



WATERFORD
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN 2023-24

PUBLIC INFORMATION ANALYST



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209-874-1809 EXT. 0118

Communications Goals & Strategies

School Site Expectations

Communications Calendar

COMMUNICATIONS GOALS



TIMELY

Communicate through the appropriate channels in a proactive manner.



PERSONALIZED

Foster meaningful connections among school, students, parents, staff, and the community.



RECIPROCAL

Provide many opportunities for two-way communication with students, parents, staff and community to actively engage with our schools.



IDENTIFIABLE

Build and maintain our identity as a desirable and trustworthy school district.



AUDIENCES & METHODS



INTERNAL

- ➔ Students
- ➔ Staff
- ➔ Board of Trustees

EXTERNAL

- ➔ Parents
- ➔ Parent Organizations
- ➔ Community
- ➔ Education Partners
- ➔ Officials

METHODS

- ➔ Intrapersonal (Board Meetings, Councils, Events, in-person school visits)
- ➔ Electronic (Website, Social Media, Email, App, Text)
- ➔ Print (Newspaper, Banners, Brochures)



STRATEGIES & TACTICS

1**Build trust through consistent and professional branding**

- The district will establish a unified branding strategy for each campus that includes a logo, school colors, and a style guide
- The district will finalize and copyright all school logos
- The district will create and distribute templates and letterheads for school sites
- School site will use the district mission/vision/values statements consistently and make school specific mottos and values well known
- The district will create procedures that protect our brand from misuse by employees and outside organizations

2**Promote interest with external families through targeted advertising and develop a positive reputation with the community**

- The district will develop relationships with editors and education reporters and create press releases as needed
- Maintain a high level of visibility for the district through participation of key staff in various professional and community activities
- School sites will encourage student participation in volunteer opportunities
- The district will promote itself on community social media pages and through local news
- Expand business partnerships and increase the number of student internships in the community
- Highlight key programs through videos, news, radio, etc.
- Nurture a relationship with Roberts Ferry and Hickman Schools
- The district will target families outside our school district through direct mail campaigns and other advertising

3**Use inclusive communication tactics**

- Use clear, concise writing at an 8th grade reading level or lower
- Avoid educational jargon and acronyms
- Translate messages and materials into Spanish
- Use diverse communication channels to reach a wide audience

STRATEGIES & TACTICS

4

Provide excellent customer service to all our stakeholders

- Ensure customers leave with an answer to their question
- Never be dismissive
- Actively listen to understand the message and concerns beyond the words

5

Promote a positive staff culture

- Practice staff-first communications
- Highlight staff on their scheduled recognition date and for special achievements
- Use letter of thanks to promote a culture of gratitude
- Promote wellness and mental health strategies among staff
- Create short videos focusing on staff and recruitment

6

Increase engagement from our educational partners

- Encourage parents and community members to participate in District communication platforms
- Share monthly school newsletters and keep calendars updated to provide ample notice to our audiences of upcoming events and opportunities.
- Conduct surveys to receive feedback
- Prioritize opportunities for parent engagement, volunteerism, and advocacy
- Promote a safe and connected school environment and bring awareness to the importance of attendance
- Align communication campaigns across school sites to bring awareness to key programs and issues
- Share everyday stories of student fun and success

7

Build communication capacity with school site staff

- The district will provide communication reports and campaign reminders to school administrators monthly
- The district will provide professional development on communication tools to frontline staff
- The district will schedule monthly check-in times with front-line staff regarding communication and newsletters
- The district will create resources for reference and staff training



- Two posts with photos per week on site social media / website live feed



- Upload 4-6 newsletters announcements to peachjar digital flyer board per month



- Check your website regularly and communicate updates needed on pages
- Post at least twice a week to your "Live Feed" website section
- List all school events on your "events" calendar
- Share important events and info monthly in "news"



- Publish a monthly parent newsletter

SCHOOL SITE COMMUNICATIONS NORMS

- ✓ Our logo, colors, and branding are consistent and professional on all platforms.
- ✓ We post reminders on multiple platforms to highlight upcoming events.
- ✓ We inform the district office of all special events.
- ✓ We communicate graphic design and video needs at least two weeks prior to the due date/event.
- ✓ We review our emergency procedures and crisis communication plan with all staff annually.
- ✓ We immediately inform the communications department before any media interaction occurs.
- ✓ We have a customer service mindset.
- ✓ We send out newsletters to parents monthly.
- ✓ We practice staff-first communication.

