



Standard Program and Service Evaluation Template

(Board of Education Approved on June 1, 2004)

Program Evaluation Question

Is the district effectively reaching constituents through the monthly e-newsletters *Focus on Special Education* and *Focus on Technical Education*?

I. Program/Service Information

Name of Program or Services:

Communications Department

Personnel Responsible for Evaluation:

Nancy Ide, Chief Information Officer

Date of Evaluation:

October 2004 – April 2005

Goal/Objective of Program/Services:

The SSD Communications Department is responsible for all media contact and crisis communications on behalf of the district, as well as public awareness activities and communications aspects of strategic planning. In addition, the department oversees the district's Web site; publishes a range of internal and external newsletters, two e-newsletters, and other communications pieces; and coordinates numerous special events and community outreach activities.

Brief description of relationship between program goals, CSIP and MSIP Standards:

Data gathered for this program evaluation regarding open rates and the number of subscribers for the e-newsletters will assist the Communications Department in determining if the e-newsletter facet of its public awareness plan is meeting MSIP standard 8.8, checklist 8.82.

(MSIP standard 8.8 – The board of education and the staff systematically and frequently provide information to the public about the condition of school programs.

MSIP checklist 8.8.2 – The district explains its policies, goals, needs, and status to the community.)

Demographic Description of Program:

Location(s)

District-wide



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Communications Department Staff

Chief Information Officer
Director of Publications
Web Site and Graphic Design Manager
Communications Coordinator
Department Secretary

Length of program/service

Ongoing

II. Description of Stakeholders Engagement in Program Evaluation:

Nancy Ide, Chair, Chief Information Officer
Jeff Konkel, Director of Publications
Tia Kreinbring, Communications Coordinator
Anne Willis, Web and Graphic Design Manager
Judy Berger, Marketing Services Facilitator, Technical Education Division
Linda Shemwell, Executive Director, Central Region, Special Education Division
Kelley Garbero, Parent/Parkway School District Board of Education President
Brad Berry, Teacher, North Technical High School
Paula Berner, Teacher, Litzsinger School

III. Evaluation Criteria for Programs/Services Offered:

Assessment statistics

IV. Data Collection Methodology:

Open-rate data (Exhibits 1,2)
Subscriber statistics (Exhibit 3)
Product review (Exhibit 4)

V. Results:

According to data analysis:

- The e-newsletters have good open rates among community subscribers and poor open rates among staff.
 - An “open rate” is the number of subscribers who open an e-newsletter divided by the total number of e-mails successfully delivered.
 - According to Katey Charles of Katey Charles Communications, open rates vary by audience, and in general, an open rate that levels out at between 30 and 40 percent after the first year of publication is a good open rate.
- There is a need to attract and retain new subscribers.
- When constituents are made aware that the e-newsletters exist, an overwhelming majority sign up as new subscribers. (example: “forward to a friend” function)



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Time spent on program evaluation

26 hours

Strengths of program/service

- Open rates in the community subscriber categories are on average 29.6 percent for *Focus on Special Education* and 26.9 percent for *Focus on Technical Education*. (Exhibits 1, 2)
- E-newsletters that are “forwarded to a friend” result in new subscribers 81 percent of the time.
- Each e-newsletter won an Award of Excellence from the Missouri School Public Relations Association (MOSPRA) in April 2005. (Exhibit 4)
- *Focus on Technical Education* won an Award of Merit and *Focus on Special Education* was awarded an Honorable Mention from the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) in June 2005.

Concerns regarding program/service

- Open rates in the staff categories are low – on average 2.9 percent for *Focus on Special Education* and 2.3 percent for *Focus on Technical Education*. (Exhibits 1, 2)
- The number of subscribers is flat – an increase of less than 200 subscribers in nine months. (Exhibit 3)

Recommendations regarding program/service

- Raise awareness of the availability of the e-newsletters and increase sign-up opportunities.
- Evaluate the content and design of e-newsletters to increase open rates.

