



Every effort shall be made to assist the press and other communications media to obtain accurate information about the program, planning, and activities of the Division.

In order that the Division publicly is given wide coverage and is coordinated into a common effort and purpose, the following procedures will be followed in giving official information to the news media:

1. The Board Chairperson and the Superintendent/CEO or designates shall be the official spokespersons for the Division.
2. News releases that are of a system-wide or sensitive nature or pertain to Board Policy are the responsibility of the Superintendent who is responsible for the coordination of information to the media.
3. Promoting of school programs and activities at one school are the responsibility of the principal of that particular school.
4. School employees contacted by the news media may, with the approval of the principal, respond, but only within the scope of their responsibility and knowledge. Individuals should not attempt to speak for the Division, for other employees, or discuss topics with which they are not familiar or are outside their realm of responsibility.
5. Students and employees may be interviewed during the school day only with the approval of the principal or Superintendent, and only when, in the judgement of the principal or the Superintendent, such interviews do not disrupt the educational program and/or the health, safety, welfare, and privacy of students or employees.

Filming of students under the age of majority or staff within Division buildings, or the electronic transmission of photographs through computer networks must only be done with the approval of the individual, the principal, and the permission of the students' parent(s)/guardian(s). Parents/guardians who do not wish their children to be interviewed or identified by news media must caution their children and convey their wishes to the principal. Students who have reached the age of majority may exercise their right to participate without parental permission.

Every possible effort should be made to obtain coverage of school activities that will create and maintain a dignified and responsible image for the Division.

News Releases

The Board shall encourage sound relations with the press and other communications media. The Superintendent shall plan for periodic releases to the press and other communications media which will provide information to the community concerning divisional programs and plans. News media representatives shall be welcome to attend all regular and special meetings of the Board.

Any news releases written about or on behalf of the Division should be read and approved by the Superintendent/CEO, the Board, or the Chair before being released to the news media.

News releases regarding a particular school should be read and approved by the Principal of that school.



News Conferences And Interviews

Any news conferences or interviews given by any staff member on topics that pertain to the Division should be approved and/or attended by the Superintendent or a representative appointed by the Board.

The following guidelines are included to assist personnel.

- If you can answer a reporter's or parent's question in your area of responsibility, do so honestly.
- Respond quickly to requests for information.
- Avoid educational jargon where possible.
- Don't be afraid to say "I don't know. I will find out and call you back."
- Nothing can be assumed to be off the record.
- Never request a reporter to show you a story before it is published.
- The media should be given access to all documents that are of a public nature.
- Never play favourites. Treat all forms of the media and the general public equally well.
- Avoid making statements reflecting personal beliefs or opinions. Responses should be objective, brief, and to the point.