



Educational Leadership: School and Community Relations

Course Description

This course provides a survey of the principle aspects of school community relations for aspiring or current educational leaders. Topics covered include an overview of the importance of school community communications, the role of the leader, communications with families, partnerships with the community, crisis communications, and evaluation of school community relations programs. This course will provide tools and resources for building a positive relationship with staff, parents, and the community at large.

Course Prerequisites

No prerequisites for this course are required.

System Requirements

- Computer with word processing software
- Internet access connection
- Online video viewing capabilities/Adobe flash player
- Software capable of reading PDF files

Operating Systems	Browsers
Windows XP	Firefox, Chrome
Windows 7 and 8	IE9, IE10, Firefox, Chrome
Windows Vista	IE9, IE10, Firefox, Chrome
Mac OSX	Safari, Firefox, Chrome
iOS devices (tablets and phones)	Safari
Android devices (tablets and phones)	Chrome

NOTE: Additional software will be used, but will either be free and open-source or trial versions, and will be based on the individual needs of each teacher's Web site development and deployment needs. The instructor will work closely with each assist in determining the appropriate software.

Text Books/Supplemental Reading

Critical reading of assigned articles and text is embedded throughout the course.

Global Goals of the Course

Upon completion of the course, the learner will be able to:

1. Analyze the role of the leader in effective school community relations
2. Examine the legal and ethical aspects of a school community relations program
3. Assess the elements of effective internal, external, published, and electronic communication policies and plans of an educational institution
4. Evaluate the school population and community as part of a comprehensive school community relations program, according to the determined criteria
5. Develop press, media relations, and school community partnership plans that connect schools to families
6. Analyze a crisis communication plan for a school or school district

Instructional Objectives

The learner will deepen existing knowledge of content and apply professional expertise to the skills and strategies contained in this course by meeting the following instructional objectives:

Lesson 1: Introduction to School Community Relations

- 1.1 Explain the role of schools in a democratic society
- 1.2 Describe contemporary issues that have made school and community relations a critical component of education leadership
- 1.3 Identify the role of the leader in the development and implementation of a communications plan
- 1.4 Describe the relationship between school community relations and school culture
- 1.5 Explain how the school leaders' values and beliefs

Lesson 2: Understanding the Community

- 2.1 Select instruments to collect data from a diverse community
- 2.2 Apply the concept of community power structure to special interests affecting school and school district decisions
- 2.3 List the elements of a diverse community

Lesson 3: Communication Policies and Plans

- 3.1 List the elements of an effective communications process
- 3.2 List effective communication strategies for school meetings
- 3.3 Explain the importance of framing an inclusive communications policy
- 3.4 Determine the key components of a communications policy
- 3.5 Analyze a school or school district communications policy
- 3.6 Describe the importance of the strategic planning process to the development of a school and community relations program
- 3.7 Explain the roles of the stakeholders in the communication planning process

Lesson 4: The Internal Communications Plan

- 4.1 Explain the value of an internal communications plan for an educational

- institution
- 4.2 Describe the impact of internal communications on the relationships among staff, teachers, administrators, and the community
- 4.3 Identify strategies for effective internal communications during times of institutional change, negotiations, and strikes
- 4.4 Create an implementation checklist for internal communications
- 4.5 List the uses of different types of internal communications

Lesson 5: The External Communications Plan

- 5.1 Explain the value of an external communications plan for an educational institution
- 5.2 Analyze the uses of different types of external communications
- 5.3 Describe the impact of external communications on the relationships among staff, teachers, administrators, and the community
- 5.4 Identify strategies for effective external communications during times of institutional change
- 5.5 Describe effective ways to handle criticism within various contexts
- 5.6 Explain how different communication opportunities require different types of media and messages
- 5.7 Outline considerations for working with the media
- 5.8 Describe the value of special issue campaigns to a school and community relations program
- 5.9 Create an implementation checklist for external communications
- 5.10 Explain the steps to effective communication during a crisis

Lesson 6: Preparing Published and Electronic Communications

- 6.1 List the different types and uses of publications for a school or school district
- 6.2 Develop a publication for a school or school district
- 6.3 List the different types and uses of electronic communications
- 6.4 Determine the appropriate electronic communication avenue for specific school issues
- 6.5 Analyze the impact of modern technology on school community relations