VI. Action Plan for Recommendations as A Result of Program Evaluation

Person responsible to champion action plan

Nancy Ide, Chief Information Officer

Timeframe for reporting updates to Board of Education

- Develop and begin implementing a plan to increase subscriber numbers and open rates. (September 2005)
- Review subscriber numbers and open rates monthly. (beginning in October 2005)
- Report results to the SSD Board of Education. (June 2006)

_____ Date: _____
Signature of Administrator Responsible for Chairing Evaluation

E-Newsletter Open Rates *Focus on Special Education*

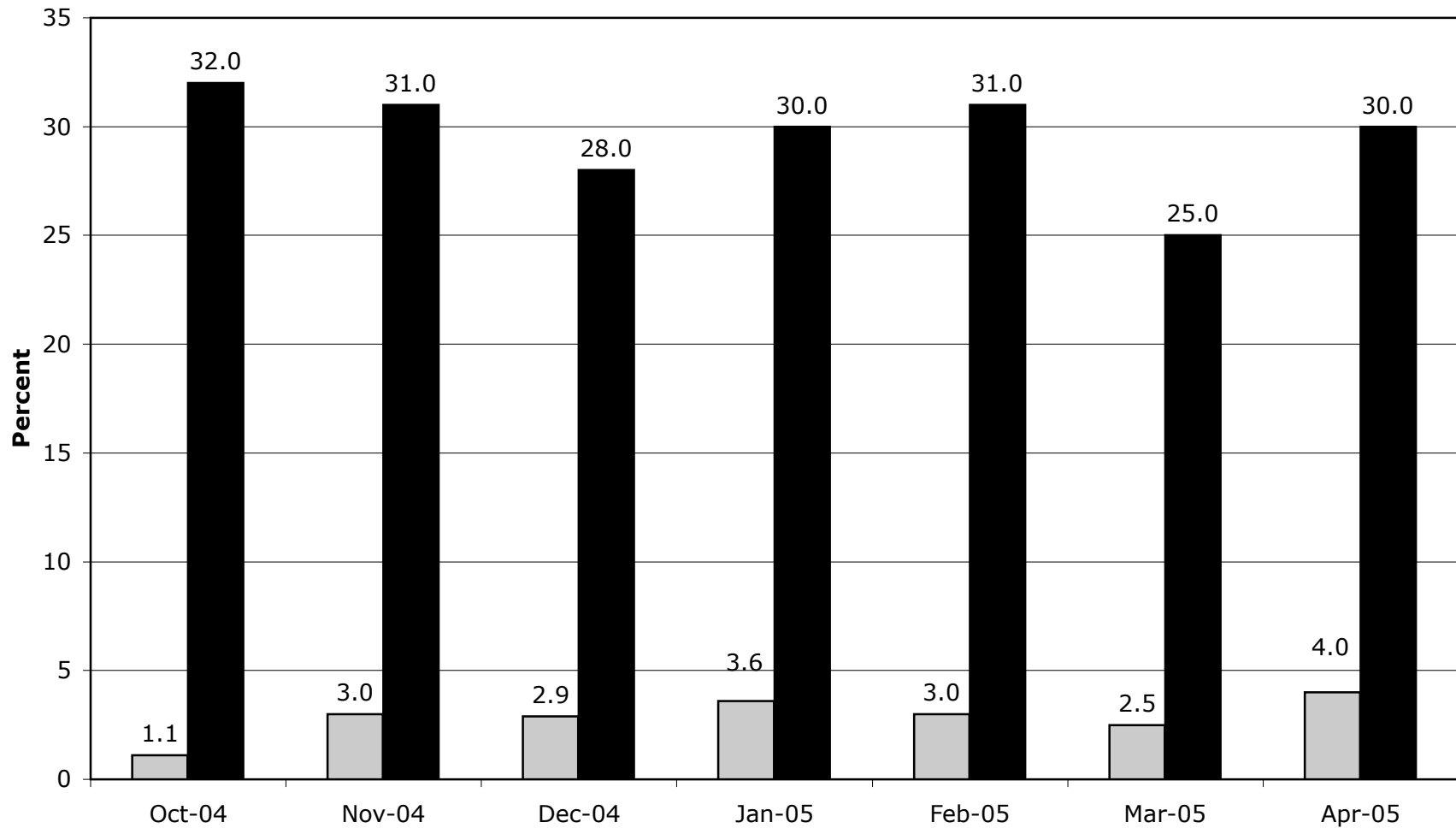


Exhibit 1

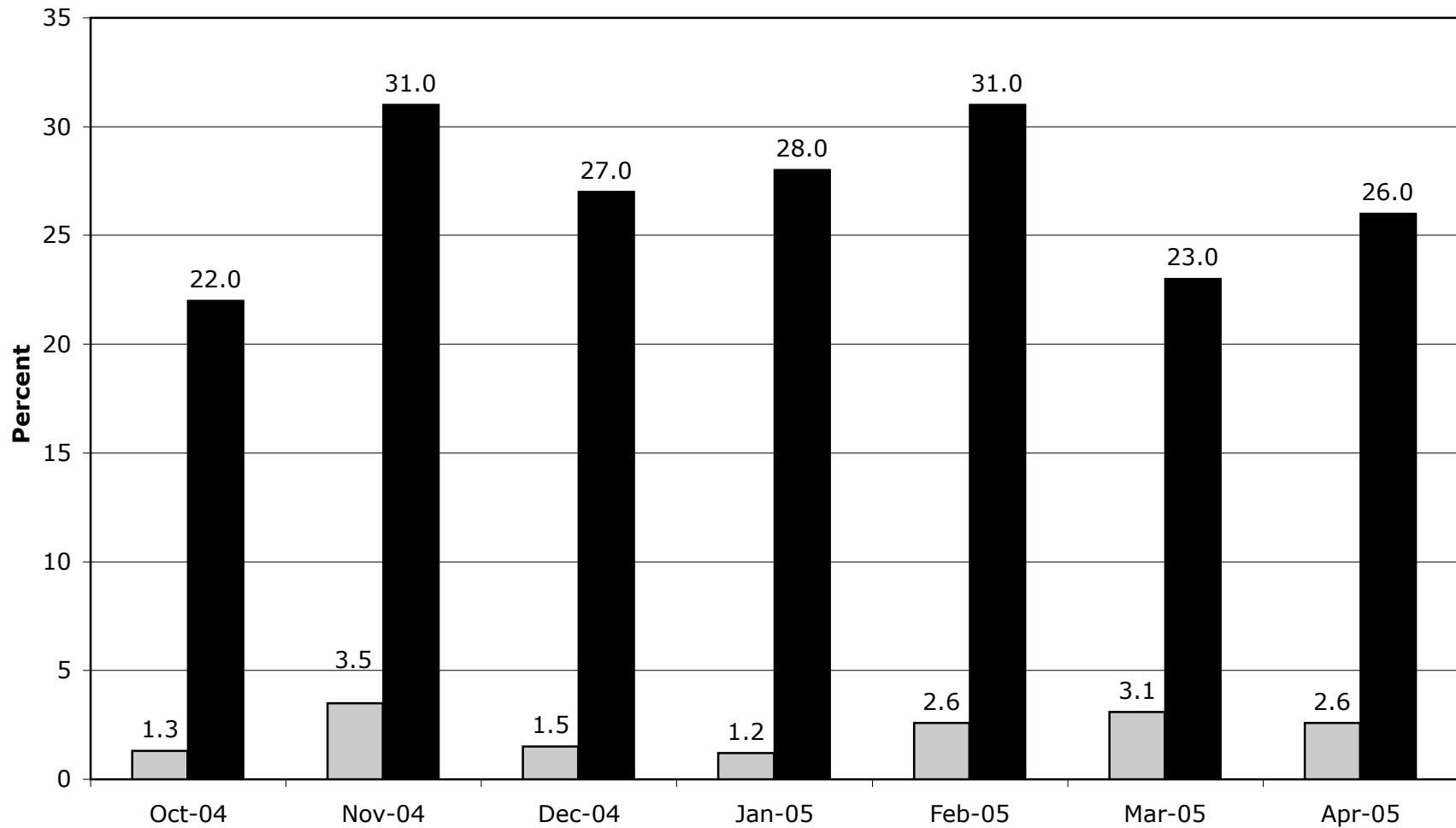
Average Open Rates

Staff 2.9%

Community 29.6%

Open rates differ by audience. In general, an open rate that levels out at between 30 and 40 percent after the first year of publication is considered good.

