

Position Description, Qualifications and Responsibilities

Position: Director of Communications for School Year 2023-2024

About PA Distance Learning Charter School

Established in 2002, PA Distance Learning Charter School was one of the first cyber charter schools in the state of Pennsylvania focused on utilizing technology so that our teachers could teach live lessons 50% of the required school hours and our students could use those technologies to learn asynchronously the remaining 50% of the time. Our students, who come from localities throughout the state of Pennsylvania, are empowered to own their own learning, to grow, achieve and succeed through the use of evidence-based, inclusive and culturally responsive practices. We strive to build positive relationships in our online environment with all students, families and communities. Our teachers are dedicated to making sure that each student has what they need to succeed. To date, we have a staff of over 150 certified and noncertified professionals dedicated to the education of over 1,300 K-12 students. While our professionals are based out of our central location in the Pittsburgh area, our students reside throughout the state. We strive to bring out the best in each student and, equally important, our students bring out the best in us!

Reporting directly to the Chief Executive Officer, the Director of Communications will execute the tone set by the Board of Trustees and the CEO for messaging and will portray the school's mission and values. In addition, the Director will be responsible for establishing relationships with media outlets, coalitions, political appointees, government agencies and community resources. The Director will develop strategic marketing plans, handle public relation issues that may arise internally or externally, acts as the face of the organization at media events and directs marketing and public relation campaigns.

Essential Functions:

Communications

Ensures all school materials have consistent and positive messaging and branding

Conducts quality control on all communications

Creates promotional and informative materials for public view

Works with all forms of media, including press releases, digital campaigns, print materials, social media, audio, video and more and creates, curates and distributes this content

Serves as the primary facilitator of the school's communications to both staff members and the greater school community

Strives to help both the school and those in the community-at-large create meaningful connections within the school community

Cultivates the "voice" of the school to communicate our ethos, values and organizational story

Performs an annual communications audit to monitor and continuously improve internal communication pathways

Facilitates multi-platform communications of the school

Meets regularly with the staff to explore recent "stories to tell" and upcoming events to promote

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Identifies primary audiences and best communication platforms for each communication

Utilizes SEO and analytical tools to monitor and evaluate the efficacy and efficiency of communication strategies

Oversees the maintenance of the school's website including methods to deliver message, ease of navigation and clarity of information; ensures that all content is current and relevant

Create metrics and report quarterly on the ROI and reach of communications methods and platforms

Communicates effectively and consistently with internal and external constituents of the school

Organizes and conducts a comprehensive public relations program to disseminate accurate and positive information

Establishes line of communication with PA Distance staff and families to identify student and staff successes

Highlights and human interest stories that demonstrate the school's accountability to various constituents

Develops relationships with business, political and civic organizations and assertively seeks to attend and present at these meetings or to have CEO attend and present

In conjunction with the CEO, acts as a public spokesperson for the school

Serves as liaison/main contact to media inquiries and requests

Participates in community activities, programs, conferences, and meetings as necessary

Creates, disseminates, collects and analyzes quantitative and qualitative data on PA Distance students, parents and staff

Develops report for the Board of Trustees highlighting department accomplishments, challenges and opportunities

Develops and manages the Marketing/Public Relations budget

Connections

Develops relationships and works with media outlets, charter advocacy groups, business and industry

Develops and implements a network for PA Distance Alumni

Responds to crises or challenging situations quickly and professionally

Attends speaking engagements, host special events and advocate for and discuss the school's mission and vision

Develops initiatives the spread awareness of PDLCS

Develops initiatives to increase engagement on our social platforms and within the school

Develops the school's internal and external communications plan in cooperation with school leadership and the Board of Trustees

Collaboration

Serves as a member of the School's Administration Team

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Communicates with other departments in the school to remain up to date with new initiatives and necessary changes; especially with Academic and Community Engagement teams

Serves on committees as required and appropriate

Assists in the development and execution of strategic plans that will support engagement

Qualifications:

Bachelor's degree in journalism, communications, marketing or related field that ensures excellent writing and editing skills that conform to nationally accepted journalistic style

5 or more years of experience in communications or public relations demonstrating writing and editing experience covering areas such as website content, newsletters and external facing communications, with experience in the public school sector (preferably charter schools) preferred

Experience developing and implementing communication strategies, audits or comprehensive analysis of communications platforms

Ability to take knowledge and transform it into exciting and useful messages and disseminate it to the appropriate audiences through the best communications channels

Strong interpersonal communication skills with the ability to effectively communicate, both written and verbal, in a professional manner that supports the ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships across all levels of the school and external stakeholders

Other Requirements:

Travel to and from community events and standing for prolonged periods of time both indoors and outdoors

Event attendance will include set-up responsibilities for PA Distance promotional items. Overnight travel will be required.

Application Instructions:

Interested and qualified candidates should submit the following materials in a single PDF file to the attention of Leigh Anne Lord, HR Coordinator (leighanne.lord@padistance.org)

- Letter of intent including summary of specific qualifications that match this position description and the school's mission and vision;
- Current resume or CV;
- Names, phone numbers and email addresses of three current, professional references.
- Clearances to include: Department of Human Services Child Abuse and History Clearance, Pennsylvania State Police Request for Criminal Records Check, Federal Criminal History Record Information (CHRI)

Position will remain open until filled. PDLCS is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the bases of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, parental or marital status, age or genetic information. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform essential duties.