

# Small Districts need PR too!

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# District Overview:





PRIMARY • ELEMENTARY • INTERMEDIATE • MIDDLE SCHOOL • HIGH SCHOOL • GIBSON TECHNICAL CENTER

- Approximately 1,800 students
- Approximately 330 staff members
- Located 30 minutes south of Springfield
- New middle school opened in February

A progressive district focusing on:

- Standards-based teaching and learning
- Collaborative teams
- Innovative instructional strategies
- Optimal learning environments

Great Place to Learn  
Great Place to Work



[www.rs-wolves.com](http://www.rs-wolves.com)





# District Overview: Reeds Spring





# District Overview: West Platte

- Population of Weston is 1,641
- Located 20 minutes north of Kansas City
- K-12 Campus all in one location
- Approximately 600 students in grades K-12
- Average Composite ACT score: 23
- New construction in 2015-2016: District Office, Sports Complex, Weight Room, High School Science Labs and High School Cafeteria
- New construction to be started in 2017: Two new room additions, renovate preschool and Parents as Teachers and Agriculture Upgrades



The West Platte School District promotes high achievement through exceptional academics, quality staff, personalized learning, strong programs, stable student and teacher population, and state of the art facilities.



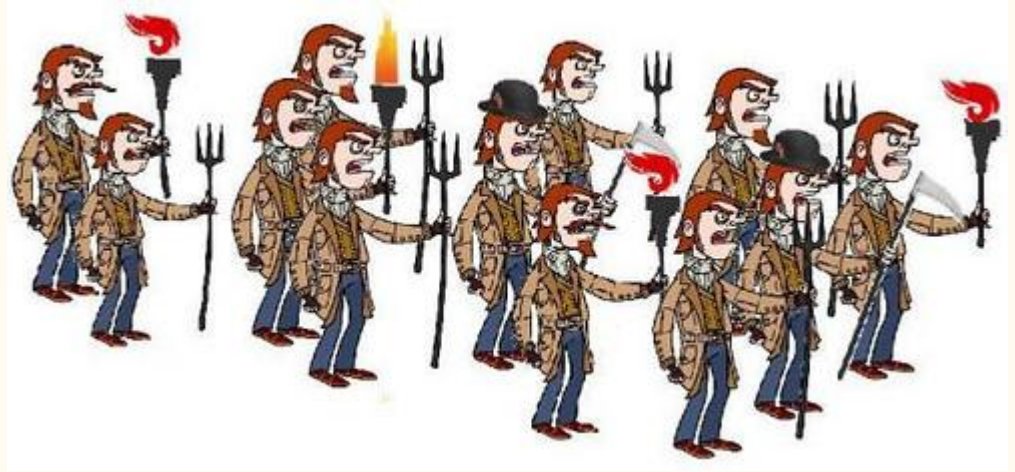
# District Overview: Hallsville

- ❖ Almost 1,400 students
- ❖ 8 administrators, 104 certified staff, 35 support staff
- ❖ Four buildings across campus
- ❖ Located 14 miles north of Columbia
- ❖ Rural, farming area
- ❖ Bedroom community lacking commerce & industry
- ❖ No local newspaper
- ❖ “I want my kids to go to Hallsville.”

# Why School Public Relations?

# Education is Under Attack

- Taxpayers
- Business Groups
- Politicians
- You Need a Guard Dog





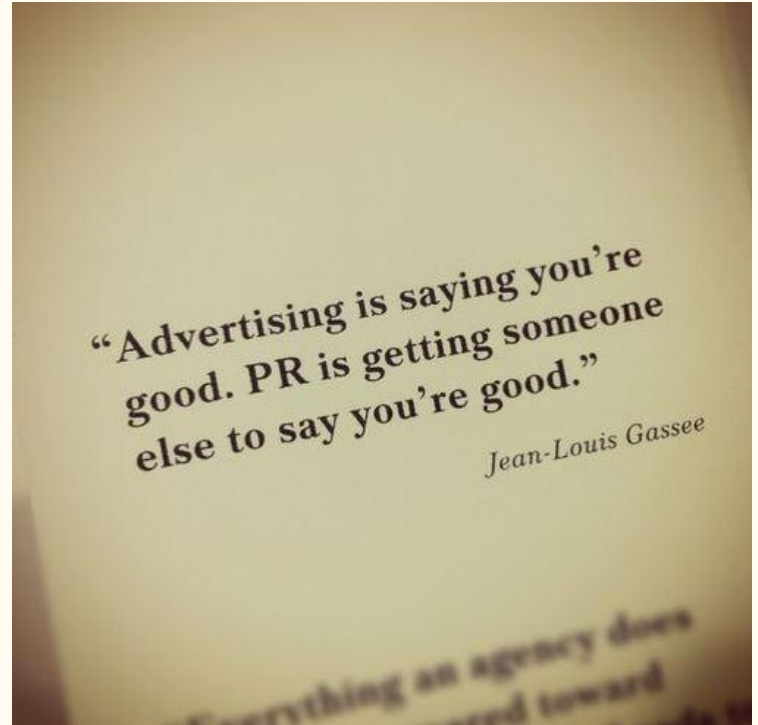
# This is the Media Age

- Communication Needs Have Increased Dramatically
- Print Media
- Electronic Media
- Social Media
- Face-to-Face Communication



# Why School PR?

- “Imagine you/your superintendent doing this...”
- People remember stories.
- Find your audience in today’s world.



