Evaluation of Waco ISD PR Plan

Planning & Preparation

Our team engaged in comprehensive and strategic planning to ensure a strong foundation for the Waco ISD public relations campaign. The campaign's planning phase reflected a clear understanding of target audiences, measurable objectives, and actionable tactics.

What did we study in the research phase?

- Key Publics–including parents/guardians, students, faculty and staff, Waco tax payers, and local media
- Informal Research–intercept interviews, media coverage analysis, institutional research reports, online surveys, focus groups, and competitor analysis.
- Formal Research– Surveys (Quantitative) and Focus Groups (Qualitative)

What change did we propose in the objectives

- The objective was to increase transparency, community awareness, and public engagement, while correcting misinformation and encouraging a stronger school spirit.
- For current students:
    - Improve students reported feelings of safety by 50% by the end of the 2025-2026 school year.
    - Decrease absenteeism by 30% by the end of the 2025-2026 school year.
    - Increase school pride by 50% by the end of the 2025-2026 school year.
    - Strategy: Launch Campus Confidence Campaign and implement the Lion Pride Campaign
- For current parents:
    - Decrease parental safety concerns by 50% by the end of the 2025-2026 school year.
    - Improve knowledge of school program offerings and supplemental educational opportunities by 20% by the end of the 2025-2026 school year.

    - Improve parent reported concerns over the quality of education offered at Waco ISD by 30% by the end of the 2025-2026 school year.
    - Strategy: Launch Safe and Sound Campus Confidence campaign and launch Learning Learning Leaders campaign
- For current faculty:
    - Increase faculty job satisfaction by 40% by the end of the 2025-2026 school year.
    - Increase faculty retention rates by 20% by the end of the 2025-2026 school year.
    - Strategy: Launch Retain and Sustain campaign

How is our change tracking?

- The plan tracked well because the messaging consistently centered on transparency, student needs, and long-term district stability, meeting the community's demand for clarity.
- Early communication emphasized awareness, while later phases emphasized clarity and persuasion.
- The district collected feedback from over 1,200 survey respondents, compiled facility audit reports for 19 campuses, and held 4 focus groups prior to campaign launch.
- Multiple formats were used: infographics, FAQs, print mailers, videos, and community presentations. Message clarity was rated highly by internal reviews and community feedback at forums.

Implementation

What worked?

- The multi-channel approach (social media, newsletters, community forums, direct mail, local news) ensured wide exposure.
- Using both digital and face-to-face communication built trust with our internal and external audiences and allowed for real-time clarification of misconceptions.
- The timeline-driven strategy also allowed the district to slowly deepen community understanding.
- Using social media for frequent updates kept families informed and engaged between larger events.
- Partnering with local news helped extend credibility and reach beyond the district's owned channels.

What didn't?

- Initial reliance on digital communication overlooked households with limited internet access, creating a gap in message reach.
- Some events, such as early parent forums, were scheduled at times inconvenient for working families, limiting participation.

- Overlapping messages from different school departments sometimes caused confusion about event dates or initiative details.

Noise we encountered

- Competing narratives on social media from community members sharing outdated or inaccurate information.
- External news stories about unrelated local safety incidents occasionally undermined the positive messaging around district safety improvements.
- Seasonal distractions (holidays, testing season) drew attention away from certain planned communications and events.

Response to feedback

- Adjusted event scheduling to include evening and weekend options for working parents.
- Increased direct communication from school principals and trusted teachers to cut through misinformation and personalize the message.
- Launched “myth vs. fact” posts on social media to clarify common misconceptions shared by the community.
- Began using short, consistent safety updates in all newsletters to keep the conversation steady and proactive.

Impact & Results

Number of messages sent to media and activities designed:

- The campaign launched with an estimated 60+ social media posts across district platforms.
- Surveys and feedback indicated that over 80% of the target audience (parents, staff, students, and community members) could accurately recall key elements of the district's safety message after the campaign.
- 12 press releases to local news outlets, and multiple email newsletters each semester. Additionally, a full calendar of activities was developed, including spirit weeks, safety meetings, parent orientations, and staff town halls.

Number of messages placed and activities implemented:

- Success will be tracked through media monitoring, internal communications logs, and event records.
- We anticipate 80% of press releases will result in earned media placements.
- The full slate of planned activities — including monthly student events, quarterly faculty town halls, and parent orientations — will be executed as scheduled.

Number who received messages and participated in activities:

- Targeted social media posts are expected to reach at least 80% of enrolled families, while newsletters will track open rates of 50% or higher.

- Event participation will be recorded through attendance sign-ins and digital RSVP systems.

Number who attended to messages and activities:

- Engagement will be measured using metrics such as social media shares, comments, and likes, as well as qualitative feedback from surveys.
- Event attendance will be evaluated against expected capacity, aiming for 60%+ turnout at key events like safety meetings and school pride activities.

Report to Management

https://www.canva.com/design/DAGkinag8s8/hs201w6ENYY3NXWMuT-UmA/edit?utm_content=DAGkinag8s8&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton

The evaluation confirms that our plan is successfully laying the foundation for long-term cultural change at Waco ISD — creating safer, more engaged, and more confident school communities.