E-Newsletter Open Rates Focus on Technical Education



Average Open Rates

Staff 2.3%

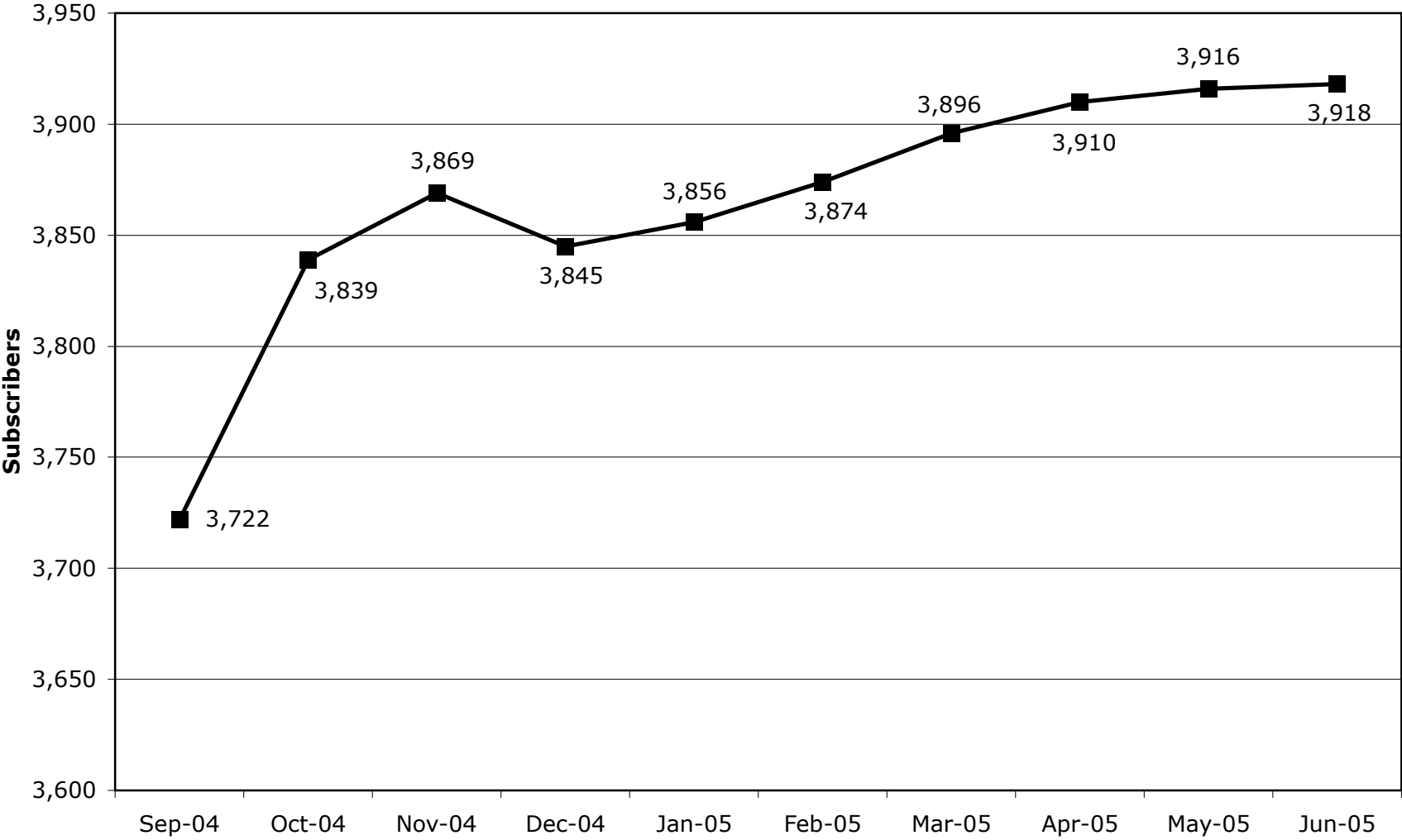
Community 26.9 %

□ Staff ■ Community

Exhibit 2

Open rates differ by audience, In general, an open rate that levels out at between 30 and 40 percent after the first year of publication is considered good.

Total Subscribers By Month E-Newsletters



**Missouri School Public Relations Association (MOSPRA)
Communications Contest 2005**

Entry Title: *Focus on Special Education – SSD*

Entry Category: District Newsletter

Result: Award of Excellence

Electronic Media

Criteria	Score *
Overall Appeal	10
Product Quality	10
Content	10

Writing

Criteria	Score *
Style	10
Mechanics	10
Content	10

Judge’s Comments: “Excellent! Great job! What a wonderful resource for your special needs students and their families!”

Entry Title: *Focus on Technical Education - SSD*

Entry Category: District Newsletter

Result: Award of Excellence

Electronic Media

Criteria	Score *
Overall Appeal	10
Product Quality	10
Content	10

Writing

Criteria	Score *
Style	10
Mechanics	10
Content	10

Judge’s Comments: “This is an outstanding electronic publication. I’d like to attend these schools!”

* Scores are based on a scale of one (poor) to 10 (excellent).