

Bend-La Pine Schools
Deschutes County
Bend, Oregon 97703

Position Title: Director of Communications
Department: Superintendent's Office
Reports To: Superintendent

Bend-La Pine Schools (BLS) is committed to principle of equity. Equity supersedes the notion of equality, where all are treated the same. Pursuing equity requires the removal of barriers and the promotion of inclusive practices so that all students fully benefit. The principle of equity will inform all BLS policies, regulations, operations, practices, and resource allocations.

Studies have shown that some individuals (women and people of color, for example) are less likely to apply for jobs unless they believe they meet every single qualification in a job description. The goal of this search is to find the best candidate for the position, and it must be acknowledged that the best candidate may be an individual from a less-traditional background. Interested individuals are encouraged to apply even if they don't believe they meet every one of the listed qualifications. Interested individuals who are unsure whether they meet the qualifications of a position, or how this would be determined, should reach out to Human Resources to discuss those qualifications.

JOB DEFINITION

Bend-La Pine Schools is committed to the academic and personal growth of every student. Our schools provide safe and supportive learning environments where staff can carry out our mission of educating thriving students.

The Director of Communications, under the leadership of the Superintendent, develops and implements a comprehensive and dynamic communication framework and strategy for the District to improve student achievement, family and community involvement and awareness, as well as cohesive and comprehensive messaging to internal and external stakeholders.

The Director is responsible for the leading of the District's public information and communications programs, ensuring that long-term and emergent needs are coordinated, effective, and maintain high standards of quality. This person will work proactively and responsively with local media to provide information about district news and events and will be responsible for assisting with the development and implementation of district messaging. The Director provides communication and community relations leadership and serves as the primary point of contact for all district- and some school-based communications.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:

1. Serve as liaison between the district and the news media and supervise the production and distribution of all news releases, arranges press conferences as required, prepares press kits for distribution to media
2. Create inclusive communication plans to include and elevate the voices of members of our priority populations (including, but not limited to: Latinx, Black, African-American, Asian-American, Pacific Islander, Native American, persons navigating disability, and LGBTQ+ students, staff, and community members
3. Maintain open lines of communication with all community organizations and provide prompt responses to requests for public information about the District, its policies, and its programs
4. Serve as the District spokesperson to assist the media in obtaining and interpreting information about the District, its programs and schools, and assist the media in interpreting board actions
5. Support the Superintendent with crisis communications
6. Support the Superintendent with the preparation of public-facing communications in various media

7. Coordinate the District's role in levy and bond elections
8. Identify key strategic storylines, moments, and proof-points across the District that showcase the District's efforts to increase inclusive practices in line with the District's Equity Stance
9. Maintain an internal communication system so employees are informed and engaged in District and building issues and news
10. Maintain updated knowledge of best media practices and measurement, graphic design and/or website design and maintenance, content management systems, and marketing
11. Participate in regional and statewide school public relations associations such as Oregon School Public Relations Association
12. Attend all school board meetings. Serve as board liaison to the media, coordinate requests for interviews, respond to questions, and provide results of board actions
13. Consult with staff to ensure that the preparation, editing, and distribution of special publications is done in a manner consistent with the District's vision
14. Provide leadership for an office that manages internal communications, external communications, two-way community engagement, crisis communications, and public speaking
15. Stay informed on all policies, regulations, laws, and court decisions pertinent and/or relative to the District
16. Maintain a high level of ethical behavior, including confidentiality with sensitive information and data
17. Ensure timeliness in the completion of assigned projects
18. Manage multiple projects with firm deadlines simultaneously

WORKING CONDITIONS:

Bend-La Pine Schools promotes positive, professional, and healthy work environments for all staff. At times, however, school and district leaders may need to work under heavy workloads and pressing deadlines. Issues may require immediate attention, setting up conflicting priorities. Sound judgement is required in stressful situations. The employee needs to be able to lift materials, boxes or equipment weighing up to 30 pounds and/or maneuver up to 50 pounds. This position generally works in an office environment with occasional travel to schools and other locations for meetings. This position will require scheduled and emergent work outside of the typical work schedule, including evening and weekend work.

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

Knowledge of:

- A variety of communication concepts, practices, and procedures
- Professional marketing and public relations practices for public agencies
- Oregon public records laws
- Strategic communications planning and execution
- Cultural understanding of the ethnic, cultural, geographic, and socio-economic diversity of the populations served by the District
- Graphic design principles, including web-based design
- Copy writing and editing practices
- Public speaking practices
- People and project management skills
- Workplace practices to create and maintain a healthy and positive working environment for communications staff

Skills and Abilities:

- Interpret, explain, and apply complex laws guidelines, initiatives, policies, and procedures
- High level of commitment to the completion of assigned tasks
- Adhere to District requirements of a drug free workplace
- Work collaboratively and cooperatively across a variety of departments to develop communications plans in line with the District's vision

- Build strong, collaborative, and meaningful relationships working across individuals, teams, and administrators
- Support of high visibility change projects with a highly collaborative and integrated workstyle
- Complete tasks that meet or exceed quality expectations on deadline

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:

- Bachelor's Degree or equivalent in Public Relations, Communications, Journalism, Marketing, or other applicable discipline to provide foundational understanding of the scope and components of the position
- Minimum of five years' experience in a professional public administration, communications, or related field
- Bilingual candidates encouraged to apply

The statements herein reflect general details as necessary to describe the principle functions of the job, the level of knowledge and skills typically required and the scope of responsibility, but should not be considered an all-inclusive listing of work and physical requirements. Individuals may perform other duties as assigned, including work in other functional areas to cover absences or relief, to equalize peak work or otherwise to balance the workload.