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE SHOULD BE NOTIFIED FOR THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF EVENTS:

- ➔ An elected official will be on campus for any reason/role other than as a parent.
- ➔ Community or parent meeting or forum is being held to address an issue or concern.
- ➔ Students or staff are being recognized.
- ➔ Media is invited on your campus by you, a parent, or community partner – or the media shows up without invitation.
- ➔ A press release is crafted for an event or program by any person other than the PIA.
- ➔ A special event that involves external participants, such as the community, other schools, or businesses.
- ➔ An event is being hosted by an outside organization, particularly if it will draw a media presence.

SPECIAL EVENTS PROTOCOL

The superintendent and members of the Waterford Board of Trustees are actively engaged in the programs and events that occur throughout the district. It is the responsibility of the administrator in charge to make sure the superintendent and board are aware of events before they occur and that the potential dates do not conflict with other major events that may already be planned. Please do not schedule events on board meeting nights. Also, event programs that include board of trustees' or district administration names must be reviewed by the superintendent's office prior to publication.

In addition to special events, the administrator should contact the superintendent's office if anything occurs unexpectedly involving student safety, involves the community, is controversial, involves the media, or is otherwise important.



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.

What do I do when I receive a call from the media:

Always notify the superintendent's office and/or the public information analyst before one-on-one communication occurs. Be particularly cautious about controversial or sensitive issues, such as the topics of religion, facilities, policies, or crisis events, and defer all speaking to the superintendent, public information analyst, or designee. Our intent is to support and remove any obstacles/interference from you so that you can concentrate on what's most important– your sites, departments, and students.

WHEN ANSWERING OR RETURNING MEDIA CALLS, TAKE THE FOLLOWING NOTES:

- The reporter's first and last name, media outlet, phone, and email
- The reporter's deadline
- The subject/intent or angle of the story
- A list of questions (if known)
- What's being requested – information, interview, photo op., or site visit

HOW SHOULD I HANDLE UNANNOUNCED MEDIA VISITS?

If members of the news media arrive at your school unannounced, please notify the public information analyst at 209-874-1809 Ext. 0118 immediately for direction in handling the request for information or interviews. Meanwhile, please have the reporter sign in and escort him or her to the Principal's office where a discussion on the particulars of the visit can take place. Please wait until contact has been made with the superintendent's office or public information analyst before proceeding with an interview or allowing the photographer to obtain photos. Be mindful while you wait that your words, actions, and interactions between staff reflect the district and may be used by the reporter in their story.

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

The superintendent's office will assist schools with responding to a crisis. The public information analyst (PIA), part of the Incident Command Team, will assist schools in drafting timely and appropriate messages to key stakeholders.

It is the responsibility of the administrator to determine the level of the crisis, implement the appropriate emergency response procedures, and immediately contact the superintendent's office.

Administrators should review the district's Comprehensive Safety Plan, the Emergency Response Procedures, and the **Crisis Communications Plan** to best understand how to respond to an emergency.

STEP 3

Determine which, if any, stakeholders need to be notified and how best to do so.

STEP 2

Notify the superintendent's office and PIA.

STEP 1

Verify and assess the crisis. Notify first responders and implement emergency procedures as necessary.

STEP 4

The PIA will assist in drafting a message(s) for key stakeholders.

STEP 5

Seek approval of all crisis messages from superintendent.

STEP 6

Translate messages to Spanish.

STEP 7

Approved messages are sent to specified audiences.

STEP 8

Determine next steps.



SAFETY PROCEDURES



LOCKDOWN



SECURE SCHOOL



DUCK & COVER



SHELTER IN PLACE



EVACUATE ON CAMPUS



EVACUATE OFF CAMPUS

- **Lockdown**

LOCKDOWN is implemented when there is a dangerous intruder on campus or approaching campus. This procedure differs from Secure School in that during a Lockdown everyone should stay quiet and hidden from view by taking cover behind desks or tables.

- **Secure School**

SECURE SCHOOL is implemented when there is an increased potential for danger to the campus but no immediate threat to students or staff. This may include a wild animal on site or nearby police activity. This procedure is similar to Lockdown where all doors and windows are closed and locked but students and school personnel are able to continue normal work inside.