How does  
School PR work?



# How does school PR work?



# How does school PR work in Hallsville?

- Internal > External
- Teacher PR Ambassadors
- Parent PR Ambassadors
- Surveys/Emails/Social Media
- Yearbook Class



# How does school PR work at West Platte?

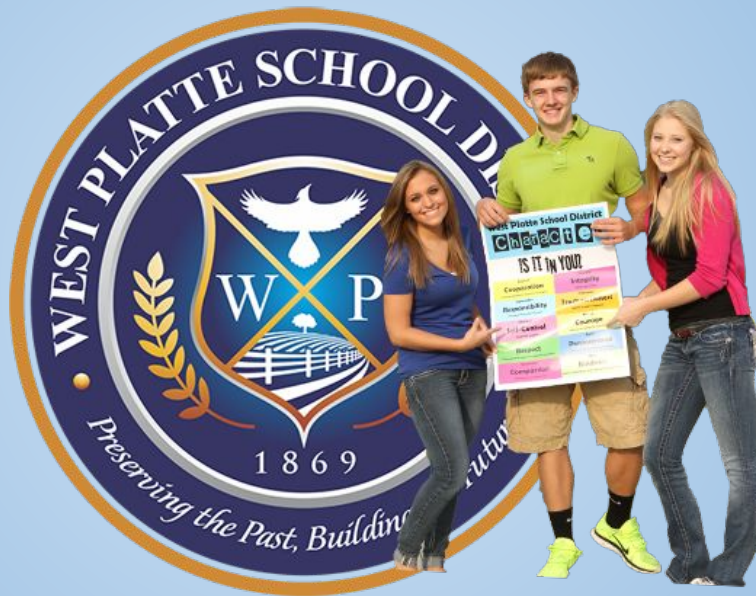
## GOALS:

Get the positive things going on in our nice, small community.

Tell our story: we have opportunities available to our kids other small districts do not have.

Get information out in a fast, accurate way to our parents and community.

Share the great things going on at West Platte.



## ways we communicate:

Newsletter  
Local and Regional Newspaper  
Email  
Blue Jay Connect  
Website  
Facebook  
Twitter  
YouTube

*See Yourself Here.....* WPSD.Net



Why do  
districts need  
Public Relations?

# Why do districts need school PR?

- Acting as voice of the school
- Marketing the district
- Managing the School Foundation
- Building relationships with internal and external stakeholders
- Engaging students, parents, community
- Written into CSIP/MSIP or district/building-level plans
- The next crisis is just around the corner! We have to deal with student safety, social media issues, cyber bullying, communicate accurate information to parents and community
- To build honest, meaningful relationships recognizing both the good and bad in a system on the path to supporting student and school success. (from NSPRA.com)

# Challenges in School PR




# Challenges in school PR

- Searching out stories
- Assumption that school PR is not needed
- One-person department
- Depth of workload & managing priorities
- Not being informed of events
- Ensuring staff, students, administrators, and community all hear the same message even if it takes repeating the message multiple times
- Communicating through written, video, audio and visual
- Monitor and manage reputations on and offline
- Build relationships with media, clubs and industry influencers

# Small District Challenges in School PR

- Money
- Equipment/Resources
- Everyone Knows Everyone Else's Business
- PR person can be the last to find out about event or situation!

A yellow sticky note with a quote about living in a small town. The text is written in a casual, handwritten style. The quote is: "The nice part about living in a small town, is that when you don't know what you are doing, someone else does." The sticky note is slightly tilted and has a soft shadow.

The nice part about  
living in a small town,  
is that when you don't  
know what you are  
doing, someone else does.

Quotesaday.com

# Success in School PR



# School PR success: Reeds Spring



Better ticket sales for  
school foundation  
fundraiser



Increased attendance at annual  
community event



\$100,000+ in  
sponsorships sold

Parent Quote: "In just a short time, you have made a terrific contribution to our community and to the school district.  
Bravo!"

# School PR success: Hallsville



Established  
brand  
consistency &  
recognition



Increased  
revenues  
through  
various  
outlets



# School PR success: West Platte

Our **success** stories are built around **relationships**  
and how we **welcome** new students and their families.



Lunch to welcome new moms to the community and meet other moms!



Struggling student moved here and successfully went from a D student to a B student and a king candidate!



Make our families feel welcome when they visit our school. Show parents their kids are top priority!

Schedule lunch with new moms and **INTRODUCE** them to other moms who have kids in the same grade so they have someone to contact with questions. Make them feel **welcome**!

We try to be **PROACTIVE** so we don't have to be **REACTIVE**. Open and honest with staff, students, families, and community members.

*See Yourself Here.....*WPSD.Net

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