
COMMUNICATIONS GUIDEBOOK

PUBLIC INFORMATION ANALYST



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Branding and Style Guide

Social Media Guide

Communications Toolkit

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OVERVIEW

As employees working for a taxpayer-supported organization, we are watched and judged by the public every day. No matter what our job title, any one of us can be an image-maker or an image-breaker. The messages we send—verbal, written, image-based, electronic, or video—affect the image of this office and public education in general.

Clean, consistent, and professional communications methods build trust with our many audiences. For this reason, it is important that we are all on the same page. This guidebook is intended to share ways to consistently and effectively communicate with our stakeholders.

The Brand and Style Guide establishes the official colors, logos, and typography of the district and schools, as well as other style standards that create a reliable and trusted voice for the District.

The Social Media Guide defines what official District social media sites are, the requirements to start and maintain them, and the legal liabilities associated with using social media.

The Communications Toolkit provides information on using other information sharing tools at Waterford USD, including the newspaper, videos, and Peachjar.

If you have any questions or suggestions pertaining to this guide, please contact the Public Information Analyst:
awilson@waterford.k12.ca.us

BRAND ASSETS

MISSION STATEMENT: Our mission is to develop self-directed and collaborative learners who are college, career, and community ready.

VALUES: Waterford Unified School District, in partnership and collaboration with families and community, is committed to developing:

- A safe, healthy, and supportive environment
- Academic excellence and achievement for all students
- Well-rounded successful citizens with personal integrity
- Diverse learning opportunities
- Critical thinking and creative expression
- Effective use of technology as a tool for learning

VISION: Excellence - Achievement - Success

BRANDING & STYLE GUIDE

Waterford USDs brand is its identity. A brand is more than just a logo or mission statement though; it includes organizational beliefs and values, the way we interact with our stakeholders, and practices and experiences that determine how the public views the organization.

The purpose of this manual is to ensure that all communication from Waterford Unified School District is presented in an attractive and consistent way, and all reproduction standards are followed. This includes flyers, reports, presentations, social posts, webpages, and formal letters. This is important because the appearance of our work says a great deal about us as an organization. It's also a way to create a cohesive message and style across all of our schools and departments.

Most of the listings in the style, grammar, and punctuation section are based on the Associated Press Stylebook and the Merriam-Webster dictionary. Please note, that while using other styles and choices may not be grammatically wrong, using consistent and cohesive language is a way Waterford USD is building trust in our organization.

LOGO BASICS

The Waterford USD and each school site logo serve as the official display logos to identify the organization and its leaders, teachers, students, and services.

Logos are available by request from the Public Information Analyst, and should only be used by the designated designers and authors creating official school correspondence. Logos should not be provided to outside organizations, and the use of logos by employees or outside organizations for commercial purposes or political activities is strictly prohibited.

The logo should be used for all official communications, such as (but not limited to) cover sheets, brochures, PowerPoint presentations, presentation folders, signage, publications, advertising, direct mail, websites, etc. Logos should not be used by employees or associated organizations, such as parent organizations, when crafting unofficial materials. Do not alter the logos in any way, including changing the font, stretching the logo, or placing it in colored boxes. Do not create logos for departments, clubs, or other organizations without the prior consent and involvement of the Superintendent and the Public Information .

Absolutely no alterations to these logos may be made without prior approval from the Public Information Analyst.

When using the logo, it is important to maintain enough clear space around it for maximum impact and clarity. The size of the clear space increases or decreases proportionally to the size of the logo. Allow for more space whenever possible.

Do not change the proportions of the logo vertically or horizontally. When sizing the logo in any application (Microsoft Word, Power Point, Google Docs) drag from any corner and hold shift, to size proportionally without distorting the logo.

If materials are created in partnership with another organization or organizations, multiple logos can be used. The size and prominence of the logos should be similar.

If you are unsure about logos used in a specific situation, please contact the Public Information Analyst.

APPAREL STANDARDS

No employee or associated person should provide or sell official school or athletics merchandise without the prior approval of the principal. Employees and associated persons who have received permission should submit proofs of all apparel artwork to the principal prior to ordering, and order only from vendors who have been approved by the principal.

When using school logos on shirts, art should be approximately 4" in width depending on type and size of apparel. Position the art on the left breast and above the pocket.

