

Wayland Union Schools

Communication Plan

2022-2023

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WAYLAND UNION SCHOOLS

DISTRICT MISSION

We will challenge and inspire all students to become lifelong learners and productive citizens.

DISTRICT VISION

Challenge and Inspire all students

DISTRICT BELIEF STATEMENTS

We believe in all students.

We believe all students can learn.

We believe in providing meaningful opportunities for all students.

We believe in fostering diverse and trusting relationships.

We believe community involvement is essential for student success.

This communication plan was initiated as part of the 2021-2026 Strategic Plan:

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

Communications & Community Engagement

GOAL:

Wayland Union Schools will encourage positive relationships through effective communication and community partnerships.

Per Strategic Plan Objective:

Develop a Communication Plan for Building and District Newsletters that is consistent across the district by June 30, 2022 to implement by the 2022-2023 school year and includes information on school finance and casino funding.

COMMUNICATION VISION

The Wayland Union Schools' Communications Plan for the 2021-2026 school years will be utilized as a tool to ensure that all communications align with the strategic goals of our school district. The plan will be continually evaluated and updated as needed. It is the vision of Wayland Union Schools to effectively communicate with all stakeholders and create an environment of trust, respect, and transparency.

Through efficient and productive communications with all stakeholders, the district will be known for providing a quality education for all students. The district will actively pursue two-way communications by listening to its staff and community to continuously improve and evaluate communications efforts. This plan will also help our employees be knowledgeable ambassadors for the district, as they communicate key messages to the community.

Wayland Union Schools Communications Plan is led by the Superintendent along with the Assistant Superintendents, Directors, Principals, Assistant Principals, and Supervisors. The communications team will be coordinated by the Communication Specialist and the Superintendent. The activities contained in this plan ensure that Wayland Union Schools will always be proactive in telling our story and responding appropriately to external events. This Communications Plan will be targeted towards internal and external audiences with desired communication outcomes:

INTERNAL AUDIENCES

Students, Staff, Administrators, Executive Leadership, and Board of Education

Desired Communication Outcomes:

- Take pride and ownership in Wayland Union Schools
- Be informed about key district issues
- Be advocates for Wayland Union Schools

EXTERNAL AUDIENCES

Students, Parents, Families, Taxpayers, Senior Citizens, Community Leaders, Media, Business Leaders, Realtors, Religious Leaders, Prospective Families, and New Families

Desired Communication Outcomes:

- Feel connected to Wayland Union Schools
- Feel connected to our campuses
- Exhibit community pride
- Build trust
- Support initiatives
- Actively participate in events & committees

TELLING OUR STORY: What We Do

Key Functions of Communication

- WRITING COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA RELATIONS – news releases, media relations, parent and emergency communication, publications, graphics design, social media, district newsletters, editorial content for community publications, district/campus letters, Superintendent correspondence to staff.
- MARKETING/ADVERTISING – ensures the district follows proper brand using style guidelines while promoting Wayland Union Schools as a destination district through use of digital and printed advertisements.
- PUBLICATIONS – brochures, postcards, newsletters, digital newsletters, and informational bond materials
- WEBSITE – design and maintenance of district website, oversight of campus websites for accurate information, event spotlights, links to our Infinite Campus Parent Portal and enrollment information.
- SOCIAL MEDIA – maintain district social media platform on Facebook by pushing out digital content including general news, photos, videos and emergency information while also enhancing an interactive element with the followers
- INTERDEPARTMENTAL SUPPORT and TRAINING – special projects, graphics design, general communication, web maintenance, publications to support other departments/buildings.
- RAPID NOTIFICATION SYSTEM – general information and emergency communication, provide content for email and phone messages, develop and manage Infinite Campus usage guidelines for users, and set up user accounts and training (*duties shared with Human Resources and the technology department*)
- CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS MATERIALS – develop proactive and anticipatory crisis management plans for district and campus leadership, provide crisis/media contact information for employee ID badges, and assist with the Emergency Response Plan and alert system
- GRAPHIC ART DESIGN – provide graphic artwork and layout designs for district and campus promotional projects as needed
- VIDEO PRODUCTION – assist campuses and departments with brief promotional videos as needed
- BUILDING COMMUNICATORS PROGRAM – building liaisons provide school related information for publication
- DISTRICT EVENT PHOTOGRAPHY – attend events to help publicize district and campus needs
- AWARDS & RECOGNITION – recognize and promote annual Outstanding People for Education Awards
- SPECIAL EVENTS/PROJECTS – student/staff recognition such as Academic Awards Ceremony & Reception, National Honor Society ceremonies, Board Appreciation, Outstanding People for Education Awards, special projects and

events on an as needed basis including dedication ceremonies, community focus groups

- SUPPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION – assist with general presentations and projects, emergency communication and prepare recognition content

KEY STAFF MEMBERS RESPONSIBLE FOR COMMUNICATIONS

- Communication Specialist
 - Building Principals
 - Designated Office Staff *(as determined by building principals)*
 - Athletic Director
 - Athletic Director Secretary
 - Middle School Athletic Coordinator
 - Fine Arts Center Director
 - Superintendent
 - Superintendent/Board of Education Administrative Assistant
-

TELLING OUR STORY: Keys to Success

The District Must:

- Engage its audience beyond simple communication efforts
- Proactively promote within the community and establish relationships for community to promote district
- Communicate positive & negative news to establish Wayland Union Schools as primary, credible & unbiased
- Accept opinions & react with an educated approach to the overall communication strategy & plan

The style behind a message:

- Tell our story
- Short & to the point
- Clear and concise without room for misinterpretation
- Uniform & consistent
- Accurate to display credibility
- Genuine, rely on district's mission and vision

TELLING OUR STORY: Principles to Remember

Wayland Union Schools will tell its own story and by doing that, will adopt two principles that deliver effective communication.

Audience Closeness:

When determining what information is the most relevant, an audience member will foster a sense of closeness and audience proximity becomes vital. The closer one is to any particular piece of information or the more involved or invested, the more the message will matter. For example, a parent will determine that information distributed from their child's classroom is the most important, then from the building and then the district.

Here at Wayland Union Schools, we plan to educate our teachers and administrators on the importance of two-way communication to parents and community members. District-level communication is typically tailored to be for larger audiences, but also specific to an audience that requires a district response. Messaging is always specified for different audiences, but Wayland Union Schools encourages members of the community to share information about the district through all realms.

Digital Communication:

Technology has radically changed the way a communications department builds its plan and messages typically now spread through a faster and more precise measure while reaching audiences with great ease and speed.

- Website
- Social Media
- Infinite Campus
- School App
- eNewsletters

TELLING OUR STORY: Information Channels

Wayland Union Schools utilizes the following primary means of communication.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

- District website
- School webpages
- Infinite Campus
- Social media: Facebook
- eNewsletters: Smore
- PeachJar
- Vimeo
- YouTube
- Online newspaper advertisements
- School App

PRINTED COMMUNICATION

- Green & White District Newsletter
- Brochures, flyers, posters, and/or postcards
- Chamber of Commerce Annual Directory

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION

- Superintendent Coffee Hours (*pending TR's plans*)
- Superintendent Community Office Hours (*pending TR's plans*)
- Wayland Union Leadership
- Community Conversations
- Wayland Union Education Foundation
- District Improvement Planning Committee
- Wayland Chamber of Commerce
- Community Focus Groups
- Administrator meetings

