

Newsletter Submission Guidelines

Deadline

Submissions are due to wildcatsweekly@woodsideschool.us by Wednesday evening prior to the following Monday's newsletter.

Use a Short, Descriptive Title

- Try to stick to 3-5 words, such as "Room Parents Needed" or "Basketball Sign-Ups This Week".
- If you need to add more details up-front, try a subhead that is no more than one sentence long:

Ex.:

Basketball Sign-Ups This Week

Sign up online, or in Sellman Pavilion from 3:10-4:30pm January 2-6, 2017.

Keep Submission to 70-100 Characters (approx. 30 words max)

Try to keep your article no longer than 70-100 characters (excluding titles, subheads, and links). If you're working in Google Docs, you can check your character count by highlighting your text and selecting "Tools > Word count" from the menu bar.

Keeping it short allows us to present a lot of content to our readers in a small space. Last year's research confirmed for us that readers had a hard time with lengthy content, and were OK with clicking through to a webpage or flyer for details.

A few tips for keeping it short:

- Stick to the basics - who, what, where, when, and how.
- Break it up into several shorter articles -- one topic per article is best.
For example: We created two short articles from one submission regarding fall sports sign ups. One article for volleyball, and one for flag football works better for readers than one article talking about both sports, even when signups are happening at the same time.
- Bulleted lists or short sentences are best.
- Use an image (which will appear next to your article in the newsletter), a corresponding web page, or pdf flyer to provide additional details and "color".
- If you have enough information to require a web page, signup form, or flyer, it is your responsibility to create that page, form, or document. If you need help, just ask. We're happy to provide some instruction on how to create these items yourself.
- Things that belong on web pages (the school website, school-approved instagram, or similar):
 - Persistent information (info that will be relevant for more than one week)
 - Lengthy or detailed information
 - Forms of any kind
 - Additional images

Add an Image

For each article, you have the opportunity to include one image, to appear along-side the article, usually to the left. Images are not required, but tend to generate more interest, and more clicks. That said, we have a pretty small space to work with. Below are a few guidelines for choosing images to go with your articles.

Select an image that is reminiscent of an “icon”, meaning it’s small, graphical in nature, simple and without much detail.

- If your image includes text, make sure it’s a few large, legible words.
- If you have a group shot (several people), and would like to feature just one person’s head or torso, it’s OK to send in the group shot with a request to crop the image down to just that person. We’re happy to help.
- If you are using a student in your image, please ensure we have permission to use their image. There is a short list of students for whom we do not have permission in the office - please ask for help in the office if needed - before you submit to the newsletter.
- If possible, resize your image to 200x200 pixels max, before you submit. If you need help resizing or cropping your image, please ask.

Calls to Action

For many articles, in addition to conveying some information, you’ll want to ask your readers to follow up somehow -- with a “call to action”. Examples include: filling out a form, going to a web page for more details, emailing someone to volunteer, and downloading a flyer. There are certainly others, too. Please confirm you links work!

For each article that requires readers to “do something”, include one clear call to action at the end of the article. Keep it short and directive. For example:

- Register Now
- Learn More
- View the Flyer
- Volunteer Today

If you choose to include a call to action when submitting your article, please also include the appropriate webpage link or PDF. If your PDF is already online, that’s best. If not, send it in. We can help post it, and teach you how to post it yourself next time.

Email Address

Sometimes you’ll want to include an email address to contact for more information, in addition to your “call to action”. In these cases, please include the email address in your article, and we’ll be sure to turn it into a link. For example, you might send in: “Please contact Michelle Ahlstrom (mckeenahlstrom@gmail.com) for more information.” We’ll convert that to: “Please contact [Michelle Ahlstrom](mailto:Michelle.Ahlstrom) more information.” in the newsletter.