- **Duck & Cover**

The DUCK AND COVER protocol is implemented when protection is needed from flying or falling debris.

Example: earthquakes

- **Shelter in Place**

The SHELTER IN PLACE protocol is implemented when there is a need to isolate students and staff from the outside environment and airborne contaminants. This procedure is similar to secure school but also includes shutting down all air conditioning and heating units in order to keep outside air out. Students and staff may also move around indoors.

Examples: hazmat, excessive smoke

- **Evacuate (on campus)**

The EVACUATE protocol is announced to move students and staff from one location to another, usually when the decision is made that is unsafe to remain in a building.

Examples: Fire; When conditions outside buildings or off campus are safer than inside campus.

- **Evacuate (off campus)**

When the on-campus evacuation assembly area or shelter is no longer safe or students and staff need to be taken to an alternate location for parent or family reunification.

BRANDING GUIDE

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 district 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. The **Communication Guidebook** is intended to share ways to consistently and effectively communicate with our stakeholders, and includes a Branding and Style Guide, a Social Media Guide, and a Communications Toolkit. Below are some of the primary DOs and DON'Ts covered in the Communications Guidebook.

DO...

- ✓ Social Media graphics are properly scaled, school colors and logos are used.
- ✓ Printed brochures, flyers, banners, etc. are visually appealing and school colors and logos are used.
- ✓ Our photos celebrate our students and our district.
- ✓ Content creators use the grammar, punctuation, and style guide to ensure consistency.
- ✓ Be aware that you are an ambassador of the District's brand and reputation at all times.

DO NOT...

- ✓ Allow employees, coaches, or associated groups to create social media sites on the school's behalf without prior approval.
- ✓ Modify the school or district logo in any way.
- ✓ Share photos of students without a photo/media release.
- ✓ Share personal information or prohibited content on social media.
- ✓ Delete content that does not fall within the guidelines allowing deletion.

SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS



THE PHOTO

- Do the students have photo releases?
- Are the pictures of the students/athletes flattering – is it something you would have posted of yourself as a teenager?
- Does the photo display the best of WUSD?
- IG will crop photos to be square, so adjust them beforehand.

THE WRITING

- FB Posts should try to stay under 80 words.
- IG posts should try to stay under 50 words.
- Links do not work on IG.

EMOJIS

- Throw an occasional emoji in at the top of your post – it will boost engagement.

CALL TO ACTION

- Ask or direct your audience to do something – comment, click link to learn more, etc.

School sites are expected to post photos at least site twice per week. The easiest way to do this is through "Thrillshare," where you can also update the website's and app's live feed section at the same time.

What makes a social media post successful?

THE HASHTAGS

- Always use district hashtags
 - #WUSD
 - #WaterfordCares
- Always use your school hashtag
 - #Tigers
 - #Wildcats
 - #Bobcats
 - #MoonCubs
- Use event hashtags as applicable
 - #ReadAcrossAmerica
 - #TigerChefs
 - #Classof2024
 - #MentalHealthMatters



PEACHJAR DIGITAL FLYERS

Peachjar is a digital flyer distribution system that sends emails with graphics and actionable links to parents every Wednesday. School sites can upload flyers to be sent home. All flyers are reviewed and approved at the district office. Parent organizations and local nonprofits can also use peachjar to distribute flyers through their OWN accounts. Review flyer guidelines and/or watch a tutorial on how to upload your flyers for distribution on the communications google site.



PARENTS NOT RECEIVING MESSAGES

All emails listed through Infinite Campus are automatically opted-in to receive peachjar messages. If parents aren't seeing the weekly email notifications, have them check their spam folder. They can adjust their email setting to trust the messages and have images automatically populate. If they do not see any messages in spam, have them visit peachjar.com and "log in" or "sign up" - you can also sign them up yourself.



OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS

Peachjar is the platform for outside organizations to advertise to our school families. It is the **ONLY** way organizations can distribute flyers. Do not accept flyers for direct distribution to students, post information to class dojo, or otherwise advertise for outside organizations without direction from the superintendent or public information analyst.

Organizations can learn about Peachjar and other district communication procedures on our website under "ABOUT US" >> "CONNECT WITH US" Refer inquiring parties to this page first. If they have questions they can contact Amanda:
awilson@waterford.k12.ca.us

AUGUST THEME:

Wellness

"We Care" starts with "Me Care" - share how staff can focus on self care, stress management, and healthy routines.