Lesson 7: Legal and Ethical Aspects of School Community Relations Programs

- 7.1 Identify the potential liability issues within a school community relations program
- 7.2 Identify potential copyright issues involved in school community relations
- 7.3 Identify ethical issues involved in school community relations
- 7.4 Describe the impact of the school leaders' beliefs and values on ethical decision making

Lesson 8: Working with the Press and Media Outlets

- 8.1 Describe the steps to working with a print media reporter
- 8.2 Develop an appropriate press release for a print media reporter
- 8.3 Describe situations in which a news conference or press release is necessary
- 8.4 Explain the role of the school leader in a news conference
- 8.5 List advantages and disadvantages of using broadcast media in school community relations programs

Lesson 9: School Family Communications

- 9.1 Analyze communication methods between schools and families
- 9.2 Describe methods for building positive relationships with families of all students
- 9.3 Develop specific communications plans for families with children with special needs
- 9.4 Describe how a community relations plan promotes understanding of the diversity in the community
- 9.5 Describe the school financial information that is publically available to the community
- 9.6 Distinguish necessary communication of school financial issues from required public reporting

Lesson 10: Building Partnerships with the Community

- 10.1 Describe methods of developing active partnerships with parents and families
- 10.2 Identify successful school community partnerships
- 10.3 Describe practices that build school community partnerships
- 10.4 Analyze practices to sustain school community partnerships
- 10.5 Analyze a school or district's community partnerships

Lesson 11: Communication in a Crisis

- 11.1 Describe scenarios that require a crisis communication plan
- 11.2 Defend the inclusion of a crisis communications policy as part of a school and community relations program
- 11.3 Evaluate the role of leadership in a crisis situation
- 11.4 Summarize the responsibilities of school personnel for a crisis communication plan
- 11.5 List the elements of a crisis communications response plan
- 11.6 Explain the strategies for working with the mass media during a crisis

Lesson 12: Evaluation of School Community Relations Programs

- 12.1 Explain the importance of an assessment strategy for a school and community relations program
- 12.2 Describe strategies for documenting outcomes of a school and community relations program
- 12.3 Describe strategies for communicating outcomes of a school and community relations program
- 12.4 Clarify legal and ethical issues associated with a school community relations program
- 12.5 Explain how research informs the accountability efforts of a school and community relations program

Teaching Methodology and Delivery Model

Teaching methodologies used in this course are specifically designed to maximize learning in a graduate-level, online distance-learning model. Each course facilitator is trained

and/or experienced in facilitating graduate-level online courses as well as the specific content and skills of this course.

1. Online methodologies include instructor/expert presentations, directed skill practice, assignment and quiz completion, as well as the synthesis of new knowledge and skills in designing educational applications.
2. The course is taught in a supportive learning environment with teacher-participant interaction and feedback.
3. Content focuses on the presentation of advanced concepts linked to instructional strategies which accommodate learning needs of a diverse student population.
4. Course content, activities, and assignments are organized into Lessons/Milestones that participants complete during the 12-week span of the course. Course content is intended to cover material equal to 45 seat hours of instructional time.
5. Class participants actively construct their own learning and make it personally relevant by acquiring and applying course knowledge/skills to their own teaching situation.

Topics Agenda

Milestone One: Introduction to School Community Relations

This milestone focuses on school community relations in a democratic society, the roles of leaders, and the impact of a school community relations program. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to analyze the role of the leader in effective school community relations.

Milestone Two: Understanding the Community

This milestone focuses on data collection, community organizations, and power structures. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to analyze the school population and community as part of a comprehensive school community relations program.

Milestone Three: Communication Policies and Plans

This milestone focuses on communication processes, policies, and planning. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to evaluate the elements of an effective communication policy and plan.

Milestone Four: The Internal Communications Plan

This milestone focuses on the influence of internal communications and their different uses, using internal communication for difficult issues, the value of plans and planning, and the implementation checklist. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to evaluate the internal communications plan of an educational institution.

Milestone Five: The External Communications Plan

This milestone focuses on the value of plans and planning, the implementation checklist, the importance of external communications and their different uses, and using external communications for difficult issues. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to evaluate the external communications plan

of an educational institution.

Milestone Six: Preparing Published and Electronic Communications

This milestone focuses on publications, electronic communications, and the impact of technology. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to analyze published and electronic communications for a school or school district.

Milestone Seven: Legal and Ethical Aspects of School Community Relations Programs

This milestone focuses on liability, copyright, and ethics. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to analyze the legal and ethical aspects of a school community relations program.

