



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

**EDUCATION**

## **Director of Communications**

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is the State Education Agency for the District of Columbia charged with raising the quality of education for all DC residents. OSSE is focused on sustaining, accelerating, and deepening the progress being made for the District's 90,000+ students. OSSE serves as the District's liaison to the U.S. Department of Education and works closely with the District's 470+ early childhood facilities, 250+ schools, 60+ local education agencies (including DCPS and charter organizations), and community-based organizations to provide critical programming and resources to our stakeholders.

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), a mission-driven, complex and dynamic organization in the District of Columbia is seeking a Director of Communications. This critical role reports to the Chief of Staff and serves on the agency's leadership team.

The Director of Communications catalyzes the agency's impact by ensuring effective communications strategy and execution, to best serve local education agencies, community-based organizations, families and students of the District of Columbia. They are charged with ensuring that internal and external stakeholders are clear on the agency's role, its direction and priorities, policy decisions and the rationale behind them, as well as our impact and outcomes for the communities we serve.

The Director of Communications oversees a team of six talented specialists, who provide a range of communications support including managing our internal communications review process, developing communications materials and marketing collateral, implementing organizational culture initiatives, ensuring access to services for community members of all language backgrounds, and event support.

Serving as an internal consultant, the Director of Communications advises the Superintendent, Chief of Staff, division leaders and other staff on communications strategies and execution methods based on internal and external communication processes, needs and best practices.

The ideal candidate is a creative and detail-oriented thinker who can expertly manage high-priority projects under pressure. The ideal candidate also must possess impeccable discretion and professional judgement.

### **Specific functions of the Director of Communications Strategic Communications**

- Develop and oversee the execution of a proactive, creative, and aggressive communications strategy incorporating press, marketing, and digital media for the agency, in conjunction with key stakeholders such as OSSE's leadership team and the Mayor's communications team;

- Provide direction to the communications team and divisions to ensure all external communications maintain OSSE brand and messaging integrity;
- Advise program teams to understand the work of the agency and ensure programmatic outcomes and policies are communicated effectively to key stakeholders;
- Ensures effective structures and channels for communicating with key audiences and stakeholders; and
- Ensures the Superintendent can communicate a clear mission and vision and make strong progress towards its realization by providing agency-wide leadership.

### **Leadership**

- Serves on the agency's leadership team and provide communications consultation and expertise during all phases of agency work;
- Manages a team of specialists and ensure their effective execution of communications plans and projects; and
- Through established and new communications channels, build a strong culture for the agency that is aligned with the agency's core values.

### **Media and Public Relations**

- Lead media and public relations—including developing a strong working relationship with key reporters, providing strategic advice and guidance for OSSE executives, preparing key OSSE representatives for media and public interactions and ensuring timely and effective responses to media inquiries;
- Ensures OSSE's public events and Superintendent's public appearances align with agency's standards and achieves strategic objectives;
- Proactively pitch proactive ideas for content, events and Mayoral opportunities;
- Oversee development of remarks, talking points and Q&As that anticipate difficult questions and provide responses and guidance;
- Stay abreast of the news and relevant issues being reported in the press and identify opportunities for proactive outreach and/or need for talking points; and
- With the Chief of Staff and Superintendent, help lead clear and timely crisis communications, both internally and externally.

### **Key Qualifications**

- A Bachelors' Degree in communications, journalism, marketing, public relations or related field from an accredited institution of higher education;
- At least 10 years of progressive experience in communications;
- Outstanding communication and writing skills;
- Excellent problem-solving, planning, and strategic thinking skills;
- Outstanding attention to detail and the ability to juggle priorities and work with grace under tight deadlines;

- Established relationships in the Government of the District of Columbia across branches of government;
- Superior relationship-building skills in establishing and maintaining constructive working relationships with coworkers, peers, staff and stakeholders; and
- Embodies OSSE's core values.

#### **Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)- Who We Are**

- OSSE is focused on sustaining, accelerating, and deepening the progress being made for the District's 90,000+ students. As the state education agency, OSSE serves as the District's liaison to the US Department of Education and works closely with the District's 470+ early childhood facilities, 250+ schools, 60+ local education agencies (including DCPS and charter organizations), and community-based organizations.
- Over the years, OSSE has worked hard to improve systems and supports to help close the achievement gap and ensure people of all ages and backgrounds are prepared to succeed in school and in life. DC remains the fastest improving state and urban school system in the country on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, also known as the Nation's Report Card.

**Interested applicants should email their resume to [OSSE.Careers@dc.gov](mailto:OSSE.Careers@dc.gov).**

**Subject line must include the *position title and your first and last name***  
**(Example: *Director of Communications – Jane Doe*)**