

Administrative Procedure 150

MEDIA RELATIONS

Background

The Division has an obligation to keep the electorate accurately informed about Division activities. One mechanism for achieving this objective is the use of print, radio and television media.

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

Procedures

To maximize media opportunities and to enhance the position of the Division and of our schools, the following procedures shall apply:

1. In all cases of media communications, the provision of the FOIP Act and Board Policy must be respected.
2. The Board Chair or the Superintendent shall authorize news release development and distribution on behalf of the Division.
3. All school media releases must be authorized by the Division.
4. All news releases or other forms of communication regarding any Division operation, including school-issued communications, must be accurate, complete and timely. School contacts should coordinate development of any media contact or plans with the Manager of Communications.
5. Division office will plan and implement all major media announcements and news conferences.
6. In the event of a critical incident at a school site, all media communications are to be directed to Division office until such time as a site-based media spokesperson contact is identified. In such cases, direct on-site communication by students and staff with the media is to be coordinated through the Manager of Communications and are otherwise discouraged.
7. Inform the Superintendent and/or Manager of Communications immediately if a significant incident occurs in your school or community that may threaten the safety of students or staff. They will contact our Alberta Education Field Services liaison manager as soon as possible, as Alberta Education may be able to provide us with valuable support in a crisis situation.

8. Only individuals designated as official corporate spokespersons may serve as spokesperson for the Division. The following individuals are designated as official corporate spokespersons:
 - Board Chair or delegate – addresses Board policies and decisions
 - Superintendent or delegate – addresses Division operation and actions
 - Manager of Communications – addresses general Division inquiries and/or identifies internal subject matter experts to be connected with media
 - Principals or delegate – on school-specific operations or activities
 - Experts or specialists designated by the Superintendent
9. The Superintendent, Manager of Communications, or delegate will contact media to issue news releases or to invite them to attend Division or community events.
10. The principal or delegate is authorized to contact local media to invite them to attend special school events.
11. Media representatives may be asked by Principal or Division staff to leave a Division facility or property if it is deemed to be in the best interests of the students and staff.

Reference: Section 27, 60, 61, 113, School Act
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
Policy 5 – Role of the Board Chair