

Chief Communications Officer
New Hanover County Schools

Job Description

Class: Administrative
Division: Superintendent
Department: Communications and Outreach

TITLE: Chief Communications Officer

QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Master's degree or higher in public relations, administration, journalism, education, communication or equivalent combination of education and experience.
2. Six to ten years of experience in communications, media, public relations, school leadership or public information; experience in publishing and electronic media editing preferred.
3. Other qualifications as the Superintendent and Board may find appropriate.

REPORTS TO: Superintendent

JOB GOAL: To provide leadership in translating the district's educational philosophy, goals, and objectives into communication strategies that directly benefit students, staff, the district and school community stakeholders. Develop, achieve, and maintain the implementation of a comprehensive public relations program to promote the school system's activities, programs and relationships throughout the county and with external agencies and organizations. Ensure the public relations and communications programs align with and promote the district's strategic plan, initiatives and programs.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Follow all rules, policies and procedures of New Hanover County Schools, along with local, state and federal regulations pertaining to school system issues.
2. Lead efforts in planning, developing, coordinating, promoting, branding and publicizing the school system through print, digital, broadcast productions, and all other communication methods to reach the widest scope of public viewers.
3. Provide oversight and direction related to district relations, media relations, communications, parental and community involvement, volunteer programs, and legislative matters.
4. Interact and foster collaborative working relationships with government, community, industry officials, the Superintendent and the Board of Education in the representation and development of strategic program initiatives and in policy development, legislation, and lobbying to promote and sustain district initiatives and goals.

5. Serve as the point of contract for governmental agencies and legislators; maintain knowledge of legislative agendas and work with agencies and organizations to promote the well-being of the district.
6. Direct facets of the daily operations of the Office of the Superintendent to ensure compliance with board policies and regulations and local, state and federal laws and regulations. Provide communication counsel and support to the Superintendent to ensure the district's strategy, objectives and performance are effectively communicated to external and internal audiences.
7. Analyze and manage sensitive issues to ensure compliance and a consistent response for resolution. Advise district leaders on probable public relations consequences relating to shifts in existing programs, policies or other issues, and develop positive message branding in response to shifts.
8. Provide guidance in conflict resolution of complex issues and needs, and during emergency and critical situations in support of district and community objectives.
9. Prepare, contribute and oversee the preparation of reports, briefings, presentations and responses on strategic issues as appropriate, and in response to public information requests.
10. Serve as the district's point of contact for news media outlets by assisting representatives in obtaining background information, setting up interviews, providing story ideas, and handling problem areas of coverage. Analyze education trends to develop story lines publicizing district initiatives and accomplishments.
11. Assist principals, staff members, program directors and others in publicizing and promoting any performance, exhibition, display or special program sponsored by the schools and open to the public.
12. Supervise and conduct personnel administration duties for direct report subordinates, including hiring and firing, evaluating, assigning special duties, monitoring attendance and travel reports, and granting leave.
13. Perform other duties and responsibilities as requested.

The above statements describe the general nature and level of work being performed by individuals assigned to this job. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all responsibilities and duties required of personnel so employed.

Terms of Employment: Twelve month work year/Contract/FLSA Exempt

Starting Salary and/or Grade: SA VII

Evaluation: Performance of this job will be evaluated in accordance with provisions of the Board and local policy on evaluation of personnel.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- Ability to communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing; ability to communicate well with school personnel, employees, and news media.
- Ability to provide leadership and to supervise the planning, development and implementation of a comprehensive public relations program.
- Demonstrate functional knowledge of computers and all aspects of the Microsoft Office Professional software programs and Google Suite.
- Proficiency in communications and marketing technology, tools and capabilities.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships as necessitated by work assignment.
- Comply with confidentiality requirements in local, state and federal policies and statutes.
- Physical ability and dexterity to perform the duties and responsibilities of the job.