Provide the company with the official school colors, and choose an ink color or thread that matches as closely as possible. White or black can be substituted as necessary to ensure sufficient contrast.

Logos should not be modified for use on apparel.

No merchandise representing the district should ever be sold for commercial or political purposes.

For assistance creating quality graphics that maintain the integrity of the District's brand, contact the Public Information Analyst.

DISTRICT BRAND COLORS

Different combinations of colors can dramatically change the tone and appearance of a document so it is important to consider how colors work together. To help achieve greater brand recognition it is essential that our color palette is applied consistently and thoughtfully.

When choosing colors for graphics and fonts, try to create as much contrast between background colors and text as possible. Black and white can be used as secondary colors in addition to the official school colors.

WATERFORD USD



**TEAL -
#06494C**



**AQUA -
#4E9D9C**



**GOLD -
#ECAA1F**



**BLACK -
#070707**



**WHITE -
#FFFFFF**

SCHOOL BRAND COLORS

CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER



RICHARD M. MOON SCHOOL



LUCILLE WHITEHEAD INTERMEDIATE



WATERFORD JR. HIGH SCHOOL



SCHOOL BRAND COLORS

WATERFORD HIGH SCHOOL



Black and white are secondary colors that can be used in addition to the primary school colors.

SENTINEL HIGH SCHOOL

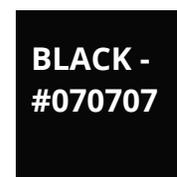


Black should be used sparingly, particularly in sports uniforms. It has a habit of overtaking the primary colors.

ADULT EDUCATION



SECONDARY COLORS



TYPOGRAPHY

POPPINS is the District's **primary typeface**. Poppins conveys simplicity, friendliness, accessibility.

Poppins provides a number of font choices ranging from light to bold. It can also be used in italics and all caps. When poppins is unavailable, use Sofia Pro as a substitute.

Poppins (Thin)

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789!@#%&*()+/?<=>;

Poppins (Regular)

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789!@#%&*()+/?<=>;

Poppins (Medium)

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789!@#%&*()+/?<=>;

Poppins (Bold)

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789!@#%&*()+/?<=>;

Poppins (Italics)

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789!@#%&*()+/?<=>;

Poppins (Extra Bold)

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789!@#%&*()+/?<=>;

NICONNE is our **secondary typeface** and the typeface for the Waterford High School alternative logo. A more traditional typeface that is intended for quotes, call-outs, subheads, and the use of our motto. It serves as a nice contrast to the more modern, professional and clean lines of the Poppins typeface. When Niconne is not available, use Bernard Cursive as a substitute.

Niconne

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789!@#%&*()+/?<=>;

CONFIDENTIALITY

PUBLIC RECORD

Employees have no reasonable expectation of privacy in the use of any technological resources provide or maintained by the district, including, but not limited to, computer files, email, text messages, instant messaging, and other electronic communications, even when provided their own password (BP 4040).

Employees should not use district equipment or communications devices for personal purposes while on duty except in an emergency, during scheduled work breaks, or for personal necessity (BP 4319). To ensure proper use, the Superintendent or designee may monitor employee usage of district technology at any time without advance notice or consent and for any reason allowed by law. Records maintained on any personal device or messages sent or received on a personal device that is being used to conduct district business may be subject to disclosure, pursuant to a subpoena or other lawful request (BP 4040).

