

# Sonoma County Office of Education – Job Description

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Classified Management

## COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

### **Definition:**

Performs a variety of highly specialized and confidential duties that support public information and communications for the office of the County Superintendent of Schools. Acts as a liaison between the county, districts, office of elections, emergency services, and other state agencies in the educational mission of the County Superintendent. Composes, designs, edits, proofreads, and distributes print, electronic, and multimedia materials produced for internal and public consumption.

### **Distinguishing Characteristics:**

This position requires the ability to maintain confidential and extremely sensitive information; in-depth proficiency in programs used to compose and design high-quality publications, including but not limited to Adobe Creative Suite, Canva, Microsoft Suite and Google products; the ability to coordinate multiple projects, events and exercise independent judgment; the ability to proofread, design, and edit professional correspondence, publications, and website content; the ability to comprehend education, board, and County Superintendent policy and government code requirements in support of districts, agencies, and the county office; and the ability to use a digital camera to take quality photographs and video as well as edit photos and simple videos.

### **Supervision Exercised and Received:**

The Community Engagement Specialist reports to the Director of Communications and the County Superintendent. This position serves under general supervision and direction for standing routines and schedules. May exercise partial leadership over other staff as assigned. May oversee work of contractors for graphic design or video production.

### **Example of Duties and Responsibilities:**

*Duties and Responsibilities may include, but are not limited to, the following:*

- Serves as a point of contact for interagency questions between the County Office of Education, local school districts, county, and state agencies. Responds to inquiries, compiles informational materials, and conducts research of issues and topics.
- Acts as primary liaison between the County Superintendent's Office and county and community agencies and school districts as needed.
- Works with the Director of Communications to ensure family-facing communications are translated into Spanish, as needed.
- Covers all aspects of duties of the Director of Communications when needed.
- Creates and produces written materials used for internal and external purposes, including website content, ensuring documents are accessible according to the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Composes, designs, proofreads, and edits office and agency publications.
- Ensures consistency of the County Office of Education branding in all designs.
- Maintains databases of information, addresses, and contacts to support distribution of written and electronic communications.

- Manages the County Office of Education social media channels and strategies through effective, professional communication and advertising.
- Promotes the County Office of Education programs, services, and recognition activities through creation and maintenance of visual displays.
- Assists with maintaining all school district trustee contact information, election information, and trustee resignation/appointment information; maintains school district trustee archival data.
- Gathers all school district emergency contact information and maintains this database for use and coordination with the County Office of Education, school district, county, and state emergency personnel and distributes emergency protocols to these groups.
- Plans and coordinates events and recognitions pertaining to school districts and other agencies, including but not limited to Classified School Employee of the Year and School Board Candidate Information Sessions and the Teacher of the Month program.
- Coordinates publication of the countywide Online Directory of Sonoma County Schools annually. Works with Information Technology, Human Resources, and district personnel to ensure correct and current contact information is reflected in the Online Directory.
- Provides photographs and simple videos on as-needed basis for department/SCOE-related publications, website, and social media channels.
- Serves as back up to coordinate student expulsions and student interdistrict transfer appeals, which are reviewed and adjudicated by the County Board of Education. Serves as primary contact between the school district, superintendent, County Board, legal staff, parents, and other administrators as needed with professionalism, empathy, and tact. Handles all administrative tasks associated with appeal hearings.
- Receives walk-in guests and telephone inquiries from a variety of individuals. Initiates and receives telephone calls, provides information, and resolves matters, or routes calls as approved.
- Performs outreach support for special projects, events, and activities involving multiple departments and/or locations as needed.
- Acts as the County Superintendent liaison with the state/county Office of Emergency Services.
- Acts as back up for the Administrative Operations Specialist, as needed.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

## **Employment Standards:**

### ***Knowledge of:***

- Thorough knowledge of proper English usage, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and proofreading/editing skills sufficient to write and review widely disseminated written communications.
- Working knowledge of computer-based software programs that support this level of work, including but not limited to word processing, spreadsheet, graphic design software, video editing software, and social media platform management.
- Appropriate and professional conduct for an office environment.
- Sufficient interpersonal skill to communicate technical concepts and sensitive issues to others and convey a positive, service-oriented image of the department and of education in the county.
- Maintain safe, neat, and orderly work practices.

### ***Ability to:***

- Prioritize and perform all of the relevant duties of the position with only minimal supervision.
- Communicate with a wide range of contacts within and outside the County Office of Education with tact, diplomacy, and courtesy, and in a manner that reflects positively on the department and the County Office of Education.

- Provide and receive constructive feedback in a collegial manner.
- Gain skills as needed through self-directed training.
- Coordinate and perform work with speed and accuracy.
- Interpret, explain, and apply knowledge of the County Office of Education and department organization, operations, programs, functions, and special department terminology.
- Compile and maintain complex and confidential records and prepare routine reports.
- Maintain confidential and sensitive written and oral information.
- Analyze situations accurately and adopt an effective course of action.
- Read, understand, interpret, and apply information from contracts, and state, federal, and local laws and regulations.
- Write confidential correspondence in a professional manner.
- Must be able to work effectively as part of a collaborative team devoted to high-quality work output, customer service, and positive client and agency relationships.
- Ability to speak and write in Spanish is preferred.

***Computer Skills:***

- Ability to do independent research online.
- Advanced Word Processing skills.
- In-depth proficiency in programs used to compose and design high-quality publications, including but not limited to Adobe Creative Suite, Canva, Microsoft Suite and Google products.
- Basic database skills, such as the ability to create a database in Excel or Google Sheets.

**Education and Experience:**

*Any combination of education and experience that would provide the knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be:*

***Education:***

- Completion of a Bachelor’s degree in English, journalism, marketing, communications or related discipline is preferred.

***Experience:***

- Three years of increasingly responsible administrative or communications work is preferred, but not required.

***Physical Abilities:***

*The physical abilities described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job.*

- The position requires ordinary ambulatory ability to retrieve work materials, intermittent walking, standing, stooping, and carrying.
- May need to occasionally lift up to twenty (20) pounds and in excess of twenty (20) pounds with assistance.
- Requires visual acuity sufficient to recognize people, words, and numbers.
- Requires hand-eye-arm and finger dexterity to use a personal computer keyboard, ten-key, and other common office equipment.  
Requires speaking and hearing ability sufficient to hear over phone and carry on routine conversations.

***Work environment:***

- Work is performed in an office environment with minimal exposure to health and safety considerations.

***Other Requirements:***

- Must be fingerprinted and a satisfactory Department of Justice records check must be received by SCOE, prior to employment.
- TB testing will be required upon employment.
- Must pass a pre-employment physical (if applicable).
- May be required to obtain first aid and CPR certificates within the first 6-12 months of employment.
- May be required to drive with or without students; some positions may require a current California driver license, proof of insurance, and possible participation in the DMV Pull Notice Program once employed.

***Other:***

- Revised: June 26, 2023
- FLSA Status: Exempt
- Bargaining Unit: Unrepresented
- Approved by: Personnel Commission