

**TOMPKINS COUNTY CIVIL SERVICE
EXAMINATION
Inclusion Through Diversity**

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Tompkins County Department of Human Resources Office
125 E. Court Street
Ithaca, NY 14850
(607) 274-5526

Tompkins County is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer. Minorities and women are encouraged to apply

TITLE: School Communications Director

EXAM NO: 61620

SALARY: \$20,000/year

LOCATION: Lansing School District

TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT: Part time

EXAM DATE: 11/04/23

ISSUE DATE: 09/06/23

THE FINAL DATE TO FILE APPLICATIONS: 09/21/23

DATE THAT THIS ANNOUNCEMENT SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM POSTING: 11/05/23

RESIDENCY: Candidates must have been legal residents of Tompkins County or one of the six adjoining counties (Cayuga, Chemung, Cortland, Schuyler, Seneca, Tioga) for at least one month immediately preceding the date of application and maintain residency. For Examinations: The eligible list resulting from the examination will be established in accordance with the final earned numerical ratings of passing candidates regardless of residence. A municipality or district may exercise its right under section 23-4-a. of Civil Service Law to request a certification of eligible candidates who have been residents of that municipality or district for at least one month prior to appointment. After the names of residents have been exhausted, Tompkins County must then certify the names of non-residents on the list.

THE USE OF A QUIET HAND HELD CALCULATOR IS ALLOWED FOR THIS EXAMINATION.

LOCATION OF POSITIONS/VACANCIES:

There is currently one vacancy in the title of School Communications Director located at Lansing Central School. The eligible list resulting from this open competitive examination may be used to fill any full-time, part-time, and/or temporary vacancies that may occur during the life of the eligible list.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: EITHER:

(a) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a Master's Degree in Communications, English, Journalism, Public Relations, Public Administration, Marketing, Public or Business Administration, Social Sciences or a related field; **OR**

(b) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a Bachelor's Degree in Communications, English, Journalism, Public Relations, Public Administration, Marketing, Public or Business Administration, Social Sciences or a related field; **AND** two (2) years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time) experience in a position with substantial public information responsibility; **OR**

(c) Completion of two years of study (at least 60 college credit hours) in a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with major coursework in Communications, English, Journalism, Public Relations, Public Administration, Marketing, Public or Business Administration, Social Sciences or a related field; **AND** four (4) years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time) experience in a position with substantial public information responsibility; **OR**

(d) Any combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that described in (a), (b) and (c) above.

Tompkins County is Committed to Equity and Inclusion. We encourage those with similar values to apply.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

The Communications Director supports the Superintendent and the School leadership team and is responsible for developing and delivering a comprehensive engagement strategy and communication plan that amplifies the District's priorities and drives engagement across the community.

The Director is an experienced communications leader, strong writer, and strategic thinker; well versed in communication strategies & processes; skilled in creating succinct, well-crafted, persuasive content.

The Director is an effective communicator and thought partner with demonstrated experience working closely with senior leadership in complex settings. The Director plays a critical role in building public trust through various communications programs and initiatives and advancing transparency and accountability of the school district. They lead the external communications activities for the school district including community outreach, public relations, public information, and social media relations.

The Director is responsible for social media, website content, print and electronic communication, and assists departments with the development and implementation of communication strategies and crisis communications. The Communications Director also works directly with and assists the District Leadership to develop key information about the district, its educational programs, finances, and people.

The Communications Director will also have the opportunity to interact with leaders within the district, ranging from administrators to supervisors, and staff across multiple departments. The position receives supervision from the Superintendent and is expected to function in a highly autonomous manner. Supervision of others is generally not a function of an employee in this class but may occur on a project basis. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Directs support staff in the coordination, development and implementation of internal and external communications, public information and community relations activities (i.e., broadcasting or streaming of meetings, website, social marketing programs, special events, etc.);
- Coordinates, plans, and manages integrated internal and external communication activities;
- Provides accessible, easily understood information about the school district programs and events using various communication strategies, tools, and tactics;
- Provides oversight and direction for digital communications, including the website, e-newsletters, digital signage, intranet, and social media;
- Supports the Superintendent and other organizational leaders in the development of communications, including presentations and print/digital communications.
- Advises and counsels management and staff on policies, plans, and practices that affect the District's relationship with the public;
- Plans, organizes, and directs efforts that enhance the District's image in the community through relationship building, special events, and information sharing;