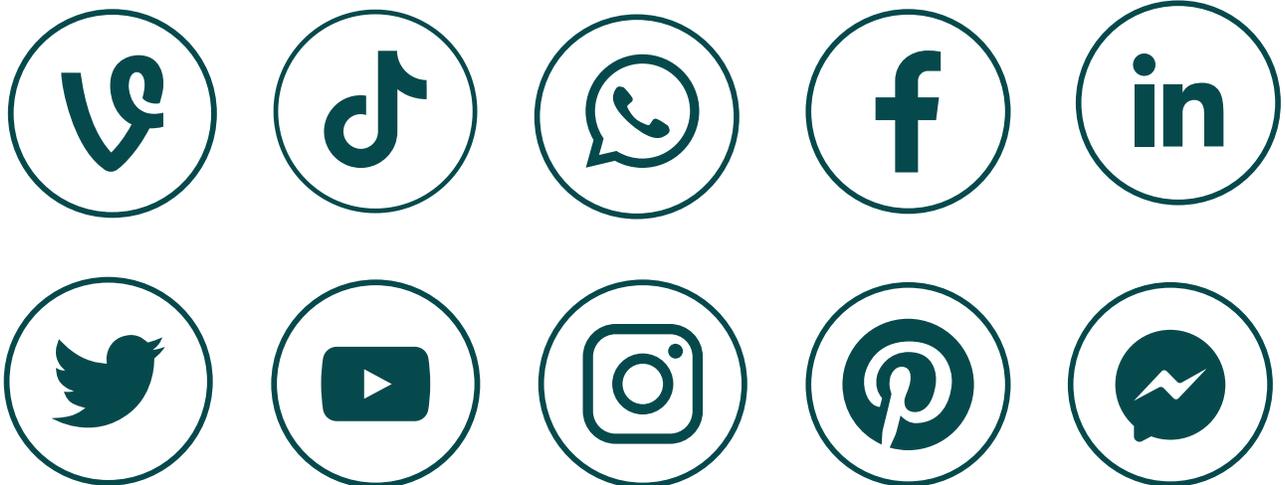
"CONFIDENTIAL" EMAILS NOTICE

There is no admonishment or message that can be inserted at the bottom of an email that will change the law, or whether a document is a public record. Even if an email signature includes a confidentiality statement, the email will be judged on an individual basis as a public record or non-public record under the law as well as being subject to appropriate redaction or nondisclosure as applicable (BP 4040).

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE

Emerging platforms for online collaboration are fundamentally changing the way we communicate with educators, support students, and serve communities. Waterford USD recognizes the importance of using social media as a tool to connect and share information with our stakeholders. With proper security precautions, Waterford USD supports the use of social media as a valuable tool to further the district's vision and mission, support student learning and staff professional development, and enhance communication with students, parents/guardians, staff, and community members.

These guidelines will ensure that our district staff are aware the liabilities and responsibilities associated with social media usage, and will assist the managers, staff, and students of Waterford USD who post to social media on behalf of the organization.



DISTRICT APPROVED PAGES

An official district social media platform is a site authorized by the Superintendent or designee. Sites that have not been authorized by the Superintendent or designee but that contain content related to the district or comments on district operations, such as a site created by a parent-teacher organization, booster club, or other school-connected organization or a student's or employee's personal site, are not considered official district social media platforms.

No division, department, or employee is permitted to create a stand-alone social media page or online presence without the prior approval of the Superintendent or designee. Teachers and coaches should also obtain approval from the principal before creating an official classroom or team social media platform (BP 1114). Employees or associated persons who desire to create a social media page for their school, program, or team must do the following before approval may be granted:

- Describe the need and why you believe a social media site best meets that need
- Describe why current approved social media pages are not accommodating your need
- Clearly define long-term goals for your social media page
- Indicate who will be responsible for regularly creating and adding content
- Decide who will be responsible for monitoring and answering questions from the public, removing inappropriate comments, etc
- Exhibit an understanding of our social media policies and agree to abide by all of the requirements listed on the following page

Use of any Waterford USD or program related logos or images as a profile on one's personal social networking site is prohibited unless approved in advance. If an employee wishes to promote a specific Waterford USD activity or event, the employee should contact their principal or the Communications Department for guidance.

SOCIAL MEDIA REQUIREMENTS

- **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY** – The District's social media policy must be attached to every official social media page per District Policy 1114. The Social Media Policy states the purpose of our social media pages and outlines what content is prohibited. Our social media policy can be found on our website.
- **SECONDARY ADMIN** – All official district social media sites must have secondary administrators, which should include the principal or vice principal and the Public Information Analyst, unless permission is given to the contrary.
- **PHOTO PERMISSION POLICY**– Employees and associated persons shall ensure that a student has the appropriate media release on file before sharing their image publicly.
- **PUBLIC RECORDS POLICY** – Content published by an employee or associated person, or comments made by the community, should not be removed unless they lack relation to the site's purpose or violation of the district's policy, regulation, or content guidelines (BP 1114). Before removing content, consult with the Communications Department, and ensure that comments and content records are preserved prior to deleting.
- **POLITICAL ACTIVITIES** – It is illegal for employees to endorse a commercial product or service or political party while using Waterford USD sponsored social media.
- **CONFIDENTIALITY** – Social media and networking sites and other online platforms shall not be used by district employees to transmit confidential information about students, employees, or district operations. Board policy pertaining to the posting of student photographs and the privacy of telephone numbers, home addresses, and email addresses, as specified in BP 1113 – District and School Websites, shall also apply to official district social media platforms.
- **DISCLAIMER** – When appropriate, employees using official district social media platforms shall identify themselves by name and district title and include a disclaimer stating that the views and opinions expressed in their post are theirs alone and do not necessarily represent those of the district or school (BP 1114).



