



# How to Write Press Releases (That Get Published)



In the Information Age, reporters and editors are inundated with story ideas daily. Getting your story out in the world requires a multi-pronged approach:

- Develop “trusting” relationships with the press
- Offer reporters potential access to further and future content (“scoops”)
- Issue your release on a Tuesday; midweek is the driest when it comes to news
- Though a few media may print your release verbatim, write to invite a follow up

Writing Style:

- Look at existing articles from the publisher and mirror their style
- Don’t use the first person (I, we), except in quotes
- Write in the past tense (“....”, said Jim Beam, Director of Spirits)
- Keep sentences short and informational
- Credit your Board and Superintendent/President/Director
- Include anything your benefactor (grant provider, sponsor, partner) would want mentioned. They may even have a sample release from which you can draw language and content.

## Press Release Template

[Letterhead with info for your main contact.]

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**[5-10 word snappy and descriptive title]**

*[Additional line in italics with a bit more detail, mentions benefactors by name, if any]*

**Jan. 14, 20xx --** [Paragraph 1: 50-75 word intro that summarizes the project succinctly]

[Paragraph 2: 50-75 words to elaborate]

[Paragraph 3: 50-75 word context info-- challenges this helps meet and how this project fits in with your other initiatives]

[Paragraph 4: 30-40 word closer, looking to the future-- how this is going to help move you forward]

Intersperse: 2-3 short quotes, 1 to 2 sentences max, that elucidate the content before them.

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*Sample on reverse*

## Press Release Sample

HAMILTON REGIONAL SCHOOLS

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*Photo courtesy of Hamilton Regional Schools*

**Caption:** A school-based market is part of the district's new NJDOE-approved Marketing CTE program.

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **Beyond Vocational**

*District leverages Career Academy model to access federal funding*

**Feb. 24, 2020--** An engineering student uses a computer-assisted drafting application to design a kitchen utensil, then uploads it to a lasercutter to create a model from wood. A digital arts student crafts a 3D world using physics software and has classmates interact in a virtual reality simulator. A business student develops plans for a shop downtown, then makes her vision come to life in an empty storefront. These aren't vocational school programs; students at Hamilton Regional's two high schools now have these opportunities and more.

Through the academies, the schools have developed over a dozen new partnerships, internships, courses and learning pathways unique in the state. "Our Career Academies inspired us to rethink space, technology, materials, and teaching methods," said Assistant Superintendent Dr. Marc Natanagara. "And after the first months, new ideas flowed constantly from staff, students, and community members."

Grants from the Hovchild Foundation, the Gruber Foundation, the Office of Army Research, and the NJDOE have helped train teachers, renovate rooms, buy equipment, and provide summer STEAM camps. A \$30k grant from the United Way of Winston and Salem Counties is funding a program at High School South to help prepare students for vocational schools.

According to the [National Center for Educational Statistics](#), the average number of career and technical education (CTE) credits earned by U.S. public high school graduates declined from 4.2 to 3.6 between 1990 to 2009. But by 2018, 94% of students were served by CTE programs, increasingly in non-vocational high schools.

The Office of CTE defines a "Program of Study" to include a minimum 3-course sequence, dual college credit, industry-valued credentials, and real world experiences like job shadowing, internships, and research projects. Program approval provides schools with access to the federal Perkins V grant, currently worth over \$140,000 to the district. Three applications were approved in February-- Engineering, Game Design, and Finance-- providing a funding resource for these programs and more well into the future.

With the district losing millions in state aid, progress on these fronts couldn't come at a better time. "Despite funding cuts over the past 10 years, grants combined with staff ingenuity have allowed us to innovate and provide exemplary opportunities for students," said Superintendent Bloom.

To quote the Association for Career and Technical Education, "CTE prepares students for the high wage and high demand career fields of the 21st Century," a goal Hamilton Regional is committed to.

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