These are some of the ways school districts are connecting with parents, property owners, civic groups, legislators and other stakeholders in today's fast-paced, high stakes public arena. Now, more than ever, a school district needs to take its message directly to the voters who control the district's budget and to the parents whose children are entrusted to its schools. That means finding multiple ways to reach community members on their own terms. To that end, the School Communications Service at Putnam | Northern Westchester BOCES offers a full range of digital as well as traditional media and collateral services to help school districts communicate effectively with today's parents, build support for budgets and initiatives and save money.

BOCES' public relations professionals have decades of experience in mass media, crisis management, branding, fundraising, web content and social media. Our staff includes a former foreign correspondent, Pulitzer Prize contenders, experienced broadcast journalists and former editors at top magazines like Vogue as well as seasoned marketing, public relations and graphic arts and video professionals. We know media and we're prepared to help your district reach parents, students, taxpayers and others with the message you want to deliver.

Who We Are

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Flexibility

The School Communications Service will work with school district officials to craft a communications plan and delivery method that meets their needs. For example,

• District leaders may choose to purchase specific services such as newsletters, videos, social media, web maintenance and press releases provided by public relations professionals working out of PNW BOCES.

• Or, district leaders may contract for the services of a dedicated public relations professional who works in district like a district employee, providing whatever communications services are needed. In-district consultants have the support of the School Communications Service, which includes graphic designers, web experts and crisis managers as well as public relations professionals.

For more information, please contact Ellen Lane at the School Communications Service at 914-248-2235 or email at elane@pnwboces.org

Fee Schedule

E-Newsletters
$3,000 per newsletter including reporting, writing, design, emailing and quantitative feedback.

Facebook/Twitter & Other Social Media
For districts already receiving publicity services, additional cost would be minimal. $76 per hour tailored to the needs of the district.

Mobile Apps
$1,800 plus 55 cents per student to launch a basic app including directories, calendars, news, videos, sports, photos, social media, cafeteria news. $4,950 to $8,250 depending on student portal plus $1.65 per student to launch a custom app including all of the basic features plus mobile-optimized, fully integrated access to student progress reports. Renewal fees for each year: $1,100 plus 55 cents per student for basic app; $1,100 plus $1.65 per student for custom app.

Web Management
Priced by project.

Videos
$3,000 and up for classroom, animated explainer, promotional videos; $500 and up for spotlight videos and $75 per hour for live event coverage.

Publicity
$70 per hour for press releases, media strategy and placement services.

Printed Newsletters
$3,750 for 4-page; $4,650 for 6-page & $6,020 for 8-page. This includes reporting, writing, photography, editing, layout & design. Cost of printing and delivery not included.

Graphic Design
Priced by project.

Crisis Management
$100 per hour for a communications specialist to gather the facts, develop an action plan, deal with the media, notify key audiences and prepare written materials. SCS partners receive the first three days of crisis communications services at no charge. For crises continuing beyond three days, partner districts are charged $70 an hour.

Grant Writing
$1,500 per day includes gathering information, researching funding sources and preparing proposals or white papers for the purposes of obtaining government, foundation or corporate support.

Market Research
Priced by project.

Fees are for creative services only and do not include printing or delivery. All prices are subject to change. Our services are not limited to the above. If interested, please contact Ellen Lane, Communications Director, at 914-248-2235 for further pricing & services.
Digital Media Services

Mobile Apps
The latest frontier in social media, mobile apps bring together all of the district’s resources in a device that parents and community members can access wherever they go. Given that more than 50 percent of Americans own a smartphone and people access information from phones six times as often as from computers, going mobile makes sense for school districts. That's why the School Communications Service has partnered with the nation’s leading developer of custom, mobile apps for schools to bring this service to districts in our area.

Because young adults, minorities and economically disadvantaged families are more likely to access the Internet from a smartphone than a computer, mobile apps can help close the engagement gap in districts with significant low-income, immigrant populations. With a good mobile app, parents will not only be able to access critical district information, they will be able to do so in their own language.

Videos
The fact that more than 400 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute is a testament to the power of video storytelling. With PNW BOCES Video Production Service, school districts can harness that power without ever stepping inside a studio or behind a camera. Videos include highlights that provide fly-on-the-wall glimpses into the classroom; animated explainer videos; and promotional videos that capture your district’s brand. Also available are professionally produced studio spotlights, website videos and event videos.

