

Riverside School District 96 Communication & Branding Guidelines

January 2025

INTRODUCTION

Effective communication is essential to the success of any public school district. At Riverside School District 96, it is our responsibility to communicate all district and school news to the Riverside community and district stakeholders. This guide serves as a resource to ensure district communication is professional, on-brand, and recognizable to internal and external audiences.

The district brand is more than our logo. A strong and cohesive visual identity and voice evokes trust and reinforces our mission, vision, values, and strategic plan goals.

Transparency and consistency are priorities of this plan. The district utilizes multiple communication channels to reach all stakeholders. A provided communication method chart shares a clear strategy for how, when, and to whom communication should be delivered. District stakeholders include staff, school board members, parents & caregivers, students, community partners, and the media. Communication channels include our website, social media pages, email, phone alerts, and media outlets.

A point of contact progression chart is also included with clear channels for stakeholders to reach the correct contact closest to the area of concern. The district is a safe environment for two-way communication, as exemplified through the District 96 Family and Community Engagement Guidelines.

These communication and branding guidelines reflect our dedication to student achievement and community engagement. Adhering to these standards ensures that all stakeholders are consistently informed about the district's goals, initiatives, and events in a unified way. Together, we are telling the district story.



Riverside School District 96

Board of Education Members

Wesley Muirhead President
Joel Marhoul Vice President
Stephanie Gunn Board Secretary
David Barsotti
Salina Claps
Dan Hunt
Marlowe Kachlic

District Administration

Martha Ryan-Toye Superintendent of Schools
Angela Dolezal Director of Teaching and Learning
Jim Fitton Director of Finance and Operations/CSBO
Nora Geraghty Director of Special Education and Student Services
Don Tufano Director of Innovation & Instructional Technology

Schools and Building Administrators

Ames Elementary School Todd Gierman
Blythe Park Elementary School Casimira Gorman
Central Elementary School Peter Gatz
Hollywood Elementary School Kim Hefner
Hauser Junior High April Mahy; Chris Harvalis, Assistant Principal

BOARD POLICY — related to communication

2:140 Communications To and From the Board

2:230 Public Comments at Board of Education Meetings

5:125 Personal Technology and Social Media

6:235 Access to Electronic Networks

7:310 Restrictions on Publications - Elementary Schools

8:10 Connection with the Community

8:25 Advertising and Distributing Materials in Schools Provided by Non-School Related Entities

8:95 Parental Involvement

MISSION

Empowering learners through meaningful educational opportunities that reflect the knowledge, skills and experiences needed for future success as engaged citizens.

MOTTO

Empowering learners for life.

VISION

Meaningful educational learning opportunities must:

- Foster student passion for learning.
- Celebrate and reward curiosity, creativity, innovation and experimentation.
- Close opportunity and equity gaps to ensure high levels of achievement and expectations for all learners.
- Nurture the “whole child” and empower learners to grow socially, emotionally and physically, showing respect for self, others and community.
- Embrace individual differences and support learners in building their understanding of cultural awareness, diversity and inclusion.
- Invest in high quality staff who are lifelong learners, effective collaborators and instructors.
- Create relevant and authentic learning experiences that extend beyond the text and classroom and provide real life application.
- Allocate resources, including facilities, to enhance learning and teaching and achieve the mission.

VALUES

- Respect and Responsibility
- Agility and Resilience
- Collaboration and Engagement
- Equity and Inclusion
- Innovation and Creativity
- Continuous Improvement and Commitment to Excellence
- Empathy and Compassion

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS 2021–2026

- Student Growth and Achievement Goal: Ensure high levels of learning for all students.
- Learning Environment and Culture Goal: Cultivate a safe, secure and inclusive learning environment that is responsive to the evolving needs of each student.
- High-Quality Staff Goal: Recruit, develop, and retain exceptional personnel for all positions.
- Family and Community Partnerships Goal: Build a strong support system by engaging families, partners and the greater community to meet the needs of all students.
- Stewardship of Resources Goal: Develop and sustain effective, efficient and equitable use of all resources to optimize the operations for improved student achievement and fiscal responsibility.

COMMUNICATION METHOD CHART

TYPE OF COMMUNICATION	WEBSITE	PHONE ALERT	EMAIL	SOCIAL MEDIA	MEDIA
Emergency Alert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
School Closing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Event Promotion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Announcements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
General Info	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Campaigns	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

See also: Communication Tactics
 See also: Methods of Communication Best Practices

COMMUNICATION TACTICS

METHOD	NOTES
Social Media	District account: promotional School accounts: after the fact Cross promote with school PTO accounts
Website Event	Pulled from shared Outlook calendar; use standard naming conventions when adding to the District calendar
Website Homepage Letter	From Superintendent and Principals, on respective homepages; update message quarterly
Website Photo Gallery	Update images quarterly; add captions; keep 4-8 photos in the carousel
Website News	Longer form messages; can modify for other channels; select to share to district or individual school homepage(s)
Email	Quarterly announcements from Superintendent; Weekly emails from Principals; Emergency Alerts as needed
Phone Alert	Use standard boilerplate for recurring alerts
External Poster	Displayed around town
Internal Poster	Displayed in district buildings
Handout/Flyer	Sent home with students
Print Mailing (I.e. Community Report)	Direct mailing to all 60546 residents & businesses
Media	
Partner Channel	Cross-promotion from community partner