TELLING OUR STORY: Staying Connected Electronically

SOURCE	PURPOSE	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
ANONYMOUS ALERTS	<p>URGENT</p> <p>Anonymously submit any suspicious activity, bullying, or other school-related issues to administration. We encourage you to report important issues.</p>	Submit anonymous alerts through the school websites or OK2Say
<p>BUILDING NEWS (Baker Bits; Steeby Star; Dorr Press; Pine Street Press; WMS Newsletter; & HS Newsletter)</p>	<p>EMERGENCY & GENERAL</p> <p>Emergency updates pertaining to one building will come directly from the specific building. If more than one building is involved, the communication will come from the district.</p> <p>General monthly Smore e-newsletters with general information, highlighting events, & more.</p>	Visit the school website for each newsletter at www.waylandunion.org
FACEBOOK	<p>EMERGENCY & GENERAL</p> <p>Facebook will provide updates, news, photos, & emergency information. Also allows for response and feedback.</p>	Search “Wayland Union Schools;” “Wayland Union Fine Arts Center;” “Wayland Union Band” “Wayland Union Orchestra” “Wayland Union Theater”
INSTAGRAM-FINE ARTS	GENERAL	Search “Wayland Union Fine Arts”
GOOGLE CLASSROOM/TEACHER WEBPAGES	<p>GENERAL</p> <p>Teacher websites provide information on building and classroom updates, and homework/coursework</p>	
<p>INFINITE CAMPUS Parent/Staff Notification; Phone calls, emails, texts</p>	<p>EMERGENCY & GENERAL</p> <p>IC allows for sending of school closures, emergencies, & timely announcements</p>	Parents can update phone numbers & email addresses in IC Parent Portal
<p>INFINITE CAMPUS: PARENT PORTAL</p>	GENERAL	
PEACHJAR	Electronic Flier	Sent directly to your inbox and

	Delivery System	viewed on each building's webpage
SUPERINTENDENT UPDATES	EMERGENCY & GENERAL Updates are provided as emergencies arise. Monthly Smore e-newsletters with general information & highlighting events.	
WAYLAND UNION SCHOOL APP	EMERGENCY & GENERAL	Search "Wayland Union Schools" in the App Store
WAYLAND UNION WEBSITE www.waylandunion.org	EMERGENCY & GENERAL Website includes information on a variety of topics for all campuses & district; also emergency announcements	Visit the district website at www.waylandunion.org
WAYLAND UNION WEEKLY GOOD NEWS	GENERAL	
YOUTUBE/VIMEO	GENERAL	Search "Fine Arts Center"

Written Communication Platforms

Green & White

One of the most popular informational tools, this quarterly publication is sent, in paper-copy through the mail, to all households within the Wayland Union School District boundaries. The Communication Specialist oversees this publication. The Green & White is also placed on the district website. The *Green & White* is used to highlight students by sharing information on past and upcoming events, provide news, and share photographs.

Wayland Union Annual Education Reports

To meet the State of Michigan reporting requirements, all districts must publish district- and building-level Annual Education Reports (AERs.) The Communication Specialist is responsible for these yearly publications. These reports may be found on the district website.

Wayland Union Board Meeting and Work Session Summaries

Wayland Union Schools Board meetings and Work Sessions are held on a monthly basis. You may find the meeting dates and virtual links on the district website. The agenda is

published 48 hours prior to the Board meeting. A summary of the meeting is sent through an electronic newsletter within two days of the meeting.

Wayland Union Schools District Website

The district’s website is a comprehensive source of information about district programs, schools, curriculum, policies, events and operations. It was designed to meet the informational needs of parents, students and the community. The site was created using web best practices. The site is monitored and maintained daily by the Technology and the Communication Specialist.

Wayland Union School Newsletters

Each school publishes a newsletter promoting school activities and functions at least once per month. Parents receive timely information about the school and district highlighting learning, students, and staff. Newsletters will be posted on the Wayland Union Schools website under each school.

Wayland Union Strategic Plan Annual Report

The Wayland Union Strategic Plan annual report showcases the district’s achievement and accomplishments as it relates to the strategic plan. The next annual report will be posted by June 30, 2022.

Wayland Union Schools Employee Communications

Communication Type	Frequency	Method	Format	Audience	Responsibility
Superintendent Updates	Monthly	Send Link via IC email/text, Website, social media, School App	SMORE Electronic Newsletter	Parents, WUS Stakeholders, Key Communicators	Superintendent, Communication Specialist
Emergency Notices/ School Closures	Emergency Only	IC Emergency Messenger	Email, Voice, Text	Parents	Superintendent, Communication Specialist
Green & White District Newsletter	Quarterly	US Mail, website	Hard Copy/River Run Press	WUS Community stakeholders	Communication Specialist