NOTES:

- Wear purple/purple ribbon for overdose awareness day Aug 31

AUGUST 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
30	31 Moon Round-Up	1 National Night Out 5-8pm Beard Park Love Waterford	2 LWIS Round-Up	3 WHS Round-Up	4 Teacher Work Day WJHS Round-Up/ School Shots	5
6	7 Staff Development Day	8 Staff Development Day SHS Parent Orientation	9 Staff Development Day	10 First Day of School Board Meeting	11	12
13	14	15	16 Moon Back-to-school Night	17	18	19
20	21	22 WJHS Back-to-school Night	23 LWIS Back-to-school Night WHS Back-to-school Night	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31 Overdose Awareness Day	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9

SEPTEMBER

2023

SEPTEMBER THEME:

Attendance

"Every Day Counts!" - promote good attendance.

Hispanic Heritage



STAFF APPRECIATION DAYS:

IT Appreciation -
Sep 19

NOTES:

- Wear your suicide awareness ribbon Sep 14

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4 Labor Day Holiday	5	6	7	8 Literacy Day	9 CA Admission Day
10 Suicide Prevention Day	11 9/11 Remembrance	12	13	14 Board Meeting	15	16
17 Constitution Day	18	19 IT Appreciation Day	20	21	22 CA Native American Day	23
24 Yom Kippur Starts	25	26	27 DEAC	28 Comfort Kit Drive Love Waterford	29	30
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

OCTOBER

2023

OCTOBER THEME:

Safety

We care about student safety!

Bus Safety

Red Ribbon Week

Digital Citizenship



STAFF APPRECIATION DAYS:

*School Custodian
Day - Oct 2*

NOTES:

- Wear pink in October for breast cancer awareness
- Wear your red ribbon Oct 23-27
- Play "The Great Shakeout" video over your intercoms on Oct 17 for earthquake safety

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2 	3	4	5	6	7 Heritage Day
8	9 Columbus Day/ Indigenous People Day	10	11 Yom Kippur LWIS Spelling Bee	12 Diwali	13	14
15	16	17 The Great Shakeout	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 DELAC	26	27	28
29	30	31 Trunk or Treat 6-8 pm Love Waterford	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11

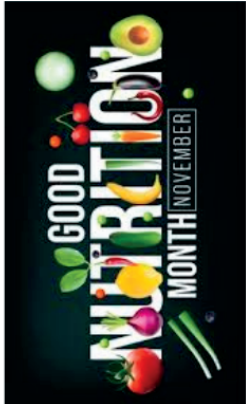
NOVEMBER

2023

NOVEMBER THEME:

Homelessness

Promote community resources for food insecurity and housing.



STAFF APPRECIATION DAYS:

Psychologist Week,
Nov 13-17

NOTES:

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
29	30	31	1 Día de Los Muertos Gifting Program Begins Love Waterford	2	3	4
5 Daylight Savings Time Ends	6	7	8 STEM Day	9 Board Meeting	10 Veterans Day Observed	11 Veterans Day
12	13	14	15	16	17 Minimum Day LWIS 1st Trimester Awards	18
19	20 ELOP Supplemental Day	21 ELOP Supplemental Day	22 <<< Fall Break >>>	23 Thanksgiving Holiday	24 Thanksgiving Holiday Observed	25
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9



School Psychologist Appreciation Week



DECEMBER

2023

DECEMBER THEME:






Service

Recognize the spirit of service in
our students

STAFF APPRECIATION DAYS:

*SPED Appreciation
Day, Dec 2*

NOTES:

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
26	27	28	29	30	1	2 
3	4	5	6	Pearl Harbor Remembrance	7	8 
10	11	12 Moon Winter Program	13 DELAC	14 	15	16
17	18	19	20 Minimum Day	21 Teacher Work Day ETOP Supplemental Day	22 	23
24	25 Christmas Day Holiday 	26 Kwanzaa Begins	27 < < < Winter Break > > >	28	29	30
New Year's Eve 31	1	2	3	4	5	6

JANUARY

2024

JANUARY THEME:

Kindness

Kindness Matters - promote the importance of kindness and the ways we teach positive behavior habits in students.

