

Administrative Procedure 600

MEDIA RELATIONS AND PROTOCOL

Background

The Superintendent is committed to the principle of open, two-way communication with the Division's internal and external stakeholders. The Superintendent believes in developing and maintaining an open and professional relationship with the media. In accordance with this commitment, the Superintendent employs a Communications Officer with a primary purpose of establishing and maintaining effective Division and school communication.

Division staff shall strive to foster quality relationships with the media and to establish a climate of communication that is open, ethical, credible and professional.

Procedures

1. To maximize media opportunities and to enhance the position of the Division and schools, the following procedures shall apply:
 - 1.1 In all cases of media communications, the provision of FOIP Act, Board Policy and administrative procedures must be respected.
 - 1.2 The Board Chair or the Superintendent shall authorize news releases on behalf of the Division.
 - 1.3 The Communications Officer, under the direction of the Superintendent shall coordinate communication with the media.
 - 1.4 At the school level, the Principal shall be the primary spokesperson.
 - 1.5 All school-based news releases must be cleared through the Communications Officer prior to release. This excludes school events specific to one school and not impacting any other segment of the Division's operations; i.e., a school talent show. A copy of any school news release is to be shared with Division Office.
 - 1.6 All news releases or other forms of communication regarding any Division operation, including school issued communications, must be accurate, complete and timely.

- 1.7 The Communication Officer, under the direction of the Superintendent will plan and implement all major media announcements and news conferences.
- 1.8 In the event of a critical incident at a school site, all media communications are to be directed to Superintendent and the Communication Officer until such time as a site-based media spokesperson contact is established. In such cases, direct on-site communication by students and staff with the media is to be coordinated through the media spokesperson and are otherwise discouraged.
- 1.9 Only individuals designated as official corporate spokespersons may serve as spokesperson for the Division. The following individuals are designated as official corporate spokespersons:
 - 1.9.1 Board Chair – addresses Board policies and decisions.
 - 1.9.2 Superintendent – addresses Division operation and actions.
 - 1.9.3 Principals – on school specific operations or activities.
- 1.10 Regular school newsletters are to be provided for families with children enrolled in Division schools.
- 1.11 The Superintendent or Communication Officer will contact the media to make press releases or provide coverage for local events.
- 1.12 Media representatives may be invited to school events by the Principal with proper notification to the Communication Officer.
- 1.13 Media representatives shall not be allowed to disrupt the normal operation of a school or a class for the sole purpose of information gathering;
 - 1.13.1 To prevent disruption, interviewing Division employees and/or students during regular class times shall not be permitted.
- 1.14 Media representatives may be asked by the Principal or Division staff to leave the premises or grounds where it is deemed to be in the best interests of the students and staff to do so.



Reference: Education Act 196, 197, 222 Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act	
	Date Approved: April 1, 2021
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References shall be updated as required and do not require additional approval.

