

Newsletter Tips

Newsletters are an important tool and work as a link some parents have to the activities that are happening at your school. Please provide the Communications Department with a copy of your newsletter for both Spanish translation and filing purposes. Also, please consider the following tips when planning or producing a school newsletter:

1. Plan your newsletter well. Write with your parents and students interest in mind. Refrain from writing about what has happened already. Write about what's going to happen, or take a timeless angle in each article. Think about the distribution date as you plan your newsletter.
2. Use strong leads. Grab the reader's attention. Make sure to include "meat-and-potatoes" information in the middle of the article. Also, be sure that each article has a strong ending.
3. Keep headlines short. For practice, take note of effective headlines that you read in newspapers or magazines.
4. After writing, set all articles aside for a day or so; then, reread each article as if you were an uninformed reader. Does each article communicate the needed information? Are the articles interesting? Any missing information that should be added?
5. Double-check all names, dates, telephone numbers, titles, addresses for accuracy.
6. Always spell-check your document.
7. Spell out names and use an acronym in parentheses on first reference. For example, write Performance Based Graduation Requirements (PBGR). On second and subsequent references, use SBDM. Use Providence Public Schools District (PPSD) on first reference; then, use PPSD for subsequent references.
8. If your article includes photographs, write "meat-and-potatoes" cutlines/captions. Don't just describe what the reader can see in the photograph. Space is valuable. Make it count.
9. Make sure that each article is written from a consistent point of view (first or third person) and in a consistent tense.
10. If you include a calendar of events, make sure it coincides with the district calendar.

Questions

Frequency

Will the newsletter be published weekly, monthly, bimonthly, or quarterly? Remember that if you need your newsletter translated you must give the translator enough time to include it in his/her schedule (see Translation Guidelines).

Appearance

Will it be colorful or black and white? Will photographs or clip art be included? How many pages are necessary? (*The ideal length is two pages.*)

Copy

Will I write all the text, or will I accept text from others? There are pros and cons to both methods. Sometimes it is easier to write all the text yourself. It also gives the publication a consistency of style. If you decide to use submissions make sure everyone adheres to your deadlines.

Deadlines

How far in advance should I write the newsletter? For a monthly newsletter, it is a good idea to prepare the August issue before school ends in May. Complete the September issue in June and the October issue in July.

Copyright

Is permission needed for including any copyrighted item? Secure written copyright permission for a copyrighted item, or leave the item out.