



For the future of every student

CLASS TITLE: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

BASIC FUNCTION:

Under the direction of the Superintendent, plans, develops, directs, and implements a comprehensive public and staff information program; advises upon and manages effective media, community and public relations; builds community partnerships and promotes understanding and support for the District through public awareness; serves as a spokesperson for the District in media relations.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

The Director of Communications has the primary responsibility of facilitating communication and outreach as part of a strategic educational marketing program designed to create and maintain a favorable public image and "brand" for the District. Key responsibilities include (1) developing, directing and maintaining a strategic departmental plan with measurable outcomes aligned with the mission and vision of the school system; (2) maintaining productive relationships with governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as local, state, and national media; (3) leading the development and coordination of all internal and external communications/media including video and the District's web presence; (4) serving as chief spokesperson for the District; and (5) supervising assigned department staff.

REPRESENTATIVE DUTIES:

ESSENTIAL DUTIES:

Strategic Communications Planning and Marketing

Creates, directs and adapts an integrated communications, community engagement and strategic marketing plan. Coordinates a public relations campaign to enhance the visibility, stature and presence of the District and its employees in the community; including, systematically planning, organizing and coordinating the flow of public information to the community pertaining to the District, general school events and activities, and initiatives; identifies opportunities for positive media coverage to reach key audiences; anticipates emerging issues and concerns, and develops appropriate communications.

Works closely with District stakeholders to facilitate communication and outreach as part of a strategic educational marketing program designed to build community partnerships in support of the district's mission and goals; provides services, support and resources to district personnel in the areas of program communication, internal and external communication, and coordination of various events and activities benefitting student achievement and elevating community awareness for the Ventura Unified School District.

Initiates the use of broadcast, internet, intranet and other mass media or emerging communication technologies that assist internal and external audiences with navigating the school system.

Develops and maintains the VUSD brand, its quality control and appropriateness throughout all print and media materials; designs layout and content for brochures, publications, newsletters and promotional materials to communicate information and ensure adherence to District policies, regulations, and guidelines concerning public information.

Monitors user-generated content (such as conversation threads, video posts, blog comments, tweets, etc.) within VUSD social network pages, responds to inquiries and removes inappropriate content.

Participates in local school and community events to develop and promote positive community relations

with city and county leaders, community and parent groups, area agencies, and businesses.

Consults with school-based and district office administrators, and staff to obtain information on current events, activities, programs, and other topics of general interest to the public.

Collaborates with the Technology Services Department to further the progress of communications technology to promote the quality of interchange necessary for internal and external audiences.

Public Relations Management

In coordination with the Superintendent, serves as spokesperson for the District in media relations including directly responding to media inquiries; establishes and maintains positive working relationships with members of the print, radio, television, and social media; maintains confidentiality of sensitive and privileged information.

Coordinates public appearances and events for Executive Staff, Leadership Team, and School Board members, as appropriate.

Writes and edits press releases on behalf of school sites, the Superintendent and Executive Cabinet; coordinates and conducts all school district news releases and media conferences.

Formulates and advises on media and public relations strategies related to crisis management or special events at the school site and District level. Serves as a primary contact during emergencies and provides immediate responsiveness, including receiving and assessing information, cooperating with news media, law enforcement and others, and informing appropriate District personnel.

Assists with requests from the media and the public for public records information. Tracks, reports, evaluates and as appropriate, responds to feedback received through online media.

Leadership and Management

Oversees and supervises staff responsible for District web content development and management, providing guidance and oversight for the design and functionality of the District's online tools, including web pages, graphic media and audio-video content

Supervises assigned department personnel and ensuring the provision of excellent customer service. Directs, counsels, evaluates performance and motivates assigned staff; recommends hires, transfers, reassignment, and disciplinary actions. Plans, coordinates, arranges and conducts training activities for personnel.

Assists in the organization/coordination of the Superintendent's Executive Cabinet-level initiatives as required by the Superintendent and/or Executive Cabinet members.

Assists with the research, preparation and publication or posting of a variety of documents for the school district (e.g. annual reports, budget presentations, curriculum presentations for parents, print media articles, etc.).

Develops and maintains a program budget.

Oversees outsourcing of print media for the school system.

Prepares and delivers oral and written reports, recommendations and presentations to the Board, committees, parents and others on District programs and services.

Visit school sites on a regular basis to monitor the effectiveness of communication and public relations activities.

Other duties as assigned that support the overall objective of the position.

KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES:

KNOWLEDGE OF:

Principles, methods, procedures and strategies related to a public information, communications and community relations program.

Management skills to analyze programs, policies and operational needs.

District goals, needs and procedures.

Legal mandates, policies, regulations and guidelines related to the distribution of news and public information.

Methods, techniques and procedures pertaining to the preparation of news releases, news copy, promotional brochures, electronic medium and other informational materials.

Strategic planning, public relations, special event planning and project management.

Traditional and social media marketing techniques.

Web page development, use and maintenance.

Budget preparation and control.

Well developed knowledge of and skill at using English grammar, punctuation, vocabulary and spelling, and editing and proofreading techniques.

Strong human relations skill to network, enhance community partnerships and collaborate with diverse individuals and groups.

Interpersonal skills using tact, patience and courtesy.

Personal computer based software programs that support this level of work, including but not limited to advanced skills in word processing, spreadsheet and presentation.

Effective oral communication to speak in public, conduct meetings and make presentations.

ABILITY TO:

Effectively and efficiently plan, organize and coordinate a public information, communications and community relations program.

Systematically and skillfully organize, design, layout and edit public information and promotional materials.

Coordinate and direct communications, personnel, projects, and management functions, to meet District needs and assure smooth and efficient Department activities.

Supervise, train and evaluate the performance of assigned personnel.

Seek out and cultivate news and information resources.

Remain informed of social media platforms and social media marketing trends and strategies.

Write clear, structured, articulate and persuasive proposals.

Communicate effectively in oral, written and electronic formats utilizing a journalistic and technical writing style.

Prepare and deliver oral presentations.

Analyze situations accurately and develop an effective course of action.

Creatively and effectively match resources to needs.

Understand and follow oral and written instructions.

Establish and maintain cooperative and effective working relationships with news media, community leaders and District administrators.

Work confidentially with discretion.

Operate standard office equipment.

Work independently while establishing and maintaining appropriate project deadlines.

Travel to various locations and work flexible hours.

Maintain regular and consistent attendance.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:

Any combination equivalent to a Bachelor's degree in English, Communications, Journalism, Marketing, Public Relations or related field, and three years of experience in coordinating, developing, and implementing communications, media, and public relations activities including writing, editing, designing and layout of publications.

LICENSES AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

A valid California driver's license.

WORKING CONDITIONS:**ENVIRONMENT:**

Office environment.

Driving a vehicle to conduct work.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

Ability to function indoors in an office environment engaged in work of a moderately sedentary nature.

Ambulatory ability to sit for extended periods of time, to utilize computers and peripheral equipment, and to move about various school district, community or related locations.

Near visual acuity to read printed materials and computer screen.

Auditory ability to carry on conversations in person and over the phone.

Retrieve work materials from overhead, waist, and ground level files.

Manual and finger dexterity to write, keyboard, and operate computer and other standard office equipment.