



HOWARD COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

10910 Clarksville Pike • Ellicott City, Maryland 21042 • 410-313-6600 • www.hcpss.org

Senior Communications Specialist

A completed application includes all application materials and three supervisory references.

*This position is posted until filled, with an initial screening date of **March 12, 2017**.*

Applicants are encouraged to submit their materials in a timely fashion.

DESCRIPTION

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) is the fastest growing and among the highest achieving school system's in Maryland. HCPSS serves 55,000 students, 8,100 staff and 76 schools within a diverse community located nearly equal distance between the Baltimore and Washington DC metropolitan areas. The Senior Communications Specialist plays a key role in the Office of Communications, as this person seeks to initiate and facilitate mutually beneficial exchanges of information with the school system's many stakeholders.

This position carries out support of Maryland Public Information Act (MPIA) requests, and other communication and community engagement activities. The person who serves in this role must have experience in analyzing and interpreting existing state law, regulations, proposed rules, and policies that apply to public information to ensure compliance; is responsible for receiving reviewing and responding to requests from the general public, attorneys, elected officials, news media, academia and special interest groups, AND plays a significant role in the Howard County Public School System's Office of Communication. Under the direction of the Director of Communications, the senior communications specialist manages Maryland Public Information Act (MPIA) requests, as well as a number of system-wide functions, initiatives and activities. This role requires someone with a legal background, and an excellent writer and editor who is able to implement with high-level communications among stakeholders, staff and executives.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

- Manage Maryland Public Information Act requests, including understanding regulatory requirements, organizing incoming requests, working with internal departments to gather necessary information, drafting responses, and completing requests within all legal deadlines; Ensure that FERPA, HIPAA and confidentiality protections are adhered to and factored into responses.
- Assist Social Media and Web Services Coordinator to manage and monitor system-level social media accounts to ensure that these presences provide accurate information for the public, and maintain a positive, consistent image for HCPSS.
- Manage Public Information Office email account, including fielding incoming emails, and researching and answering questions and concerns.

- Investigate communications issued from students, staff and other stakeholders that may signal problems or causes for concern, and take appropriate action.
- Manage HCPSS staff awards and recognitions, including Maryland State Department of Education Teacher of the Year and Washington Post annual awards.
- Anticipate communications-related challenges, and advise and collaborate with department and system leadership in crafting and executing appropriate solutions.

The above list is a summary of the functions of the job, not an exhaustive or comprehensive list of all possible job responsibilities, tasks, and duties.

QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants must meet all of the following qualifications listed below to be considered for the vacancy. Use the application, letter of introduction, and resume to specifically address each qualification.

- A Bachelor's degree in Communications or in a related field from an accredited college or university.
- Experience in analyzing and interpreting existing state law, regulations, proposed rules, and policies that apply to Public Information Act requests.
- Demonstrated working knowledge of Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations.
- Effective organizational skills/project management, interpersonal skills, self-starter, proactive.
- Other combinations of applicable education, training, and experience, which provide the knowledge, abilities, and skills necessary to perform effectively in the position, may be considered.
- Outstanding human relations skills.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Master's degree in Communications or in a related field or Juris Doctorate from an accredited college or university.
- Previous public records retention work experience.
- Previous development and implementation of communications strategies work experience.
- Experience in project management.
- Familiarity with web communications.

SALARY

This is a 12-month position on the Administrative Management and Technical Salary Scale, Grade 27. The salary range is \$84,833 to \$110,000. Salary will be determined by actual relevant experience and in conjunction with salary procedures of the Howard County Public School System. Under the Fair Labor Standards Act, this position is exempt from overtime.

APPLICATION

A complete online application and all application materials, including **three** reference surveys, must be submitted in a timely fashion.

Please be sure to include the following in your application materials:

- A complete listing of employment locations
- Dates of employment
- Names of direct supervisors
- Current salary

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

There will be a pre-screening of all applicant credentials. Interviews will be limited to those applicants who, in addition to meeting the basic requirements, have experiences and education that most closely match the position qualifications and the needs of the school system.

Only applicants who submit all of the requested information by the date of the vacancy will be considered for this position.

Equal opportunity employer

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) is an Equal Opportunity Employer. HCPSS ensures equal employment opportunity for all persons without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, or political affiliation.