

GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

GENERAL STATEMENT OF JOB

Under the direction of the Superintendent or designee, the Chief Communications Officer (CCO) serves as principal advisor providing comprehensive and proactive communications, strategies and planning, media relations, and news analysis to the Superintendent and Board of Education. The CCO is responsible for all Guilford County Schools (GCS) communications. This means working collaboratively with the Superintendent's Cabinet members and other key stakeholders and setting the vision for and leading the communications team, including internal communications, media relations, social media, GCS's external and internal websites, marketing, strategic communications and multicultural outreach and language services. The incumbent plans and conducts a broad information program concerning public education and all functions and services of the school system, so as to better articulate the appropriate messages. Reports to the Superintendent and works collaboratively as a member of the Superintendent's Cabinet.

SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

Leadership

Serve as chief communication strategist on GCS initiatives, goals and priorities with focus on forward-looking message and communications planning.

Communicate and represent the District's vision and perspective internally and to the general public/community, as designated by the Superintendent.

Build and maintain public support for public education and the school system in collaboration with the Superintendent, Superintendent's Cabinet, Executive Staff, and GCS administration.

Lead strong, vision-focused, service-oriented team of professionals across all aspects of media, internal and external communications, multi-cultural outreach, web design and communications and marketing.

Manage the Superintendent's Cabinet members public communications and the District's brand through well-developed internal communications, public affairs, crisis communications and marketing plan and strategy.

Develop, direct, and evaluate the District's public relations, marketing, communications, and public affairs strategy; execute effective campaigns/programs on a local, state, and national basis, with major emphasis on employee communications and communications between the District and the community.

CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Serve as public relations counsel and advisor to the Superintendent, and serve on the Superintendent's Cabinet and Executive Staff.

Provide professional public relations counsel and assistance to GCS administration and the Board of Education pursuant to Board Policies and Administrative Regulations.

Identify community issues and concerns, and develop strategies for dealing effectively and proactively with community issues and concerns; interact with diverse stakeholder groups, and represent the Superintendent as needed.

Assist in problem solving between and among offices in issues involving the Superintendent's input, and represent the Superintendent on teams for large-scale projects and District-wide initiatives with major employee and community impacts.

Represent the Superintendent and GCS administration at various community functions and on local, state, and national non-profit and professional boards.

Serve as the Superintendent's representative and liaison to community leaders and groups.

Administration and Management

Plan and administer District-wide functions as designated by the Superintendent.

Develop and monitor program's annual objectives, performance measures, and budgets.

Plan, develop, and maintain effective processes and channels of communication with internal and external audiences.

Develop communication strategies, tactics, and action plans for all major GCS initiatives, and serve as a public relations consultant to key District committees and task forces.

Work collaboratively with administrators, staff members, and community volunteers in planning/developing public relations programs and strategies for both one-way and two-way communications with diverse constituents.

Supervise, evaluate, and hold accountable the performance and professionalism of assigned staff; interview and select employees, and recommend transfers, reassignments, terminations, and disciplinary actions; plan, coordinate, and arrange for appropriate professional development opportunities for assigned staff.

Provide appropriate professional development opportunities for department managers/directors.

Media Relations

Lead the development and delivery of news to broadcast, print, and online media to create media coverage of the school District on a daily basis.

CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Serve as a liaison between the District and the media, and serve as the District's chief spokesperson, handling sensitive and controversial issues.

Develop, coordinate, and monitor the crisis communication plan and implementation.

Organize press conferences and the release of information to the media and the public.

Develop and maintain working relationships with community leaders, organizations, and members of the media.

Public Engagement

Represent GCS at community, state, and national functions, as requested by the Superintendent.

Organize and plan regular meetings of various GCS advisory groups.

Make the community aware of GCS needs and goals; oversee fund development, corporate and philanthropic grants management, and in-kind donations.

Develop processes and systems for garnering public input and support on key initiatives and issues.

Communicate to the public the rationale for Superintendent and Board of Education decisions.

Marketing/Communications

Create and implement a marketing program that enhances GCS's image in the eye of the public and elected officials, as well as the corporate and grant community, with a recognizable "brand" reflective of a school district on an upward trajectory.

Develop and maintain brand image, positioning, and messaging for GCS; develop and maintain image and identity standards for GCS.

Secure the development of public opinion polls, and solicit feedback from GCS community members through formal and informal means regarding District initiatives, programs, and decisions.

Provide analysis of results, and recommend public relations/marketing strategies and tactics.

Develop District-wide advertising and public relations campaigns and collateral materials to market GCS.

Provide support and direction in effective communications and marketing to school-based customers.

CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Manage the development and production of District marketing communications, including print and electronic publications, collateral materials, presentations, website content, social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook, new media productions, advertising, media relations, and television broadcasts for staff and the community.

Build capacity of GCS administrators and departments in communications by providing training on a variety of topics, including public engagement, marketing, and media.

Employee Communications

Develop overall strategy and plan for District-level employee communications.

Maintain open line of communication between the Superintendent and GCS employees using a variety of tactics and techniques.

Coach and facilitate the work of Executive Staff, administrators, and supervisors in communicating more effectively with employees.

