



COMMUNICATIONS STAFF WRITER

BASIC FUNCTION

Under general supervision, articulate internal and external communications of the District; develop written communications which promote understanding, satisfaction and support for Portland Public Schools through public awareness of the various activities and achievements of the student population and the District; convey and promote the District's Racial Educational Equity Policy.

REPRESENTATIVE DUTIES

The classification specification does not describe all duties performed by all incumbents within the class. This summary provides examples of typical tasks performed in this classification.

- Compose written and oral communications such as speeches, press releases, news conference materials, website content and social media posts to convey and articulate the District's mission; support individual schools, the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools in actively communicating Board actions, education policies and procedures, District programs and information campaigns. *"E"*
- Meet with designated staff to determine the broad framework of points and messages to cover in developing written materials and communications; research topics to augment communications with anecdotes and examples, considering the intended audiences; blend points, themes, positions, and messages with research to create informative, original and authentic communications. *"E"*
- Prepare responses to media inquiries regarding the District by providing timely, accurate information without disruption of school or District site operations as directed; assist with preparation and distribution of emergency communications; anticipate issues of potential volatility or debate and prepare responses to diffuse controversy. *"E"*
- Demonstrate a commitment to the Portland Public Schools Equity Initiative by developing a thorough knowledge and application of the district Racial Educational Equity Policy, Equity in Public Purchasing and Contracting and other board policies; participate in staff development, in-services and trainings related to diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace and in K – 12 education; model appropriate behaviors; develop, recommend, implement and communicate improvements to school and business practices with awareness and understanding of their impact in a racially and culturally diverse community. *"E"*
- Prepare and maintain of a variety of presentations, reports, email lists, records and files related to assigned activities. *"E"*
- Assure internal and external multimedia outlets and publications meet District objectives of communicating accurate, substantive and timely information; motivate others to understand their role and impact on the District's vision through proactive, sensitive and transparent communications. *"E"*
- Participate in and represent the District in meetings, workshops, conferences and professional activities. *"E"*
- Perform related duties as assigned.

Note: At the end of some of the duty statements there is an italicized "E", which identifies essential duties required of the classification. This is strictly for use in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CLASS

The Communications Staff Writer develops and provides public information relative to District programs and activities. The employee in this assignment is a highly skilled writer who crafts a wide variety of written and oral communications which articulate, convey and promote the educational mission, vision and values of the Portland Public Schools.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Knowledge of:

Writing, editing, social media and production of publications for print or web.

Communications media and their most effective uses, including print, radio, social media and television media.

The ethnic, cultural, geographic, and socio-economic diversity of the populations served by the District.

Ability to:

Compose clear and concise speeches, articles, reports and other communiqués.

Write speeches and messages that are informative and fit the style and personality of the speaker.

Research current and relevant information that express the viewpoints of the presenters.

Understand different oral communication styles and intended audiences.

Meet with groups and individuals to ascertain topics to be covered in communications.

Revise, edit and modify materials as requested.

Communicate effectively both orally and in writing.

Develop effective communications strategies and written materials for a diverse, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multilingual population.

Present information regarding District programs in a proactive, complete and media-sensitive manner.

Utilize cutting-edge technologies, including social and multi-media tools to foster communications.

Work on multiple projects at one time with constantly changing priorities and deadlines.

Communicate a culture of equity that is student centered.

Advocate, model, implement and communicate Portland Public School's Racial Educational Equity Initiative and board policies.

Learn and implement the PPS Equity in Public Purchasing and Contracting board policy.

Maintain confidentiality of highly sensitive information.

Act judiciously under pressure.

Model ethical behavior and communicate high expectations of ethical behavior to others.

Operate a variety of office machines, technologies and software.

Education, Training and Experience:

An Associate's degree in public relations, journalism, marketing, communications, liberal arts or sciences, or a related field and five (5) years of recent experience in preparing written communications, such as press releases, speechwriting, social media, news stories, and/or related materials is required. Experience working in or covering a school district, municipality or other public agency is preferred.

A Bachelor's degree in one of the identified majors will substitute for two (2) years of the required experience.

Experience working in a richly diverse school community and environment and the ability to read, write and speak Spanish are highly desirable.

Any other combination of education and experience that would likely provide the required knowledge and abilities may be considered.

Special Requirements:

Positions in this classification require the use of a personal automobile and possession of a valid driver's license.

Work hours will occasionally include irregular hours, evening and weekend activities and meetings and media, district, school and student functions.

WORKING CONDITIONS

The conditions herein are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Persons with certain disabilities may be capable of performing the essential duties of this class with or without reasonable accommodation, depending on the nature of the disability.

Work Environment: Work is performed primarily in an office environment and throughout the community with extensive media, student, parent and public contact and frequent interruptions. Work hours occasionally include irregular hours, evening and weekend activities, meetings and district, school and student functions.

Hazards: Potential conflict situations.

Physical Demands: Primary functions require sufficient physical ability and mobility to work in an office and travel throughout the community; dexterity of hands and fingers to operate a computer keyboard and other technologies and office equipment; sitting, standing and walking for extended periods of time; kneeling, bending at the waist; lifting, pushing, pulling and carrying equipment, supplies and materials weighing up to 25 pounds; repetitive hand movement and fine coordination to use a computer keyboard; emotional stability to work effectively under pressure and to keep all aspects of the job under control; hearing and speaking to exchange information in person or on the telephone; seeing to read, prepare and assure the accuracy of documents.

FLSA: Non-Exempt
Bargaining Unit: N/A
Salary Grade: 22

Approval Date: February 12, 2015
Revised December 6, 2016

Portland Public Schools recognizes the diversity and worth of all individuals and groups and their roles in society. The District is committed to equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in all its educational and employment activities. The District prohibits discrimination based on race; national or ethnic origin; color; sex; religion; age; sexual orientation; gender expression or identity; pregnancy; marital status; familial status; economic status or source of income; mental or physical disability or perceived disability; or military service.
Board of Education Policy 1.80.020-P