STAFF APPRECIATION DAYS:

*School Board
Appreciation Month*

NOTES:

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
31	New Years Day Holiday 1	New Years Holiday Observed 2	3 « « Winter Break » » »	4	5	6 Dia de la Resaca - Epiphany
7	Teacher Work Day 8	Police Appreciation Day 9 Staff Development Day	10	Human Trafficking Awareness Day 11 Board Meeting	12	13
14	MLK Holiday 15 ELOP Supplemental Day	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23 Ed Roberts Day	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31 WHS Showcase	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10

FEBRUARY

2024

FEBRUARY THEME:

Diversity

*Highlight the benefits of diversity;
share the impact of African
Americans and the ways students
are learning from their stories.*



STAFF APPRECIATION DAYS:

Counseling Week, Feb 5-9

NOTES:

- Summer school and TK registration begins in February

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
Rosa Parks Day 4	5 Lincoln Day	6 Ronald Reagan Day	7 School Counseling Week	8 Susan B. Anthony Day Board Meeting	9	10 Lunar/Chinese New Year
11	12	13	14 Valentines Day	15	16 President's Weekend Observed	17
18 President's Day	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28 DELAC	29	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9

MARCH

2024

MARCH THEMES:

Literacy

It's "March into Literacy" Month - Highlight the importance

of reading and how we support student literacy.

Women's History

Art & Music in Schools

STAFF APPRECIATION DAYS:









Maintenance & Grounds

Appreciation Day,

March 4

NOTES:

- Preschool registration begins in March

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
25	26	27	28	29	1 LWIS 2nd Semester Awards	2 Dr. Seuss' Birthday Read Across America Day EOP Reading Expo
3	4 	5 	6 	7 Moon Literacy Night 	8 	9
10	11	12	13	14 Pi Day 	15	16
17	18	19	20	21 Board Meeting	22	23
24	25	26	27 DELAC	28 Minimum Day	29 Good Friday Holiday 	30
31 	1	2	3	4	5	6

APRIL

2024

APRIL THEME:

Fentanyl

April is FNL Month. Bring awareness to the dangers of fentanyl and promote our student FNL clubs.



STAFF APPRECIATION DAYS:

VP Week, April 1-5
Para. Day, April 3
Librarian Day, April 4
Bus Driver Day, April 23
Admin Prof. Day, April 24

NOTES:

- Wear your autism awareness ribbon April 2
- Wear purple for fentanyl awareness April 11

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
26	1 Patriot's Day	2 VP Week EOP Supplemental Days, Science Camp	3 Para Day Librarian Day	4 Librarian Day	5 CA Poppy Day	6
7	8	9	10	11 Board Meeting	12 Jefferson Day	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22 Earth Day	23 Bus Driver Appreciation Day	24 Admin. Prof. Day	25	26 EOP Supplemental Day Volunteer Day Love Waterford	27
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11

MAY

2024

MARCH THEME:

Your Mind Matters

Highlight the ways we support mental health.



STAFF APPRECIATION DAYS:

Principal's Day, May 1
Lunch Hero Day, May 3
Speech Pathologist Day, May 18
Staff App Week, May 6-10
Teacher App. Day, May 7
Nurse Day, May 8
All Staff App Day, May 9

NOTES:

- Wear green for mental health awareness May 9

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
28	29	30	1 LWIS Open House DELAC Principal's Day	2	3 Moon Family Picnic Lunch Hero Day	4 Strawberry Breakfast
5 Holocaust Remembrance Day	6 Teacher Appreciation Day	7 Teacher Appreciation Day	8 Nurse Appreciation Day	9 Board Meeting Staff Appreciation Week All-Staff Appreciation Day	10 Fentanyl Awareness Day	11
12 Mother's Day	13	14	15 Peace Officer Memorial Day	16	17	18 Speech Pathologist Day
19	20	21	22	23 LWIS Field Day	24	25
26	27 Memorial Day Holiday	28 Sentinel Grad	29 WJHS Promotion	30 WHS Grad LWIS Awards Last Day of School	31 PHAST NO Tobacco Day	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8



MISSION

Our Mission is to develop self-directed and collaborative learners who are college, career, and community ready.

INTRO

This communication plan is intended to guide all of Waterford Unified School District's collective communication efforts. Effective and efficient communication is essential to the success of a school district. The purpose of the plan is to serve as a guide for connecting all stakeholders to timely information that will encourage two-way communications. This plan aligns with Board Policy, the LCAP, the Crisis Communication Plan, and the Communications Guidebook.



Excellence - Achievement - Success