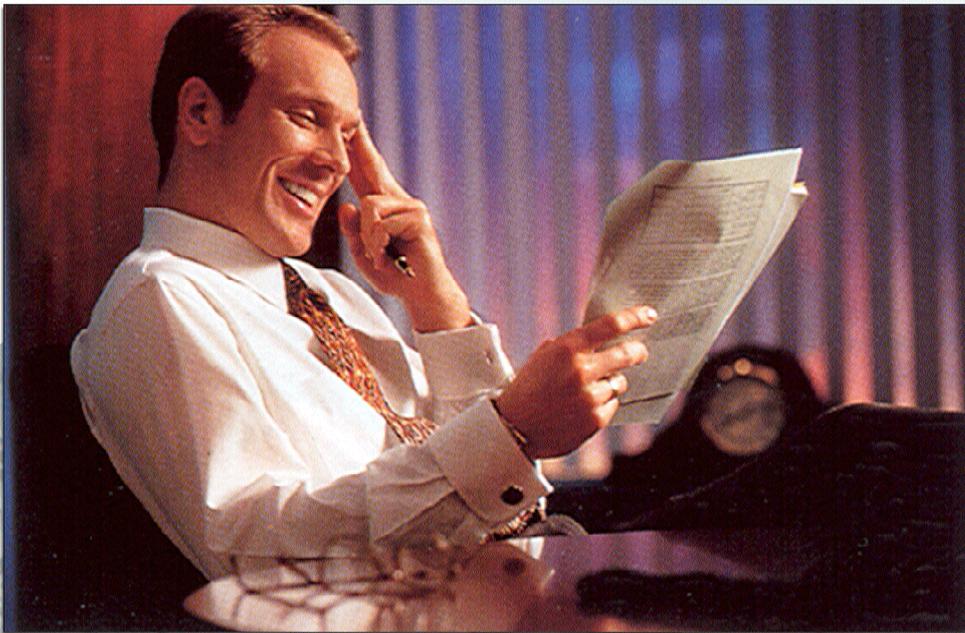


PROS

Public Relations in Our Schools



What Is an Op-Ed Article?

An Op-Ed or Opinion Article is an opinion piece published in a newspaper but written by someone who is not on that newspaper's staff. Many large dailies, smaller dailies, and weekly newspapers use op-eds somewhere in their editorial section. On many large newspapers, that paper's editorials, the editorial cartoon and columns by staff writers

Principals don't have to wait until reporters arrive at their school to obtain coverage in the newspaper. Rather, they may be able to initiate coverage through submitting an op-ed article to their local newspaper. Here is a plan to do that.

will appear on one editorial page. Opposite that page, the op-ed articles will be run, and that's where the term "op-ed" comes from -- it's opposite the editorial page.

The important point is that these articles provide anyone with the chance to publish his or her opinion. You don't have to convince a reporter to come and cover something; you can express your

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Placing An Op-Ed Article

JUNE 2006

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— OP-ED ARTICLE —

opinion. You may see that the presidents of the chamber of commerce or taxpayers association are published in the op-ed columns. This opportunity is available to you, too.

So What Do I Do?

1. First, determine whether newspapers in your area use op-ed articles. You can do this simply by reading the editorial pages. See if national columnists or local officials are published. Read these articles. Become familiar with style, length, format, messages, and anything else that makes them stand out.

2. Second, decide roughly what you would like to write. Sample topics for principals might include:

- **How parents can help students learn**
- **What's right with education**
- **Success of our local school**
- **The importance of a quality education system to our community**
- **The need for resources in education**
- **How the community can support its schools**

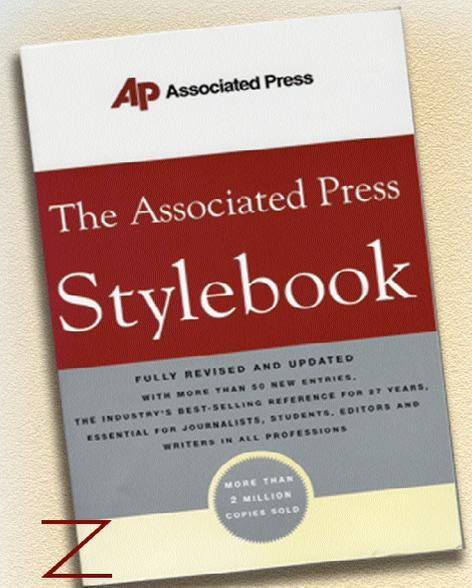
3. Third, determine the newspaper where you would like to submit your op-ed article and find out who makes decisions about those articles at the paper. It's typical to select the largest newspaper in your community and offer the article to that paper on an exclusive basis, meaning you will not submit it



elsewhere until that newspaper decides whether it will use the piece. If that paper publishes the article, you can not later give it to another paper. If the first newspaper does not use your article, you are free to send it elsewhere once the decision to reject is made.

To find out the name of the person in charge of op-ed articles, simply phone the newspaper and ask. On large papers, there will probably be one editor of the op-ed page. On smaller papers, the editorial page editor will make the decision; on weeklies it will probably be the editor or publisher. Give that individual a call and let him or her know your interest in writing an op-ed article and the topic. Focus on why your article is important to the community. Let the editor know you'll offer this exclusively. The editor will hopefully express an interest in looking at your article.