E-newsletters
E-newsletters provide up-to-the-minute news and can be accessed anywhere from a home or business computer to a smartphone. Readability is automatically tracked, allowing districts to gauge the effectiveness of its communication efforts. Because they are paperless, e-newsletters save on printing and mailing costs and are eco-friendly.

Social Media
Social media has dramatically changed the way school districts tell their stories and communicate with stakeholders. At the School Communications Service at PNW BOCES, our specialists are expert at launching and managing Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, LinkedIn and Instagram feeds. We'll manage it for you, so your social media feeds are always fresh, up-to-date and appropriate. The School Communications Service will work with the district’s staff to recognize news that’s social and disseminate it at the lowest cost to the district.

Traditional Media

Crisis Management
When districts face a crisis, it is important to contain the damage and control the message so public confidence in the school system is not lost. BOCES School Communications professionals, many of whom worked in the news industry for years, have the expertise to help your district respond quickly and effectively when needed.

Print Newsletters
Print newsletters remain a valuable tool for reaching certain segments of your audience and are the only way to ensure that the district is reaching every household in the community including those of non-parents. Districts generally use printed newsletters for disseminating school budget information.

Publicity
Districts that keep community members informed about accomplishments and challenges are more likely to build consensus among voters who ultimately must support district programs and budgets. A school communications specialist can be assigned to work out of a district, if desired. This arrangement gives districts the best of both worlds: an onsite resource to handle school communications, and the financial benefits and flexibility of a shared service.

Print Materials
For communities that prefer printed calendars, the School Communications Service offers branded two and four-color printed calendars with original photography on glossy or matte paper. Other print materials include posters, palm cards, programs and invitations.

Web Design & Management
A school district’s website serves as the district’s public face, and should be the best source of comprehensive information about everything from school events to district policies. Working with a number of vendors, the School Communications Service offers districts custom designed and maintained websites that are lively, user-friendly and attractive at prices districts can afford.

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Collateral Services

Bond/Fundraising
Whether your district is seeking to pass a bond referendum to make needed improvements or trying to raise private funds to enhance facilities, a marketing and fundraising professional can help you sell your plan to the public with newsletters, flyers, posters, social media campaigns and more.

Branding
When a school district has a strong brand, the community knows what it stands for and, more important, supports its goals and initiatives. That's why, more and more school leaders are borrowing from the corporate sector to create brand identity for their districts. The School Communications Service, working in concert with BOCES Creative Services Department, can help your district create logos, taglines and a consistent image.

Captioning
As districts strive to become more inclusive, many are turning to captioning services to ensure that broadcasts of Board of Education meetings and other important events are accessible to all. Working with CaptionSync, the School Communications Service provides both post-production and livestream captioning for school districts.

Grant Writing
School districts facing continued financial challenges, the prospect of securing grants to fund or enhance educational programs has never been more attractive. Working with seasoned grant writers, the School Communications Service is ready to help districts find potential funding sources for everything from small, classroom initiatives by a single teacher to district-wide programs aimed at all learners.

Live Production Video
We've partnered with LocalLive to bring school districts across New York access to a live production service for sporting and other events on campus. Cameras are installed on your campus wherever requested, and game producers operate the cameras remotely. The district has a branded video channel and a portal of 24/7 on-demand viewing.

Market Research & Surveys
New York City’s former Mayor Ed Koch was famous for stopping constituents on the street and asking, “How am I doing?” While school administrators could hardly be expected to roam the streets getting input from the public, knowing how the district is perceived and what the public values is critical to success. That's why the School Communications Service has partnered with respected vendors like K-12 Insight of Herndon, Virginia, and Panorama Education to offer top-notch market research and community engagement services.

Media Training
School leaders are often asked to speak with the media, to convince the community to pass a bond to share innovative programming and ideas or, unfortunately, to address a crisis. The skill and comfort with which leaders communicate can have a lasting impact on the issue at hand and the reputation of the district. Our media trainer, Amanda Bergen, has decades of experience in broadcast media and as a corporate and political communications executive. She will work one-on-one with leaders to help them learn to craft and deliver messages effectively.