Weekly Good News	Weekly on Fridays	IC Email/Text, Staff email, KCN email	Smore	WUS Community stakeholders	Communication Specialist
All Things Instruction	Monthly	Smore Newsletter	Smore Newsletter	Staff	Assistant Superintendent of Instruction
Food Service News		Send link through IC messenger, social media, school app	SMORE Electronic Newsletter	Parents	Food Service Secretary
Facebook	Four times per week to daily posts at the district level. Two times per week at the building level.	Posts, Events, Shares	Electronic	WUS Stakeholders	District page-Communication Specialist Fine Arts Center-FAC Director Building pages - Principals
Press Releases	As Needed	Email to media, wUS staff, KCN	Email, website, social media	Media, staff, parents, key communicators	Superintendent, Communication Specialist
Peachjar Flyers	As needed	Emailed to parents inbox; also on each building's webpage link	Emails sent to parents. They can edit their preferences on frequency or opt out	Parents	Communication Specialist Comm. Ed, Building Secretaries
School App Push Notifications	As needed	Blackboard App	Web-based app	WUS Stakeholders	Communication Specialist
Building Newsletters	Monthly (minimum)	Send Link via IC email/text, Website, social media	SMORE Electronic Newsletter	Parents	Building Principals
HS Athletics	Before each Athletic Season, As needed	IC Message, Social Media Posts, Peachjar,	Social Media Posts, Emails	Student Athletes, Parents	Athletic Director and Athletic Assistant

	during the season	Wayland HS Daily News			
MS Athletics	Sports Sign-ups, Parent Powerpoint and Asee during the season.	IC messages and direct emails to specific sport parent groups	Powerpoint and emails	All stakeholders based on subject of the communication and parents	Athletic Coordinator and Athletic Coordinator secretary
Fine Arts					
Specialized Instruction	Monthly	SMORE newsletter	SMORE newsletter	Special Education teachers, aides, and ancillary staff	Director of Special Education

COMMUNICATING INFORMATION ON SCHOOL FUNDING

Information regarding school revenue sources and district expenses may be found on the Wayland Union website on the transparency page as required by all school districts: <https://waylandunion.org/district/administration/budget-transparency/> Additionally, monthly reports are provided to the Board of Education at Regular Board Meetings. If you have any questions about school funding, please contact the Superintendent or the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations.

COMMUNICATING INFORMATION ON CASINO REVENUE SHARING

We are thankful for our educational partnership with the Gun Lake Tribe! Each year the Gun Lake Tribe provides generous funding to our school district based on two (2) percent of twenty-eight (28) percent of total slot machine revenue and tax in-lieu payments. Casino Revenue Sharing information is updated annually and is always available on the Wayland Union website on the budget transparency page: <https://waylandunion.org/district/administration/budget-transparency/>

Community surveys and/or meetings will be held annually to obtain stakeholder input regarding the use of casino revenue sharing funds. If you have any questions about casino revenue, please contact the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations.

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

Wayland Union Schools social media accounts are provided for the district and community. These pages are updated frequently in order to exchange information with our community, celebrate the achievements of students/staff and communicate timely information. Posting of comments on any Wayland Union Schools Social Media page(s) is at the discretion of the page administrators. These guidelines are in place to protect the privacy and rights of Wayland Union Schools students and staff. Naming specific employees or students in a negative way will not be allowed. The page administrators will review postings to make sure they do not run afoul of the rules nor of the district's guidelines regarding the use of technology.

GUIDELINES

We welcome your thoughts and comments and look forward to what you have to say. However, we will not leave postings up that:

- Break the law or encourage others to do so. This includes respecting copyright and fair use laws. If you are quoting someone else's work, reference the person, and, where possible, include a link
- Discriminate on the basis of gender, age, race, nationality, sexual orientation, sexual identity, religion, disability, socioeconomic standing, or non-proficiency in English language skills
- Easily identify students and/or staff in defamatory, abusive or generally negative terms.
- Do not show proper consideration for others' privacy or are considered likely to offend or provoke others
- Are spam or unsolicited advertisements– i.e. repeatedly posting the same comment or comments that are simply advertising/promoting a service or product
- Postings will be deleted/hidden/removed, as well, should they contain: Profane, threatening, embarrassing, harassing, bullying or racist material
- Material that is likely to disrupt the learning environment
- Lewd, vulgar, sexually suggestive, obscene or pornographic content
- Content that violates or promotes the violation of school rules
- Political lobbying

The page administrators reserve the right to remove (or decline to post) any comments at any time, for any reason.

