

Wachusett Regional School District



Communication Plan

Spring 2022

Vision

The Wachusett Regional School District will foster a vibrant educational community in which all students will realize their highest potential and become responsible and productive citizens.

Mission

The Wachusett Regional School District seeks to ensure meaningful student growth and promote social emotional well-being in a safe and nurturing environment. We will integrate the talent, experience, and knowledge of all members of our community to develop lifelong learners, equipped to think critically in an ever-changing, global society.



OVERVIEW

The Wachusett Regional School District seeks to ensure meaningful student growth and promote social-emotional well-being in a safe and nurturing environment. A vital component in fulfilling the District's mission is a comprehensive plan to establish and maintain timely and effective communication with all stakeholders. This plan will provide clarity on the flow of information between our schools and the WRSD community.

The focus of this plan is the wide dissemination of information relevant to large groups of stakeholders throughout the WRSD community. Individual communication, such as that between a parent and teacher or school administrator will always be handled on a case-by-case basis and not subject to the procedures outlined in this plan. As always, parents who have questions or are concerned about their student's specific experiences in school should contact the school directly so that their concerns can be quickly addressed.

FUNDAMENTALS

The WRSD Communication Plan will:

- Define target audiences and the types of information related to each.
- Establish clear expectations for families, staff, and community members.
- Provide details on all methods of communication in use throughout the district.
- Ensure that communication practices support transparency and accountability.
- Provide context for identifying potential areas for improvement in communication.

TARGET AUDIENCES

Internal

- Administrators
- School Committee
- Staff
- Students
- Transportation Providers

External

- Community Members
- Parents
- Parent/Teacher Organizations
- Town Officials



INFORMATION TYPES

Type	Audience	Examples
Academic Notices	Internal & External	Report cards, MCAS schedules
Administrative Items	Internal & External	SC meetings, reports, admin functions
Athletics & Extracurricular	External	Registration, schedules, clubs
Community Interest Items	External	Town events, fliers
District-Wide News	External	Newsletters, school calendar updates
Emergency Situations	Internal & External	Events that disrupt school or busing
Requests for Feedback	Internal & External	Surveys, forms
School Closures & Delays	External	Snow days, delays, early releases
School-Specific News	Internal & External	Special events, concerts,
Staff Notices	Internal	HR items, training, staff meetings

COMMUNICATION METHODS

- Broadcast Email
- Broadcast Phone Messages
- Broadcast SMS Text Messages
- District and School Websites
- Internal Email
- Public Meetings/Presentations
- Social Media
- WRSD Mobile App

COMMUNICATION MATRIX

The table below outlines the most likely means of communication to be used based on information type. There may be times when the methods deviate from those shown depending on the circumstances.



Information Type	Broadcast Email	Broadcast Phone Message	Broadcast SMS Text Message	District & School Websites	Internal Email	Public Meetings/ Presentations	Social Media	WRSD Mobile App
Academic Notices	✓	✓		✓				
Administrative Items				✓	✓	✓		
Athletics and Extracurricular	✓			✓			✓	✓
Community Interest Items	✓			✓		✓	✓	
District-Wide News	✓			✓				✓
Emergency Situations	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Requests for Feedback	✓			✓		✓		
School Closures and Delays	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
School-Specific News	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	
Staff Notices					✓			

COMMUNICATION METHOD DETAILS

Broadcast Email

- Broadcast email is the most frequently used method of communication between WRSD and families. This includes the Superintendent’s *Wachusett News*.
- By default, all parent and guardian email addresses in PowerSchool are synchronized with the District’s notification system (School Messenger) on a nightly basis.
- Email addresses for staff are updated in School Messenger weekly.
- All recipients of email sent through School Messenger may opt out by clicking the unsubscribe link provided at the bottom of each message.



- All District and school administrators have access to School Messenger email broadcasts for the purposes of communicating with families and staff.

Broadcast Phone Messages

- Broadcast phone messages are used less frequently than email in order to minimize disruptions for families.
- Phone messages are generally reserved for the most time-sensitive information such as school closings and attendance reporting.
- By default, all parent and guardian phone numbers in PowerSchool are synchronized with the District's notification system (School Messenger) on a nightly basis.
- General phone messages as well as those related to weather-related closures and delays are only sent to phone numbers designated as "home" numbers in PowerSchool.
- Urgent phone messages, related to emergency situations that disrupt school or busing, are sent to all phone numbers on file.
- Phone numbers for staff are updated in School Messenger weekly.
- All District and school administrators have access to School Messenger phone broadcasts for the purposes of communicating with families and staff.

Broadcast SMS Text Messages

- In the fall of 2021, the District began preparations for offering families a text message option to be used for school closures or delays and emergency situations.
- In the fall of 2022, parents will have access to a contact management system that will allow them to customize preferences for receiving calls, emails, and text messages.
- Parents and guardians must opt-in to receive text messages and may opt-out any time.
- Only district administrators have access to School Messenger SMS text broadcasts for the purposes of reporting school closures or delays and emergency situations.

District & School Websites

- Each school, as well as the Central Office, maintains a public website for the purposes of making essential information readily available to all stakeholders.
- Personnel designated by the principal at each school are responsible for maintaining and updating the school's website.
- To the extent practicable, the types of information presented, as well as the navigational structure of each website, will follow a standard format, though some styles will differ.
- All events affecting school operating hours are posted on all District websites in a timely manner.
- All District websites are ADA compliant and were reviewed by the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights in January 2021.



Internal Email

- All District employees and members of the WRSDC are issued a “wrsd.net” email account to be used for all District-related email correspondence.
- Various email groups are maintained which allow for efficient communication with staff members by location and/or department.
- All staff members have the ability to send messages to most email groups.
- Only members of the WRSD Executive Staff have the ability to send messages to all employees.

Public Meetings & Presentations

- All meetings of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee and its subcommittees are open to the public.
- The Superintendent frequently presents slideshows during full committee meetings which typically highlight items from the Superintendent’s report.
- District representatives may also present information at various public meetings hosted by member towns.

Social Media

- Social media platforms may be used by District and school administrators to share items of public interest.
- Social media posts are intended to enhance the delivery of information between our schools and communities and will not be used as a sole source of important information.

WRSD Mobile App

- The WRSD Mobile App is available for iOS and Android.
- The app is updated regularly to provide easy access to a number of resources including:
 - District Calendar
 - District News
 - Lunch Menus
 - School Contact Information
 - WRHS Athletic Schedules

SUMMARY

This plan will be updated annually to ensure that it contains accurate and relevant information.