

face communication, and to handle relations with the multitude of media that call school districts weekly. Districts also need someone to build their social media presence. Districts should be using a variety of social media platforms daily.

Education is under attack. School districts need a professional school PR person to promote the positive stories about student/staff achievement and programs, and to develop a strategic approach to communication that is proactive, rather than reactive. School districts need to be known as the trusted source in their communities for information about their work. Without a trusted source, people will begin to listen to the critics and they will begin to have the loudest voice.

The scope of successful school public relations has expanded greatly. At a

time when face-to-face engagement is becoming an expected means of communication, school districts need a professional school PR person to facilitate community engagement activities, including meetings and events, realtor orientations, and listening sessions with key stakeholders designed to build informed support and solid community relationships.

The focus of WSPRA is to build the capacity of school districts as it relates to communications and engagement. Since many districts don't have a school PR professional on staff, the WSPRA membership is very diverse. In addition to school PR professionals, it also includes superintendents, school board members, administrative assistants, principals, and teachers. In our



survey to those who attended the 2016 fall conference, 100 percent of respondents said they would return again in 2017.

We welcome you to join WSPRA at the annual conference Nov. 9-10 at the Osthoff Resort in Elkhart Lake. You will leave with a much better understanding of school PR and how every person in a school district — from the board president to a playground assistant — plays a role in the communication and community engagement efforts! ■

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We're excited to announce the launch of our new website! The revamped, mobile-friendly site makes it even easier to find WASB legal, policy, governance and advocacy resources.

If you are a WASB member, please visit the new website and log in. You will need to create a new password (contact the WASB if you need assistance). When you log in you'll have access to member-only resources, as well as the ability to manage your account.



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