Communicate to staff the rationale for Superintendent and Board of Education decisions.

Decision Making

Authority to set overall direction for public relations program, make final decisions, and take action regarding media relations, marketing and employee communications within policies and regulations set by the Board of Education and Superintendent.

Work collaboratively with and provide communication expertise to Superintendent's Cabinet and Executive Staff on a variety of GCS projects and initiatives.

Decisions made have a direct impact on employee and public perception regarding GCS.

Internal and External Audience

Communicate and collaborate with the Superintendent, Cabinet and Executive Staff, Board of Education, other administrators, and district personnel to coordinate activities and programs, resolve issues and conflicts, and exchange information; model district standards of ethics and professionalism.

Communicate and collaborate with the media (local, state, and national), business leaders, GCS donors and business partners, Chamber of Commerce, elected officials, government leaders, community/faith leaders, District Advisory Committee/Parent Teachers Association/parent leaders, parents, patrons/community members, and other education leaders to coordinate activities and programs, resolve issues and conflicts, and exchange information.

ADDITIONAL JOB FUNCTIONS

Performs other related work as assigned.

CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

MINIMUM TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

Minimum requirements would be a Master's degree or equivalent experience and professional development in communications, marketing, public policy administration or related field preferred. Ten (10) years of accomplished strategic communications experience of increasing scope required, preferably with some experience at a public agency or with a large, complex organization. Experience as a Principal or Central Office Administrator required, and administrative experience as an assistant or associate superintendent preferred or any equivalent combination of training and experience which provides the required combination of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS OR STANDARDS REQUIRED TO PERFORM ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

Physical Requirements: Must be physically able to operate a variety of equipment including computers, copiers, adding machines, etc. Must be physically able to operate a motor vehicle. Must be able to exert up to 10 pounds of force occasionally, and/or a negligible amount of force constantly to lift, carry, push, and pull or otherwise move objects, including the human body. Light Work usually requires walking or standing to a significant degree.

Data Conception: Requires the ability to compare and/or judge the readily observable, functional, structural or composite characteristics (whether similar or divergent from obvious standards) of data, people or things.

Interpersonal Communication: Requires the ability to speak and/or signal people to convey or exchange information. Includes giving instructions, assignments or directions to subordinates or assistants.

Language Ability: Requires the ability to read a variety of correspondence, reports, forms, newsletters, schedules, manuals, invoices, requisitions, menus, recipes, journals, etc. Requires the ability to prepare correspondence, reports, forms, evaluations, procedures, charts, surveys, articles, bid specifications, brochures, news releases, handbooks, budgets, etc., using prescribed formats and conforming to all rules of punctuation, grammar, diction, and style. Requires the ability to speak before groups of people with poise, voice control and confidence.

Intelligence: Requires the ability to apply principles of logical or scientific thinking to define problems, collect data, establish facts, and draw valid conclusions; to interpret an extensive variety of technical instructions in mathematical or diagrammatic form; and to deal with several abstract and concrete variables.

Verbal Aptitude: Requires the ability to record and deliver information, to explain procedures, to follow oral and written instructions. Must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in a

CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

variety of technical or professional languages including medical, legal, accounting and marketing terminology.

Numerical Aptitude: Requires the ability to utilize mathematical formulas; to add and subtract; multiply and divide; utilize decimals and percentages; and to apply the principles of algebra and geometry.

Form/Spatial Aptitude: Requires the ability to inspect items for proper length, width and shape.

Motor Coordination: Requires the ability to coordinate hands and eyes rapidly and accurately in using office equipment.

Manual Dexterity: Requires the ability to handle a variety of items such as office equipment and hand tools. Must have minimal levels of eye/hand/foot coordination.

Color Discrimination: Requires the ability to differentiate between colors and shades of color.

Interpersonal Temperament: Requires the ability to deal with people beyond giving and receiving instructions. Must be adaptable to performing under stress and when confronted with emergency situations.

Physical Communication: Requires the ability to talk and hear: (Talking: expressing or exchanging ideas by means of spoken words. Hearing: perceiving nature of sounds by ear.) Must be able to communicate via telephone.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Considerable knowledge of state, local and school system fiscal regulations, policies and procedures.

Considerable knowledge of the principles of supervision, organization and administration.

Considerable knowledge of the ethical guidelines applicable to the position as outlined by professional organizations and/or federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations

Considerable knowledge of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, School System procedures and North Carolina General Statutes.

General knowledge of the principles and practices of public relations work.

General knowledge of County organization and operational policies and procedures.

Ability to use a variety of common office machines, including a computer terminal, calculator and facsimile machine.

CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Ability to organize and effectively process and maintain records and files and prepare reports from them.

Ability to read and interpret various reports and statements.

Ability to verify documents and forms for accuracy and completeness.

Ability to make oral presentations before large groups of people.

Ability to exercise considerable tact and courtesy in frequent contact with the public.

Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with other employees and the general public.

DISCLAIMER

The preceding job description has been designed to indicate the general nature and level of work performed by employees within this classification. It is not designed to contain or be interpreted as a comprehensive inventory of all duties, responsibilities, and qualifications required of employees to this job.