

PTSA Student Publicity Chair

Thank you for taking on the role of Student Publicity Chair. This role is very important, and the work you do this year will bring more recognition to your student group and members. Your main focus will be to create monthly newsletters, publicize your group in your school and community, and submit photos and articles to your school journalism and yearbook departments. Every student group is unique, so showcase your strengths. Meet with your adviser and other officers to determine additional responsibilities for your position. Good luck, and have a wonderful year.

Below is a list of official duties related to your position, but feel free to add to it based on the needs of your group.

- 1) Attend all student group meetings.
- 2) Send articles and photos to your school's journalism & yearbook departments to help other students recognize the contributions from your school's PTSA student group.
- 3) Make morning announcements to promote projects, meetings & activities at school.
- 4) Post a calendar of events to publicize upcoming meetings & events.
- 5) Update the student group social media page and/or website – if the group has one.
- 6) Take photos to document student group events, activities, projects, etc.
- 7) Send articles and photos to the Utah PTA Student Leadership Commissioner, (Todd Hougaard – email: todd@utahpta.org) showing the accomplishments and activities of your PTSA.
- 8) Make public-service announcements, contact local press, send articles and photographs to community newspapers and radio stations.
- 9) Provide a visual record of the year's activities to be used the following year during club rush week and Back to School nights to help recruit future student members.
- 10) Save all published newsletters, signs, calendars & banners as a reference for the next Publicity Chair.
- 11) Assist in training the incoming Student Publicity Chair.

Writing tips

The Publicity Chair is responsible for the creation of all kinds of material meant to share your group's good works. The first step is to make sure you have a good understanding of how to write and what to write. Here are some tips.

- Make it informative. Simplify anything complicated and tell people what is coming up.
- Make it relevant. Irrelevant content can cause readers to disregard your work. If you write about things that aren't pertinent, people may not pay attention when you write about the important things.
- Make it right. Always check your work for errors. You will want to be on the lookout for grammar and spelling mistakes. Also be sure to fact-check — you don't want to communicate the wrong time or date and cause problems for members.
- Make it concise — but complete. Write at a length appropriate for the medium. Obviously, a newsletter article can be longer than a school announcement. Always make it long enough to divulge pertinent information, but not so long that people get bored.

- Make it visually appealing. You will want to include photography and easily readable fonts.
- Make it engaging. You want to help make sure your messaging is relatable. Try to create content that is thought-provoking, conversational, and touching on current trends.
- Make it reflect your student group. In photography and quotes, always be inclusive. Take photographs and share quotes that feature a variety of members. People are more likely to read or like something they feel connected to in some way. The best way to make people feel connected is to be inclusive.
- Before you publish any media, such as photographs, get permission from every person who appears in it. For minors, those under the age of 18, permission from a parent or legal guardian is also required. It could be illegal to do otherwise. A photo release can be found on the Utah PTA website.

Social Media for you student group

Social media can be a great tool for promoting your group and group projects. Creating an account for every social media channel can be a lot of upkeep, so stick to what's most important. Consider creating a private Instagram page where your group can share updates about upcoming projects, events or cool opportunities for members.

Another idea: create a hashtag for your club. Encourage members to use the hashtag when they post pictures from events or give updates on projects.

Newsletters

Suggested ideas for group newsletters and publications

August-September-October

- Back to School information – any PTSA-sponsored events, membership drive, etc.
- Club Rush week information
- Utah PTA Student Leadership Conference (promotion before, and summary after)
- Red Ribbon Week

November-December-January

- Any planned PTSA activities
- Holiday service projects
- Battle of the Bands & Open Mike competitions
- Fundraising ideas – Spirit Nights

February-March-April

- Healthy Relationships Month (February)
- PTSA Day at the Capitol
- White Ribbon Week

- Upcoming student group elections

May-June-July

- New student leader names and contact info
- Farewell to past officers and members
- Promote summer leadership development opportunities

You are your group's public relations ambassador. Good public relations strategies can help your student group recruit new members, improve your school and community image and keep members engaged. That means public relations matters inside and outside your school.

When publicizing your group and/or events within the school:

- Be creative
- Be inclusive in your messaging on fliers and posters — encourage as many people as possible to take an interest
- Promote the group by giving each member talking points to keep a consistent message about the what and why of joining your group.

Outside your school, an important aspect of public relations is to connect with local media outlets such as newspapers, radio stations and television stations.

- The first step is to make a phone call or send an email. Prepare a brief description of your PTSA and Utah PTA, unique facts about your group, number of members, service projects and contributions to local and global causes.
- Create a simple student group fact sheet to use when reaching out. You might work with the student secretary to create and consistently update such a document.
- Best practice encourages persistence, professionalism and politeness. Always include your contact information when sending out any information or press release. And follow up! In fact, don't be afraid to ask questions regarding the process for getting coverage. Your first attempts may not earn much, but they may be the first step to relationships with journalists or community members who turn into your group's allies.

Tips for good photographs

Plan ahead. Don't wait for the right image to come to you — create it. Consider your location, props and composition. Keep the background simple. Make sure the background doesn't distract from the subject and assure nothing behind the subject affects the image. Think about your lighting. Make sure your subject stands in the best light — it might be bright out, but the sun can cast shadows on a face. Capture faces. Expressions, reactions, moments, emotions and action make great photos. The best way to get them is by concentrating on people's faces when taking photos. Avoid shooting mugshots.

*This Publicity Chair Guide has been created using the Key Club Publicity Chair Guide as a template. Refer to keyclub.org for more information.