CONTENT DELETION GUIDELINES

District social media sites are publicly accessible and subject to public records requests. The community has the right to express viewpoints and opinions relevant to the district on official District social media sites, as long as they do not violate the content deletion guidelines listed below:

Official district social media platforms may not contain content that

- Is obscene or sexually explicit
- Is libelous, discriminatory, harassing, or bullying
- Incites students as to create a clear and present danger of the commission of unlawful acts on school premises
- Is in violation of school rules, or substantial disruption of the school's orderly operation
- Contains unauthorized commercial solicitations, such as spam or includes links to other sites
- Does not relate to the school district or education
- Infringes upon copyright, license, trademark, patent, or other intellectual property rights
- Contains information that violates student or staff privacy

Employees and associated persons who manage official district social media sites should make and keep a record of any content that is deleted from social media, including a screenshot of the content in question.

EMPLOYEE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The Governing Board expects district employees to maintain the highest ethical standards, behave professionally, follow district policies and regulations, abide by state and federal laws, and exercise good judgment when interacting with students and other members of the school community. Employees shall engage in conduct that enhances the integrity of the district, advances the goals of the district's educational programs, and contributes to a positive school climate (BP 4119).

Department managers and staff are encouraged to work with their school secretaries and the Communications Department so updates and important information can be shared on their behalf to appropriate social media channels. Employees and associated persons are welcome and encouraged to engage with Waterford USD social media sites, (e.g., comments, shares, tags, etc). You do not need prior approval to engage with social media if the use is in accordance with the policies and guidelines referenced in this manual.

Users of official district social media platforms should be aware of the public nature and accessibility of social media and that information posted may be considered a public record subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act. The Board expects users to conduct themselves in a respectful, courteous, and professional manner (BP 1114).

Employees or students who post prohibited content shall be subject to discipline in accordance with district policies and administrative regulations (BP 1114).

GOODWILL AMBASSADORS

The Waterford Unified School District educational partners represent a diverse audience with a wide range of views, backgrounds, and beliefs. Content shared on social media should be viewpoint-neutral, reflective and inclusive of our diverse audience, in keeping with the values of Waterford USD, and seek to ensure communication is as clear and accessible as possible.

Clear and accessible communication means:

- Minimizing the use of educational jargon and acronyms
- Choosing fonts, sizes, and colors that are easily legible
- Providing communications in English and Spanish when translation is not available in app
- Having information available on a wide range of platforms
- Writing at a 8th grade reading level or below
- Avoid judgemental language

Employees and associated persons who are using district social media should:

- Take care to avoid spreading misinformation
- Respond to questions posted within one working day, or provide a follow up date/time an answer will be provided if the answer is not known
- Encourage positive interactions by replying to comments, and "Like"/"Loving" comments
- Reply to criticism with grace, while viewing ignorant or overly harsh remarks as opportunities to educate stakeholders on ways we may already be addressing their concern or areas we are doing well
- Take ownership of mistakes and shortcomings, and view those experiences as opportunities for growth
- Seek to better understand the viewpoint of those who are upset, and ensure that they feel heard and valued
- Use language that de-escalates a situation
- After an inquiry or negative comment has been addressed publically, if the individual(s) persist with negative commentary, reach out for a in-person meeting or phone call with the appropriate supervisor