- Manages the dissemination of prompt, accurate information during emergency and disaster situations;
- Develops and recommends new communication methods and enhancements to better achieve District goals, including fostering the organization's core values and marketing District programs to residents, community groups, and other external organizations;
- Responds to requests to produce video programming;
- Prepares Newsletters;
- Advises and trains staff and officials in effective use of media;
- Engages departments in community outreach and education events;

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES, AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Thorough knowledge and understanding of the organization, functions, laws, policies, regulations, programs and goals;
- Superior oral and written communications skills, and the ability to create and articulate messages to a wide range of audiences;
- Exceptional writing and presentation skills;
- Excellent organizational and strong project management skills to manage multiple projects and the ability to design and execute process where none exists;
- Excellent editing and proofreading skills;
- Excellent organizational and interpersonal skills;
- Considerable knowledge of public relations principles and practices as they pertain to internal and external communication needs of a large organization;
- Ability to interact effectively with senior leadership, elected officials, community leaders and external constituencies;
- Self-starter, able to establish priorities and work independently;
- Demonstrated knowledge of current communications trends in a government setting, including extensive knowledge of the use of social media;
- Demonstrated ability to deliver complex messages in simple, concise and understandable ways;
- Attention to detail that drives high quality outputs;
- High-energy and optimistic;
- Comfortable with change and uses feedback to drive personal growth and development;
- Consistently acts with integrity and maintains a high degree of confidentiality;
- Initiative, courtesy, integrity and tact are required;
- The employee's physical condition shall be commensurate with demands of the position.

COMPLETE SCOPE OF THE EXAMINATION AND EXPANDED SUBTEST DESCRIPTIONS:**Educating and interacting with the public**

These questions test for knowledge of techniques used to interact effectively with individuals and/or community groups, to educate or inform them about topics of concern, to publicize or clarify agency programs or policies, to negotiate conflicts or resolve complaints, and to represent one's agency or program in a manner in keeping with good public relations practices. Questions may also cover interacting with others in cooperative efforts of public outreach or service.

Grammar, usage, punctuation, and editing

These questions test for the ability to generate, prepare, and edit written documents. Some questions test for a knowledge of grammar, usage, punctuation, and sentence structure. Others test for the ability to edit sentences to produce correct, clear, concise copy.

Preparing public information materials

These questions test for the ability to prepare basic informational materials electronically and in print, for the public and the media, including such products as correspondence, brochures, and news releases. Questions may cover such topics as selecting content to effectively communicate with the intended audience, making decisions regarding page readability of text, and using graphics, photographs, headlines, or captions to enhance a message.

Preparing written material

These questions test for the ability to present information clearly and accurately, and to organize paragraphs logically and comprehensibly. For some questions, you will be given information in two or three sentences followed by four restatements of the information. You must then choose the best version. For other questions, you will be given paragraphs with their sentences out of order. You must then choose, from four suggestions, the best order for the sentences.

Promoting and publicizing a program

These questions test for knowledge of the principles and practices related to promoting and publicizing a program or service in order to attract customers, clients, or participants. Questions may cover such topics as researching and setting promotion objectives, appealing to various target audiences, and producing and distributing informational materials.

Test guide:

The New York State Department of Civil Service has not prepared a test guide for this examination. However, candidates may find information in the publication 'General Guide to Written Tests' helpful in preparing for this test. This publication is available on line at: <https://www.cs.ny.gov/testing/testguides.cfm>.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

Falsification of any part of the "Application for Employment" will result in disqualification.

Accepted candidates will be notified when and where to appear for the examination. If you do not receive your notice to appear at least three days before the date of the written examination, call Tompkins County Department of Human Resources at 274-5526. If an application is disapproved, due notice will be sent. This department does not make formal acknowledgment of the receipt of an application or take responsibility for non-delivery or postal delay.

Applicants must answer every question on the application form and make sure that the application is complete in all respects. Incomplete applications will be disapproved.

