



Communications & Community Engagement

September 2, 2010

The Office for Communications & Community Engagement was created to:

- Publicize good things happening in the district
- Correct negative misconceptions
- Obtain input from the community on issues
- Ensure news media have accurate and timely information when news occurs
- Communicate in general at all times with the key partners we serve



How do you get media coverage?

- ✓ Contact the Communications Department
Provide names, e-mail, telephone number
- ✓ Stories often are submitted electronically
using the story submission link in the News
section on the Web site
- ✓ E-mail us directly



Which media do you work with?

- ✓ All local television stations
- ✓ Some local radio
- ✓ Some national publications
- ✓ Web, Facebook and Twitter sites
- ✓ Occasionally blog sites



Why do some schools get more media coverage than others and how can we get more coverage?

- ✓ Information is relayed to the Communications Department in a timely manner
- ✓ Designate a “reporter” from your school

What types of stories are of interest?

- Academic programs that are high-tech, cutting-edge, groundbreaking and/or showing major growth in student achievement
- Special events or activities, whether involving academics, parents, the community, politicians or outside entertainment or major speakers
- Major awards and recognitions
- Anything that is visually exciting for photographers and videographers and involves children (or teachers) doing a hands-on activity



How can I get an item on the District Web page?

- ✓ When submitted, all items are placed in the EBRPSS News section
- ✓ Items on EBRPSS splash page (main site) are placed at the discretion of the Communications Department
- ✓ Also placed on our Twitter, Facebook sites
- ✓ Include photographs and their IDs



What types of information do you need for publicity?

- ✓ Who, What, When, Where, Why and How
- ✓ A picture with IDs would be helpful



How much advance notice do you need for events?

- ✓ Preferably two weeks notice, as little as two to three days
- ✓ Local media usually do not cover an event without 24-hours notice

What type of photographs or other related information do you need?

- ✓ JPGs, TIFs, PDFs if possible
- ✓ Best if 300 dpi (highest clarity setting on camera)
- ✓ Photo should be clear, in focus, not too dark. If a picture is taken in sunlight, watch for shading.
- ✓ We cannot use photos taken by camera phone.
- ✓ Some overviews but also close-ups with people. People should always be in photograph.
- ✓ Identify what is going on in photo, who is in the photo (names, titles and organizations they represent).
- ✓ Watch out for: horizon line remaining straight, no fingers or camera strings in the shot, no gang signs, watch clothing (what's printed on it and how it looks), people/person should be in the photo (recognizable)
- ✓ Ensure we have student media permission slips on file



Who should I contact?

- ✓ Please do not contact the media directly. That is the job of the Communications Department, and we work closely with the media to establish relationships on a daily basis.



What do I do if the media calls me?

- ✓ You don't have to answer every question immediately
- ✓ Find out exactly what kind of information they need, who is calling, what is the deadline, get contact information
- ✓ In addition, try to find out when and where the item will be printed or aired
- ✓ The most important thing is to tell the media you will talk to the Communications Office, get their contact information and call us



Is it OK for my staff to call and arrange media coverage and write our own press releases?

- ✓ We prefer the Communications Department handle media contacts whenever possible
- ✓ However, designate a point person at each school to contact us
- ✓ All press releases written are subject to final approval by the Communications Department before distribution



Why don't media cover publicized events sometimes?

- ✓ We are competing with not only hundreds of other local press releases for media attention, but also thousands that news departments receive every day. If a breaking news story occurs, or a hot news story is happening at the same time as your event, they will choose the bigger story every time. If we don't have adequate information, we cannot promote the story effectively.



What else does the Communications Department do?

- ✓ Fingertip Facts, Education Matters, bi-monthly electronic newsletter, manage Web site/Facebook/Twitter, public service announcements and advertising, marketing, community outreach, public relations counseling, special events, crisis communications, any other items deemed appropriate by the superintendent.
- ✓ Schools' Web sites additional training. (Information Technology training should be completed first.)



Upcoming Projects

- ✓ Working with WBRZ to get a television program
- ✓ Education Matters
- ✓ eNews



Communications Contacts

- Chris Trahan, Director
ctrahan@ebrschools.org
922-5620, cell 274-6657
- Sonya T. Gordon, Public Information Officer
sgordon@ebrschools.org
922-5611, cell 328-4763
- Demetris Blakes, Webmaster
dblakes1@ebrschools.org
922-5583, cell 252-7661

