

Meet with the public relations coordinator to discuss the system's public relations program. Is the program formal or informal? What is the role of the principal in public relations? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the public relations program? How are parents participants in the educational process? \*

## **Public Relations Interview with Minnie Mouse**

### **Of ABC County Schools**

*February 24, 20\*\**

*AH Student*

#### ***1) Is the system's public relations program formal or informal? How so?***

**Minnie Mouse:** "The School District has a formal Public Relations/Communications program. This is evidenced by the fact that there is a full-time person assigned to the position of Public Relations Supervisor and it is an integral part of the District's Strategic Plan. Communications is one of the 12 Strategic Plan areas and there is a committee that oversees developing annual goals. The District also has a three-tiered Marketing Plan, which includes marketing efforts for the district, the high school zones, and each individual school. This is a very formal process that is updated each year and evidence of implementation of strategies is presented. Key elements of the district's efforts include: media relations, community relations, crisis communications, printed publications, Social Media, and the Key Leaders Network (which the Superintendent uses to communicate with over 500 key leaders in our community)."

#### ***2) What is the role of the principal in public relations?***

**Minnie Mouse:** "Principals play a very important role in Public Relations. They are the responsible with communicating their school's vision, mission and beliefs on a daily basis to local stakeholders, including faculty/staff, students, parents, and members of the community. In ABC County, they are responsible for developing their school's formal Marketing Plan and for submitting evidence at the end of the year to show implementation of their various strategies. The principal sets the tone for their school's culture and having a good public relations/communications plan in place builds public trust and support for our schools."

### ***3) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the public relations program?***

**Minnie Mouse:** “The strengths: It is a formal process, where accomplishments are evaluated. The district recently improved communication with the public through the implementation of Blackboard Connect rapid notification system to communicate with parents and faculty, especially during weather related events. Blackboard Connect is also used at the local school level for principals to keep parents informed of important upcoming events. The district, along with many of the schools, has recently increased its presence on Social Media through Facebook, Twitter and a News Blog on the website. Weakness: Limitations of only having one person handling PR responsibilities, rather than a full staff.”

### ***4) How are parents participants in the educational process?***

**Minnie Mouse:** “Parents are their children’s first and most important teacher. It is important for schools to continue to communicate with parents regarding the shift to more rigorous standards through the College and Career Ready Standards so they can continue to be engaged in helping their children at home. One neighboring school district (XYZ City Schools) developed an entire Marketing Campaign called HERE: Have Everyone Ready to Educate to highlight the important role parents play in ensuring student attendance. The campaign was aimed at targeting chronic absenteeism, which severely impacts student performance. This is a great example of a targeted school marketing campaign designed to highlight the importance of parental involvement in a child’s education.”