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## DIRECTOR – MEDIA RELATIONS

### **BASIC FUNCTION**

Under administrative direction, serve as spokesperson for Portland Public Schools and primary point-of-contact for multimedia outlets; manage external media communications, programs and staff developing news content, and inquiries from local, national and international media; ensure the dissemination of timely and accurate information; oversee district communications team members, television station staff and operations; promote the mission, vision, values, goals and achievements of the District, students and community served.

### **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.*

- Serve as district spokesperson; conduct live interviews and provide media relations support to schools, district leadership, the governing board and other District staff. “E”
- Manage multiple facets of print and television media relations; monitor media reports, keep impacted parties up to date about particular situations; answer and research inquiries from media and respond to public information requests. “E”
- Arrange media interviews, press conferences, media events and similar activities to keep the media informed of activities within the school district. “E”
- Work closely with digital media staff to implement on-line communications strategies. “E”
- Promote awareness surrounding district information, initiatives, programming and campaigns; share organization accomplishments, mission, vision, values, goals, successes. “E”
- Establish and maintain close working relationships with media outlets and contacts, focusing on members of print, radio and television media to ensure balanced, accurate coverage of the district. “E”
- Facilitate media interactions for the Superintendent of Schools, Board of Education and district leadership; assist in and prepare information and materials for message delivery; provide guidance, advice, coaching and training for district leaders around effective speaking and messaging techniques and delivery, provide a presence and support throughout community and media interactions. “E”
- Participate on communications leadership team to manage coordination of crisis communications during emergencies; work closely with others to report on and diffuse potentially volatile situations, assuring accurate, cohesive, consistent and timely responses and updates. “E”
- Research and work with internal stakeholders to obtain accurate information and assist with appropriate distribution of information with respect to student and employee privacy, PPS policies and legal requirements. “E”
- Maintain a working knowledge of significant developments in education and educational policy as well as of new and emergent communication technologies or trends and their uses as vehicles to support District communications goals. “E”
- Recommend and implement improvements for district communication products, technologies, strategies and campaigns and lead the development and implementation of district communication standards for assigned areas. “E”
- Work closely with communications department leadership, colleagues and staff on and across a variety of campaigns, initiatives and programs to ensure united and cohesive messages are delivered throughout the district and community. “E”
- Manage content team to develop PPS news channels and opportunities to promote positive messages and events which showcase the talents, qualities and abilities of the student population. “E”

- Coordinate special events and lead communication projects concerning the school district; promote awareness surrounding district information or initiatives and share PPS accomplishments, needs and goals. “E”
- Participate in planning and coordinating district programs, media events and press conferences; prepare work plans, strategies for information dissemination, press kits, talking points and related materials; collaborate with communications team and internal project leaders to identify, develop and promote opportunities to share district message and positive events. “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”
- Supervise the performance of assigned personnel; interview and select employees, assign, monitor and review work, provide corrective counseling and disciplinary actions, as necessary. “E”
- Monitor assigned budgets, approve expenditures in accordance with established policies and guidelines; negotiate or coordinate contracts for communication services following PPS Equity in Public Purchasing and Contracting board policy. “E”
- Serve on district committees and lead district initiatives 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 Director – Media Relations serves as the primary point-of-contact for media interactions. This is a highly visible assignment and the employee is a skilled communicator who understands the importance and implications of interactions with the media. Employees demonstrate professionalism at all times and manage media information in crisis and/or emergency situations. This classification differs from the Director – Strategic Communications and Outreach, by the focus and emphasis on immediate and immersing situations, focusing on television, radio, newspaper and similar media sources for live, real-time content delivery and response, whereas the latter assignment emphasis is on long-term strategic planning and development, community outreach and operations, public records requests and District communications of written materials, web presence and social media.

### **EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS**

#### Knowledge of:

Communications media, public relations principles and public speaking techniques and their most effective uses.  
 Current local, state and Federal issues, research and practices for education improvement initiatives related to Portland Public schools and K–12 public education.  
 Crisis management strategies.  
 The ethnic, cultural, geographic, and socio-economic diversity of the populations served by the District.  
 Written and oral communication skills.  
 Qualities of political judgment, discretion and confidentiality in the highest degree.  
 District organization, operations, policies and objectives.  
 The use and implementation of video and other media technology systems; video production techniques.  
 Word processing, database, spreadsheet and presentation software.

#### Ability to:

Conduct on-record interviews, speak on behalf of the District and key personnel and stay calm in a variety of stressful situations.  
 Manage and lead professional staff responsible for news content development and execution.  
 Interpret, explain and apply a variety of complex laws, guidelines, initiatives, policies and procedures.  
 Communicate a culture of equity that is student centered.  
 Diplomatically respond to questions and challenges posed by a variety of media constituents.  
 Maintain confidential information appropriately and exercise good judgment in media communication.  
 Communicate effectively both orally and in writing to broad and diverse audiences.  
 Manage media during crisis situations.  
 Create high quality media presence.  
 Research and organize complex information and provide clear, succinct responses.  
 Act judiciously under pressure.

Demonstrate and model ethical behavior and integrity.  
Work on multiple projects simultaneously with constantly changing priorities and deadlines.  
Advocate, model, implement and communicate Portland Public School's Racial Educational Equity Initiative and board policies.  
Operate a variety of office machines, technologies and software.  
Supervise assigned staff and operations.

**Education and Training:**

A Bachelor's degree in journalism, communications, broadcasting, media/public relations or a related field is required.

**Experience:**

Five (5) years of professional experience as an organization spokesperson, public information/media relations officer, on-air news reporter or similar experience is required. Experience managing media and information during emergency/crisis situations and experience working in a large urban school district and or complex public organization is 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 routinely include irregular hours, evening and weekend activities and meetings and media, district, school and student functions, as well as being on-call for email and telephone contact beyond the standard work day.

**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 a standard office and school building environment with extensive student, parent and public contact and frequent interruptions.

**Hazards:** Potential conflict situations.

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

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FLSA: Exempt  
Bargaining Unit: N/A  
Salary Grade: 45

Approval Date: December 12, 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*