing criteria by the California Water Board
- The second successful unannounced State inspection occurred on June 29, 2017 with all positions being recorded

2016-2017

AMADOR COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS COMMUNICATION SURVEY REPORT



Amador Public Schools conducted its first district-wide survey during the spring of 2016 and implemented several communication tools and strategies addressing the feedback. The district conducted a similar survey in the spring of 2017, adding questions to address the new communication tools as well as the level of trust in the district. Responses were gathered between April 29 and May 24, 2017 in the Typeform Survey platform.

Links to the survey were sent at the launch of the survey and as a reminder prior to closing through district and school websites, automated calls and texts, emails, district and school newsletters and district Facebook and Twitter posts. The analysis of the 2017 survey in comparison with 2016 will guide the development of a comprehensive communication plan addressing both internal and external communication strategies and tools.

Qualitative Responses

As part of the survey, respondents answered several open-ended questions about the most positive aspects of the district's communication efforts, what they would do to improve communication and suggestions about specific tools that Escalon should be using more often. The responses were categorized by theme and tallied to identify the most popular responses.

Keep using multiple methods!

There has been a lot of improvement in communication!



Best Thing about Communication

- How much it has improved
- The use of automated calls
- The use of email/mailed newsletters
- That the district uses many different ways to communicate

How to Improve Communication

- There's nothing to improve
- Updated websites
- Improve at school/teacher to home level
- Use email/email newsletters more often

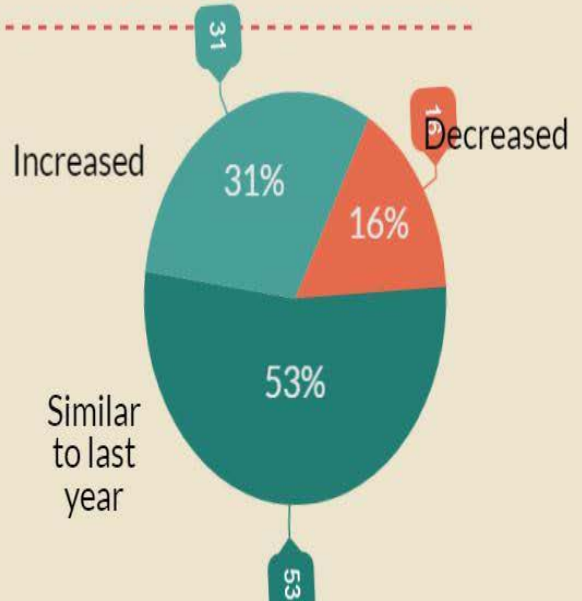
Tools to Use More Often

- Email
- Text
- Social media
- Websites

Trust

The 2017 survey introduced this line of questioning and sets a baseline that can be compared against future surveys.

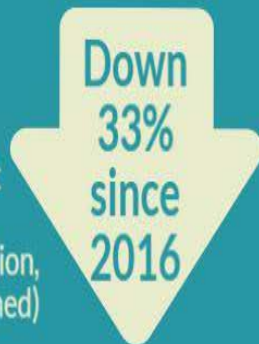
How does your level of trust in Amador County Public Schools this year compare with your level of trust last year?



Overall Impression of Communication

Negative

(Doesn't tell us much about what's going on, gives us a limited amount of information, keeps us adequately informed)



Positive

(Keeps us fairly well informed, keeps us fully informed)