CREATING GOOD CONTENT - CHECKLIST

- **SCALE** - Use the appropriate size for various social sites, the website, etc. When posting across multiple platforms, using 1200x1200px (or 1080x1080) is acceptable.
- **VIDEOS** - Ensure videos are an appropriate length for the platform they will be posted on. Avoid flashing lights or fast motions due to seizure risk and visual accessibility. Make multilingual captions available when individuals are speaking on video.
- **COPYRIGHTS** - Avoid using copyrighted material, including music and photos. If you need a resource for free music, reach out to the communications department.
- **PHOTOS** - Use only quality photos with the appropriate resolution size. Pay attention to all aspects of the photo, including the subject and background, to ensure the district is shown in the best light possible. Check that portions of the photo won't be cropped out when formatted to the social site. Ensure that all students pictured have photo releases.
- **WRITING** - Word count should be the appropriate length for site content is being posted on. Facebook posts should try to stay under 80 words, and Instagram posts should try to stay under 50 words.
- **EMOJIS** - Using emojis raises engagement, especially when placed in the first sentence of a post. An occasional well-placed emoji is encouraged, but take care not to overdo it.
- **HASHTAGS** - Hashtags should be used in every post, either in the text, or at the bottom of the post. Each school should use both the district hashtags and site hashtags for each post. Additional hashtags relevant to the post may also be used.
- **CALL TO ACTION** - Don't forget the call to action. At the end of your post, invite the audience to take action by commenting, signing up, learning more, etc. Be advised that links do not work on Instagram.
- **GRAPHICS** - Avoid stock photos and graphics when possible. Use official school colors and logos. Do not publish content with watermarks. Do not crowd graphics with text or include un-clickable links within graphics.

COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

The media - television, newspaper, and radio - is an effective way to reach a large number of people. While we welcome positive publicity about our schools and district, it is the District protocol that the Superintendent and Public Information Analyst (PIA) are informed before the media is invited to your school or program. It is the responsibility of the Administrator to inform the Superintendent and Public Information Analyst of any media involvement, press release, advertisements, articles, or any dealings with the media.

When answering or returning calls from the media:

- Note the reporter's first and last name, media outlet, phone, and email
- Note the reporter's deadline
- Inquire about the subject/intent or angle of the story
- Inquire about a list of questions (if known)
- Determine what's being requested - information, interview, photo op., or site visit
- Call the Public Information Analyst to determine the best course of action to take (e.g., who, if anyone, is the best person to speak with the reporter; help with talking points)
- Never feel pressured to make comment or provide information without first following the steps above

Your adherence to these guidelines will ensure that our office provides timely, courteous, accurate, and consistent responses to the media and that the superintendent's protocol is maintained.

CREATING APPEALING GRAPHICS

Quality graphics add color, life and interest to school activities and initiatives. Waterford USD is able to provide access to either Canva or Adobe Creative Cloud for employees and associated persons who will be involved in the content creation process. To request access to these programs, place a tech request to the IT department. To request training on the use of these programs, or access to quality school photos, contact the Public Information Analyst.

VIDEOS

Videos add a lot of interest to social media and the website, and are a valuable tool for promoting schools and programs. To request a video to promote an event, program, or other purpose, please contact the Public Information Analyst at least three weeks in advance.

COPYRIGHTS

Employees and associated persons who are working on district website, social media pages, or other communications platforms are responsible for ensuring that the materials they're publishing are free from copyrights and watermarks. This includes music, photos, and literature. If you need help finding music or photos that do not require a license, please contact the Public Information Analyst.

PEACHJAR

Peachjar is a digital flyer distribution system that allows employees and associated persons to upload digital fliers to be shared with students, parents, and the community. To request access to Peachjar as an uploader, please email the Public Information Analyst. Uploaded fliers must meet the following guidelines before they will be shared to families:

- Flyer documents should be formatted as a 8.5"x 11" PDF.
- Flyer documents should be four pages or less.
- Flyers should contain a second page with a spanish translation when possible and applicable.
- A link and another "call to action" button, such as a phone number or email, are available on peachjar. Do not include links on the flier document itself.
- Flyers should have a "start" date of a Wednesday (fliers will only be sent on Wednesdays).
- Flyers should use the appropriate school colors and logos.

Uploaded flyers will be reviewed before they are published. Flyers may be rejected, pending edits, if they do not meet the qualifications above, do not meet our quality standards, or lack important information. Uploaders will be able to re-submit flyers after edits are complete. We recommend uploaders submit flyers a week before their distribution date to allow time for editing if necessary.

If you want your information shared on social media as well as on Peachjar, then copy and resize your graphic to be 1080x1080px, or 1200x1200px. Submit the graphic to your site designee who manages your school social media, and include any links or pertinent information not contained on the graphic. Graphics for social media should not contain excessive text (20 words or less).