ACTIVE MILITARY PERSONNEL, VETERANS OR DISABLED VETERANS desiring to claim additional credit will request the Veterans Credits application form, at any time between the date of application for examination(s) and the date of the establishment of the resulting eligible list. You must meet the requirements set by NYS for these credits and they may be used only once. **YOU MAY NOT CLAIM ADDITIONAL CREDITS AFTER THE ELIGIBLE LIST HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED. IT IS THE CANDIDATE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO REQUEST THE VETERANS CREDIT APPLICATION FORMS AND TO SUBMIT THESE FORMS AND ANY SUPPORTING PAPERWORK BEFORE THE ELIGIBLE LIST IS ESTABLISHED.**

Tompkins County's written examinations are prepared and rated by the New York State Department of Civil Service in accordance with Section 23-2 of Civil Service Law. The provisions of the New York State Civil Service Rules and Regulations, which deal with the rating and review of the examinations apply.

The duration of the eligible lists may be fixed for a minimum of one and a maximum of four years and may be extended beyond four years if there has been a restriction against the filling of vacancies in that title.

The candidates must complete a separate "Application for Employment" for each open-competitive and/or promotional examination that the candidate is eligible to take.

All experience required meeting the acceptable training and experience is full-time experience. (Part-time experience will be credited on a prorated basis).

Appointment from an eligible list must be made from the top three candidates willing to accept the appointment.

Tompkins County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. As part of its efforts to provide employment opportunities to the physically handicapped, Tompkins County Civil Service has adopted a rule permitting the employment of qualified physically handicapped persons without competitive examination (pursuant to Section 55 of Civil Service Law). If you meet the minimum qualifications for this position and wish to know more about this rule, please contact the Tompkins County Department of Human Resources Office.

Unless otherwise notified, candidates are permitted to use quiet, hand-held, and solar or battery powered calculators. Devices with Typewriter Keyboards, Spell Checkers, Personal Digital Assistants, Address Books, Language Translators, Dictionaries or any similar devices are prohibited. You may not bring books or other reference materials.

CROSS-FILING - APPLYING FOR CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS IN MULTIPLE JURISDICTIONS WHEN EXAMINATIONS ARE SCHEDULED ON THE SAME DATE: When applying for examinations across multiple jurisdictions - all of which are scheduled on the same day - you must submit a Tompkins County Cross-Filing Form. This form must be submitted no later than 4:30 PM on the final filing date of the examination. On this form, list each examination that you are taking and then tell us where you would like to sit. The purpose is to ensure that all of the test materials for the various examinations that you are taking will be available in one location. If you do not provide the cross-filing form to us by the final filing date, we cannot ensure that we can accommodate your desire to cross-file. If any of the examinations are State level examinations, you must sit at the State test center. You will still need to complete the Tompkins County cross-filing form. If sitting at the State site, the State will notify you of when and where to report for your examination(s) and you should bring all admittance letters to the State site. If you are not taking a State examination, bring all admittance letters to your chosen testing site. If you have any question please call Tompkins County Department of Human Resources Department (607) 274-5526. The Cross File form is located at <http://www.tompkins-co.org/personnel/CivilSrvForms/index.html>

FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION AND HANDICAPPED PERSONS: If special arrangements for testing are required, please indicate this on your application.

ALL CANDIDATES FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR POSITIONS IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND BOCES GOVERNED BY TOMPKINS COUNTY CIVIL SERVICE MAY HAVE THE FOLLOWING SPECIAL REQUIREMENT. PER CHAPTER 180 OF THE LAWS OF 2000, AND BY REGULATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION, TO BE EMPLOYED IN A POSITION DESIGNATED BY A SCHOOL DISTRICT OR BOCES AS INVOLVING DIRECT CONTACT WITH STUDENTS, A CLEARANCE FOR EMPLOYMENT FROM THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT IS REQUIRED.

In conformance with Section 85-a of the Civil Service Law, children of firefighters and police officers killed in the line of duties shall be entitled to receive an additional ten points in a competitive examination for original appointment in the same municipality in which his or her parent has served. If you are qualified to participate in this examination and are a child of firefighter or police officer killed in the line of duties in this municipality, please inform this office of this matter when you submit your application for examination. A candidate claiming such credit has a minimum of two months from the application deadline to provide the necessary documentation to verify additional credit eligibility. However, no credit may be added after the eligible list has been established.â

BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION: Applicants may be required to undergo a State and national criminal history background investigation, which will include a fingerprint check, to determine suitability for appointment. Failure to meet the standards for the background investigation may result in disqualification.

TOMPKINS COUNTY PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT, 125 EAST COURT STREET, ITHACA, NY 14850