See also: Communication Method Chart

See also: Methods of Communication Best Practices

POINTS OF CONTACT PROGRESSION CHART

TOPIC	1st Contact	2nd Contact	3rd Contact	4th Contact	5th Contact
Behavior/ Discipline	Teacher/ Resource Teacher (if applicable)	Social Worker	Principal	Superintendent	School Board
Buildings and Grounds	Principal	Director of Buildings & Grounds	Director of Finance & Operations	Superintendent	School Board
Classroom/ Instruction	Teacher	Principal	Director of Teaching & Learning	Superintendent	School Board
Curriculum	Teacher	Principal	Director of Teaching & Learning	Superintendent	School Board
District Policy	Superintendent	School Board			
EL	EL Coordinator	Director of Teaching & Learning			
Early Childhood/ Preschool	Director of Special Ed & Student Services	Early Learner Coordinator	Superintendent	School Board	
Fees/ PushCoin	Registrar	Director of Finance & Operations	Superintendent	School Board	
Food Services	Food Service Manager	Director of Finance & Operations	Principal	Superintendent	School Board
Homelessness /McKinney- Vento	Registrar	Director of Special Ed & Student Services			
Nurse/Medical	School Nurse	Lead Nurse			
School/Other	Principal	Superintendent	School Board		
Special Education	Teacher	Principal	Director of Special Ed & Student Services		

TOPIC	1st Contact	2nd Contact	3rd Contact	4th Contact	5th Contact
Technology	Teacher	Principal	Director of Technology		
Transportation	Director of Special Ed & Student Services				
District Office	Ames	Blythe	Central	Hollywood	Hauser
708-447-5007	708-447-0759	708-447-2168	708-447-1106	708-485-7630	708-447-3896

See also: [D96 Family and Community Engagement Guidelines](#)

See also: [Staff Directory](#)

BRAND GUIDE

Voice

Professional while friendly, informative yet succinct.

The District voice is professional yet approachable and not overly formal. Use clear, concise, inclusive language.

Logo

The logo was created in 2021 by district staff member Linda Roberto. It includes the Village of Riverside’s iconic water tower and the district name.


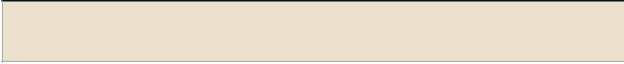





The logo can be used without the district name in certain instances. Examples include when the logo and district name both appear in the header or title, and on the website.

The logo should not appear twice on one page/screen or be otherwise overused (such as appearing on every slide of a presentation). The logo should appear in the footer or occasionally the top left of a document.

When printed, the logo should not be less than 1” tall. Clearance around the logo should be equal or greater to the width of half the logo. Do not stretch, distort, or alter the logo. If printed on color paper, the icon should be black. [Other color variations available?]

Colors

The main colors used in any D96 design should be the primary colors from the logo. District-wide flyers should be printed on white paper. Digital flyers can incorporate the logo colors as the background. A secondary color palette can include each school’s primary logo color.

	Dark Teal: #103E41; 16, 62, 65
	Cream: #EBE1CD; 235, 225, 205
	Ames: #0F5286; 15, 82, 134
	Blythe: #1A7ABD; 26, 122, 189
	Central: #B21010; 178, 16, 16
	Hollywood: #1833DB; 24, 51, 219
	Hauser: #1436BD; 20, 54, 189

Font

Arial is a widely available sans serif font and is the default in many applications. Limit yourself to this or another comparable font family. Do not mix more than one font family. The minimum font size is 12 pt.

Body text should be Arial. Headlines can use a heavier weight to stand out. The narrow variant can be used when there is limited space for subordinate text. A subheading should use a smaller size than the heading. Use no more than three weights in a single document or more than three sizes.

Inter is the website's featured font. It is specifically designed for computer screens for its increased readability. Use Inter when designing web based materials, if available.

Messaging

Ask yourself: is this concise, accessible, and on-brand?

When district communication is sent on a regular basis (e.g. weekly updates), strive to send it at a consistent day/time.

Capitalize district and formal positions when referring to the full name (e.g. District 96; Riverside School District 96; the district; The Central principal attended the meeting. Central Principal Pete Gatz attended the meeting.)

Images

Use high-res, well-lit photos of students, staff, and facilities. Confirm permissions of photographed students. Ensure representation of the district's diversity. Save images in a central location for possible future publicity use. [create shared Google folder]

Avoid generic stock photos. If a district-specific photo is not available, use the most authentic visual. Clip art should be used sparingly.

Methods of Communication Best Practices

Website — Maintain current messages, images, events, and live feed; [create guidelines for school and district homepage posting consistency]

Social Media — Relaxed language; use high res photos; include call to action; [use of #D96inspires or other hashtags?]

Email — Avoid image-only email signatures; double check spelling and dates; list announcements in order of importance or chronologically; keep recycled information (ICYMI) at the bottom

Phone Alert — Use standard boilerplate for recurring alerts

Media — Confirm with superintendent before sending a press release; use branded press release template; all media requests should be sent to building administrator or superintendent before responding

Possible Additions

-Templates Library with standard design elements; includes updating existing documents (family and community engagement guidelines; Kindergarten registration flyer; Parent presentation flyers; Early learner alumni registration flyer; monthly D96 Insider email, etc)

-Communication frequency chart

-Develop boilerplate messages for recurring alerts (medical, emergency, etc)

-Website audit — consistent pages/info across all schools