

WSPRA November 2011 Conference

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**Keeping the Spotlight on Your District** – getting positive news out there (in a world where newspaper/television, etc. is constantly changing)

Pewaukee student population: 2,584; city/village population 11,783

1. District size and location is a consideration when attempting to interest the media in your story – does your district have its own local TV station? Do other larger districts compete for the same outlets?
2. Newspapers are changing – more short staffed than ever, preference for submitted photos and articles, online news may be the opposite, need much info to keep fresh; also many communities now have the online news web company – Patch - which may be a good media outlet for you.
3. Staff stretched thin – local club and organization memberships to dispel rumors, spread the news, maybe even bring in donations for projects. Just having a school representative present can go a long way in community relations. For instance, in our district, one chamber business has donated over \$1,000 toward refreshments, books, etc. to make our special events better.
4. Use of Social Media / Facebook / Twitter / Vimeo – in one year went to almost 300 regular “likes” and have 637 impressions on the last post.
5. Photos, movies, and more can be uploaded in many places on the web (always be sure those in the clips and photos have signed releases for this)
6. Working on a referendum – types of positive news to share – start 2-3 years prior to actually holding the referendum. Talk about finances, ways your district is saving \$\$, bond rating, etc.
7. Updating the community on awards and recognition – students, staff, and district.
8. Website – some providers offer tremendous opportunity to get news out quickly and many advantages that include slide shows, video upload, pre-determined dates for notices to go up and be taken off.

--It is important to look at surveys/news circulation statistics/economics/average age in community.... to determine where you would get the most coverage for your dollars. (No two districts are alike, if a community is aging, lower income, and lacks good cell phone coverage, then it may not be beneficial to have most of your communications be electronic.)

--Determine budget for print, budget for electronic, and need for social media.

--Determine how you can measure results – did the community support your referendum? Are you going to survey to check readership of a newsletter (on your own through a company such as Zoomerang or thru a service)?