

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC POLICY AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This is professional and administrative work of a complex nature involving responsibility for serving in the capacity of confidential advisor to the executive management staff of Rockland BOCES as well several component school districts and several Rockland County departments via shared services agreements. The advisement services pertain to matters regarding agency-wide operations and to the development, modification and execution of policies and procedures. The incumbent also oversees and directs all marketing, community relations, public relations and media relations for the above locations and handles their strategic communications plan and crisis management. The work is performed under the general direction of the District Superintendent and Chief Operating Officer but with considerable leeway allowed for the exercise of independent judgment in achieving stated objectives. Supervision is exercised over a number of employees. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

Acts as confidential advisor to executive leadership pertaining to matters regarding agency-wide operations and to the development, modification and execution of policies and procedures;
Responds to highly confidential and/or highly sensitive matters and creates a dialogue with the media to portray factual information and ensure that the agency (i.e. school district or county department) is portrayed in a positive light and/or that their image is restored;
Works closely with executive leadership and other stakeholders to anticipate and react to threats against the organization's safety, finances or reputation and at times, reaches out to established media contacts for solutions;
Liaise with law enforcement, senior BOCES leadership and school district superintendents to develop, execute and continuously optimize a policy designed to protect children, faculty and staff in the event of school violence or other serious incident that would impact county-wide school districts as well as certain county departments;
Designs and implements a state-of-the-art crisis communications plan, including traditional, digital and social media monitoring, to ensure a consistent and effective message;
Advises senior leadership on matters of a highly-sensitive nature;
Develops communication strategies that advances and protects the reputation of the agency, both proactively and reactively;
Serves as official agency spokesperson to the media;
Oversees and directs all aspects of marketing, community relations, public relations and media relations for the agency;
Develops an overarching strategic communications plan, including a compelling positioning and media relations strategy consistent with the agency mission and goals;
Creates and implements an ongoing reputational analysis program and establishes the means For measuring the overall success of communications initiatives, including the developing of metrics, analytics and feedback mechanisms;
Responsible for the growth of BOCES shared services agreements by utilizing an existing network of contacts.

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FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of effective public relations and communication, including strategic communications practices; thorough knowledge of the principles and techniques used to evaluate the effectiveness of a public relations program; thorough knowledge of the functions and organization of the County of Rockland, the Rockland Board of Cooperative Educational Services and Rockland County public school districts; ability to evaluate programs and policies; ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing; ability to prepare and edit press releases; ability to establish and maintain cooperative relations with others, especially the press; ability to exercise good judgment, tact and courtesy in difficult, stressful situations; high degree of professional integrity and public trust; excellent leadership skills.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: A Bachelor's degree or higher in Journalism, Communications, Marketing, English, or a closely related field and six (6) years of public information or relations experience, two years of which were in a government setting and involved participation in policy matters.