Note: These guidelines apply to all Wayland Union social media pages, including those administered through local campuses and clubs.

REMEMBER

- Be honest - share accurate information
- Be useful - reminders, dates, times, locations
- Be motivational - encourage the community of Wayland Union Schools
- Be professional - you're a district leader
- Be lawful - check waivers, respect copyright and fair use laws
- Be engaging - share relative information, build a two-way conversation

MONITORING

- Page administrators should monitor all social media activity.
- Page administrators should be aware of followers.
- Page administrators have the authority to remove comments not pertaining to the posted topic.

CRISIS AND EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Crisis and emergency communications are required anytime an unwelcome event or circumstance draws attention to a school or district.

Wayland Union Schools is working on converting the District's Crisis Procedures Manual into a digital platform / mobile app which will allow users to easily access the written material and 'what to do in an emergency' information on their mobile device.

POSSIBLE EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

- Accident *(On/Off Campus)*
- Animal concerns
(bats, dogs, rodents)
- Lockdown
- Attempted Abduction
- Bomb Threats
- Chemical Leaks
- Death
- Death Threats
- Explosions
- Fires
- Food Poisoning
- Gang Violence
- Hate Crimes
- Homicide
- Hostage Situations
- Intruders in Buildings
- Missing Student
- Natural Disasters
- Nuclear Threats
- Power Failure
- Riots
- Sexual Assault
- Serious Illness
- State, National, International Disasters
- Suicide
- Suspicious Mail
- Weapons on Campus
- Weapons of Mass Destruction

MEDIA PROCEDURES / COMMUNICATIONS

Employees DO NOT make any comments or give interviews to the media without the proper approval from the Superintendent or Communication Specialist.

IF AN EMPLOYEE IS CONTACTED BY A REPORTER

If an employee is contacted by the media, the employee is required to tell the media representative to contact the Communication Specialist. The employee is then required to contact their supervisor. The supervisor is required to contact the Communication Specialist. The Communication Specialist will contact the reporter and consider the request.

COMMUNICATION DURING EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

- The Superintendent, Communication Specialist or designee will call, text, or e-mail the District Leadership Team as soon as possible so all will know the facts and will be better prepared to field questions.
- If the situation warrants, the principal will consult with the Communications Team to determine if a phone/email notification message needs to be sent to parents detailing the facts.
- Emergency Operations Procedures (Red Binders) are placed in each building with communication protocols and action steps.
- The Superintendent or Supt/BoE Administrative Assistant will update the Board of Education.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS DURING EMERGENCIES

The Communication Specialist will work with the principal to send an emergency phone notification system to notify parents of an emergency. Emergency messages should be sent by both phone and email.

If two or more buildings are involved in an emergency situation, the Superintendent may choose to send the information district-wide.

ID BADGE

- Employees shall wear their district ID badge at all times.

PROVIDING STATEMENTS TO MEDIA DURING EMERGENCIES

- In the event of an emergency, if instructed by the Communication Specialist, your statement/procedure should follow these guidelines:
 - As part of the Crisis Plan, work with the authorities/Communication Specialist/Superintendent to set up a designated area for the media, inform all personnel where the area is and have them send all media representatives to that area.
 - Do not release ANY names.
 - Be honest; only give facts; if the facts are not available then say the facts are being gathered and they will be released at a later time.
 - Instruct all personnel to refer questions from the media to the district spokesperson/Superintendent/Communication Specialists.
 - Always get the reporter's name, the name of the newspaper or station the reporter is working for, the telephone number, and the questions they would like answered.

MEDIA ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

- The media has no legal right to be on your campus for any reason without permission from the Communication Specialist. If a member of the media insists on violating this law, contact the School Safety Officer (SSO) and the Communication Specialist or the Superintendent.
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CONCLUSION

The Wayland Union Schools Communication Plan for the 2022-2026 school years will be utilized as a tool to ensure that all communications align with the goals of the district strategic plan. The plan will be continually evaluated and updated as needed. If you have any questions about the district's communication plan, please contact the Communication Specialist or the Superintendent.

“It’s more important to reach the people that count than to count the people you reach.”

~National School Public Relations Association

WAYLAND UNION SCHOOLS... *Challenges and Inspires ALL students*

Finalized: 5/24/2022