Milestone Eight: Working with the Press and Media Outlets

This milestone focuses on working with print media reporters, news conferences, press releases, and electronic media. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to develop a press and media relations plan.

Milestone Nine: School Family Communications

This milestone focuses on building positive relationships, communication methods, the communications plan, and communicating school financial issues. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to develop a communications plan that connects schools to families.

Milestone Ten: Building Partnerships with the Community

This milestone focuses on developing active partnerships, developing school community partnerships, and sustaining school community partnerships. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to develop a plan for school community partnerships in a school or district.

Milestone Eleven: Communication in a Crisis

This milestone focuses on the importance of a crisis plan and ways to develop a crisis plan. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to analyze a crisis communication plan for a school or school district.

Milestone Twelve: Evaluation of School Community Relations Programs

This milestone focuses on assessment strategies, documenting outcomes, communicating outcomes, and legal and ethical considerations. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to determine the criteria necessary to evaluate school community relations programs.

Assessments and Grading

In keeping with best instructional and assessment practices, this course requires participants to demonstrate synthesis and application of course knowledge linked to the instructional objectives of this course. Assessment of the projects should not be limited to the quantity of work submitted but should carefully consider the quality and

intellectual value of the work. Assessments are due and will be submitted to the instructor within the 12 weeks of the allotted class time. Unless the instructor states otherwise, all papers are expected to be properly formatted electronically.

Graded Assessment Types	Weights (%)
Writing Assignments	80%
Quizzes	20%
Total:	100%

Copies of performance assessment rubrics are included in the course. Points are assigned based on a four-point criterion rubric specifically delineated for each assessment that can be further defined as follows:

Distinguished: The assessment is highly imaginative; demonstrates critical thought; is unique; shows substantial application to one's own teaching or professional position; goes above and beyond requirements; is creative; demonstrates both breadth and depth of knowledge of transition-related subject matter; shows individual's personality; is professional in presentation and appearance; and demonstrates considerable effort. The assessment is exceptionally completed and demonstrates clear understanding of the tasks, gives explanations, and shows how the assessment applies to a teaching/learning situation. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in "Distinguished" on the course rubric.

Proficient: The assessment is well-organized and complete; is effectively and clearly presented; demonstrates clear understandings; applies what has been learned to the author's own classroom situation; clearly shows connections; is detailed; and is thoughtful and supported with ideas. A thoroughly completed assessment demonstrates that the participant shows awareness of the tasks, gives explanations, and shows how the assessment applies to a teaching/learning situation. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in "Proficient" on the course rubric.

Basic: This is the lowest passing grade. The assessment meets minimum requirements; includes general information but lacks descriptive detail; shows limited application to teaching/learning; and lacks originality. This denotes work that does not meet **all** aspects of standards for academic performance in a graduate-level course. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in "Basic" on the course rubric.

Unsatisfactory: The assessment is missing evidence or information; is sloppy and poorly organized; demonstrates only surface understandings; shows no evidence of application to the author's own teaching situation; is poorly written; and does not meet minimum standards for academic performance in a graduate-level course. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in "Unsatisfactory" on the course rubric.

Academic Honesty and Integrity

All participants are expected to maintain academic honesty and integrity by doing their own work to the best of their ability. Academic dishonesty (cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, etc.) will result in the participant receiving a zero for that assignment or paper.

Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance

In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and The Americans with Disabilities Act, participants who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, which might affect their ability to perform in this class, are encouraged to inform the Director of Academic Affairs prior to the first session. Reasonable academic accommodations, aids, and adjustments may be made as needed to provide for equitable participation.

Attendance

Participants will have 12 weeks from the time of their first date of login to complete the course. They will need to contact The Connecting Link at (888) 550-5465 should they not be able to complete the online class in the time given.

Late Work and Make-Up Policy

Failure to complete all work in this time frame will result in an **incomplete** or a grade of **F** for the work, depending on the reason for the delay.

University Compliance

Course content and instruction are bound by policies associated with the university granting academic credit for the course. Such policies include, but are not limited to: academic integrity and honor codes, institutional objectives and grade grievance procedures. These policies are located within the official academic catalogs which can be accessed through the university's official website.

Compliance with National Standards

Upon successful completion of the course, the participant will demonstrate competence in the standards developed by the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) of the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) and The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) in alignment with guidelines for the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

Compliance with Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Standards for Teachers

InTASC is guided by the basic premise that an effective teacher must be able to integrate content knowledge with the specific strengths and needs of students to ensure that all students learn and perform at high levels.