SEE PAGE 3



PERFECTING PUNCTUATION

HOW DO YOU REFERENCE A BOOK REVIEW?

Schatz, B. R. (2000). Learning by text or context? [Review of the book *The social life of information*]. *Science*, 290, 1304.

If the review is untitled, use the material in brackets as the title; retain the brackets to indicate that the material is a description of form and content, not a title.

Identify the type of medium being reviewed in brackets (book, motion picture, television program, etc.).

— OP-ED ARTICLE —

Do not expect to be told that your article will be printed, only that it will be considered. If the editor is

Now You're Ready To Write

interested, ask about length, deadlines, and any other details.

Once the editor has said he or she will consider your article, it's time to write. Include specific examples from your school and community to emphasize your main points. That will make the article much stronger. Write in a crisp, clear style. It's essential to forget educational jargon.

After writing and editing the article, email or deliver it to the op-ed editor (in your initial conversation, it would be wise to ask how the paper would like to receive the article). The sooner you can get this done after your phone conversation the better, because your proposal will be fresh in the editor's mind. If you mail your article, it's okay to phone the editor a few days later to confirm that the article has been received and inquire when a decision might be made.

Frequent phone calls, however, will bug the editor, hurt your chances of publication, and are inappropriate.

About Yourself

It's appropriate to include a few sentences about yourself since some newspapers identify the writer of op-ed articles. This should not be your resume, but one or two sentences.

Afterwards

If your article is used, it would be appropriate to write a thank you note to the person who made the decision. You should develop a relationship with this individual for the future.

If there are key people in your community who should see the message in your op-ed article, send copies of it to them. Having your message published adds credibility to it – make use of that. Appropriate people to see your message might be state legislators, locally-elected officials, business leaders, parent group leaders, etc.

– Used with permission of PrincipalsPartnership.com

“Well Said”



Education makes people easy to lead, but difficult to drive; easy to govern, but impossible to enslave.

– Henry Peter Broughan



A child cannot be taught by anyone who despises him, and a child cannot afford to be fooled.

– James Baldwin



I have never met a man so ignorant that I couldn't learn something from him.

– Galileo Galilei

TAKE A MINUTE TO CHECK OUT THESE RECOMMENDED WEB SITES

CLICK HERE



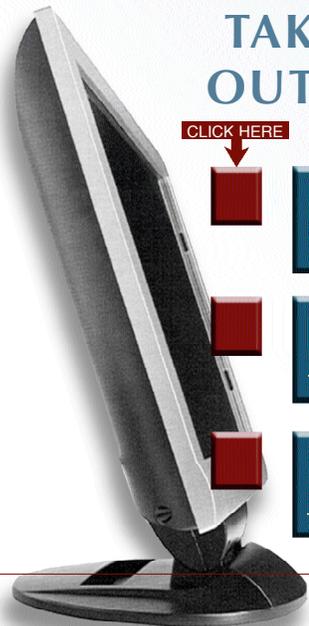
SHEFFIELD HIGH SCHOOL
<http://www.scs.k12.al.us/shs.htm>



PRINCIPALS PARTNERSHIP
<http://www.PrincipalsPartnership.com>



NATIONAL SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOC.
<http://www.NSPRA.org>





OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR AWARD

Deadline for Nominations July 21, 2006

The Outstanding Educator Award recognizes a PRSA member who has made a significant contribution to the advancement of public relations education through college or university teaching.

JUDGING CRITERIA:

Teaching: Demonstrate the nominee's excellence in teaching based on contemporary, research-based knowledge of public relations, outstanding lectures and casework, and the development of teaching aids and methods.

Research: Cite examples of the nominee's research and writing that advances the teaching and practice of public relations.

Involvement with students: Explain how the nominee supported student activities, including counseling, placement assistance and advising groups such as PRSSA.

Involvement in the profession: Demonstrate how the nominee has served the advancement of the profession through involvement in professional organizations or creation of professional development programs.

Call 212-460-1456 or go to www.awards@prsa.org

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The BAMFORD-LAHEY CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION

funds projects with broad implications for the learning and use of spoken language in children with developmental language disorders. More information is available online at <http://bamford-lahey.org/guidelines>



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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN JUNE

State Board of Education Meeting
Auditorium, Gordon Persons Bldg.,
Montgomery, AL
June 8, 2006 – 9:30 a.m.

AMSTI Summer Institute
University of Alabama – Huntsville
(UAH) and another new site to be
determined.
June 19-30, 2006
Contact Steve Ricks, 334-242-8256.

**State Board of Education
Work Session**
Plaza 104, Gordon Persons Bldg.,
Montgomery, AL
June 22, 2006 – 10:30 a.m.

**Safe and Sound: Keeping Children
and Families Safe Through Sound
Emergency Practices**
Sheraton Birmingham Hotel
Birmingham-Jefferson Convention
Complex, Birmingham, AL
June 27-29, 2006
No cost; registration is required.
(Contact Prevention and Support
Services, 334-242-8165.)

**CLAS Annual Summer Convention –
Building Leaders**
Riverview Plaza Hotel & Mobile
Convention Center, Mobile, AL
June 25-28, 2006
Register at
www.clasleaders.org

CLICK HERE



AETC Conference
June 27-30, 2006
Contact Technology Office,
334-242-9594.

