



EVANSTON/SKOKIE
SCHOOL DISTRICT 65

COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Situated on the shores of Lake Michigan and just north of Chicago, Evanston/Skokie School District 65 is a pre-K through 8th grade public school district serving approximately 6,500 students from the City of Evanston and a small neighboring section of the Village of Skokie. The district represents a wide range of ethnic, economic, racial, and cultural backgrounds and serves a community that not only supports but truly embraces public education. District 65 focuses on educating the “whole child” and is deeply committed to social and emotional learning as well as fostering a safe and supportive school climate for our students.

Department Summary:

The Communications team supports the District’s Strategic Plan by ensuring families, staff, and the broader community receive clear, accurate, and timely information. Through a variety of communication tools and strategies, the team works to build awareness and understanding of district programs, priorities, and decisions. By partnering with departments across the District, the team helps share information in ways that are accessible, transparent, and responsive to community needs. This includes highlighting the work happening in our schools and sharing stories that reflect the joy of learning and the achievements of students and staff. The team also develops systems, processes, and procedures that help remove barriers to information, strengthen community engagement, and build trust, while ensuring communications align with district policies and applicable laws.

Job Summary:

The Communications Specialist is responsible for supporting many of the aspects of daily communications to various stakeholders. This role serves as a pivotal member of the communications team and reports directly to the Executive Chief of Communications. It requires a systems-thinker and the ability to support multiple projects simultaneously while ensuring deadlines are met. The Communications Specialist must collaborate with school, department, and cabinet leaders to ensure equitable outreach, accessible communication, and deep engagement with all stakeholders to ensure alignment with organizational goals and the district’s brand.

The Communications Specialist is responsible for the following:

- Support in the development of short, medium and long-range communications plans and strategies that align with organizational and department goals, including project tracking and evaluation
- Responsible for managing district-wide internal and external comprehensive event calendars to help ensure that department and district organizational objectives are met efficiently and effectively.
- Serve as editor of the district’s weekly *Fast Five* community-based newsletter, including writing, editing, coordinating visuals, and sending via Constant Contact; ensuring that stories are engaging, diverse in content, and equitably represent schools and programs across the District; and ensuring information is distributed in a timely way in accordance with an established editorial schedule



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- Supports content development for the District 65 website, school websites, and employee intranet (with support from departments) and establishes a system for ensuring timely routine updates, including a system for maintaining school websites in collaboration with school staff
- Serves as liaison and proactively builds relationships between the District and all news media (print, radio, television, and web-based media) and supports the response to all media requests on behalf of the District; supports the production and distribution of all news releases; and arranges for media visits in accordance with student media consent guidelines
- Assist staff in planning and publicizing school- and district-related events and activities through a variety of district communication channels in collaboration with other communications team members
- Manage the district's mass notification system including sending community-wide messages and building capacity among school leaders and department staff in using the system to effectively reach various stakeholder groups
- Support content generation for District 65 social media channels and provide training, oversight and support to all employees using social media. Monitor other social media channels and respond as appropriate.
- Document and share moments from classrooms and school events through simple video and photo content that highlights student learning.
- Supports the facilitation of the *High Five!* Staff Recognition Program
- Supports the Care & Concern notification process to staff
- Submit invoices and support management of communications budget
- Support cabinet, department, and school leaders with messaging and writing for community, parent/caregiver, and staff communications, presentations, etc.
- Is available outside of regular working hours, on occasion, to attend events, respond to crisis events, and initiate communications through various district communication channels.
- Ensure compliance with applicable laws, regulations and district policy regarding transparency, the disclosure of public information and accountability.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

In order to be successful and achieve the above responsibilities, the Communications Specialist must possess the following qualifications:

Education Required:

- Bachelor's degree in communications, journalism, marketing, or a related field from an accredited college or university

Experience Required:

- Minimum of two years of communications related experience
- Experience working in a school system preferred



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Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Demonstrate leadership abilities and teambuilding skills
- Excellent oral and written communication, presentation, and public relations skills
- Experience in social media, media relations, and website content management
- Experience in current communication-related technologies
- Commitment to advancing educational equity, increasing access to information, and eliminating systemic barriers that continue to disproportionately impact marginalized communities
- Ability to manage multiple projects independently and work under deadlines
- Ability to initiate communication and work closely and effectively with other departments, administrators, employees, students, and the public
- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail
- Strong commitment to and alignment with District 65 mission, core values, and organizational goals
- Maintains drivers license and has access to transportation in order to attend various activities and events across the district within and outside of regular work hours

WORK ENVIRONMENT

The usual and customary methods of performing the jobs functions require the following physical demands: some lifting, carrying, pushing, and/or pulling, some stooping, kneeling, crouching, and/or crawling and significant fine finger dexterity. Generally the job requires 10% sitting, 80% walking, and 10% standing. The job is performed under conditions with some exposure to risk of injury and/or illness and in a clean atmosphere. There are other demands that include but are not limited to:

- Combination of office and school-based settings
- Ability to travel between school sites within the district
- Commitment to equity, inclusion, and culturally responsive practices
- Frequent school visits and classroom observations
- Occasional evening/weekend events for family and community engagement

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

This position may require traveling to various school sites, work locations, and/or community organizations throughout the district.

DISTRICT EXPECTATIONS: All employees are expected to demonstrate regular and predictable attendance; to support the District's vision, mission, goals, and Strategic Plan; to engage in civility, respect, professionalism, and collaborative teaming; and to maintain the professional knowledge and skills necessary to perform the essential duties and responsibilities of their positions.



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NOTE: School Board Policy ensures equal opportunity for all in its personnel policies and practices and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender preference, political beliefs, social/family background, disability or age.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

Physical Activities: Standing, walking, sitting, handling, keyboarding, talking, and hearing

Lifting Demands: Up to 35 pounds

Reaching Activities: Both dominant and non-dominant hand; overhead.

Environmental Conditions: Noise Intensity 3 moderate

FOR INTERNAL/HR USE ONLY

Written by: Communications Department

Reviewed by: Human Relations Department

Salary Grade:

Job Grade:

Direct Reports: N/A

Reports to: Executive Chief of Communications

Department: Communications Department

Work Location: JEH

Associated PNs: