

MEDIA RELATIONS

Background

The release of pertinent information to the media regarding Division philosophies and operations is an important vehicle by which the public may become better informed about educational concerns. The purpose, therefore, is to inform, enlighten and educate the public with regard to the direction education is taking in this Division, and in so doing, to increase public awareness and understanding of the educational process at all levels.

Hence, the Division will:

- Communicate to all publics, through all available media, at appropriate times, information relating to the plans, programs, problems, and operations of the school system; specifically excluding information pertaining to all contracts, collective and otherwise, under negotiation and personal matters affecting an individual's relationship with the school system. It is recognized that discretion must be used in communicating information about plans and programs during developmental stages to avoid public uncertainty, confusion, and misapprehension.
- Foster an atmosphere which makes two-way communication between trustees, administration, teaching and support staff, parents,, students and the general public a vital force in the continuing improvement of the Division's schools.
- Conduct surveys and consultations to ascertain public attitudes about the schools and their programs while conveying constructive suggestions for consideration in the planning of policies and programs.

Procedures

1. The Board Chair, Superintendent, Secretary Treasurer, and Committee Chair, shall be the only authorized spokes-person on Board matters, unless the Board specifies otherwise by resolution.
2. Copies of the agendas and minutes of all open meetings shall be made available to local media outlets.
3. Media releases which accurately communicate the Board's business to the public may be issued by the Superintendent or designate or by Board resolution.
4. Official information shall only be released which is deemed to have value in promoting and furthering the cause of education, and/or clarifying Division policy or procedures.
5. All official information released to the media from the Division Office shall receive prior approval from the Superintendent or designate. Wherever possible, such media releases shall be reviewed by trustees.

6. Informational items from schools which enhance the educational climate of that school in the community or Division may be released to the media by the Principal or Division Office personnel.
 - 6.1 Sensitive media requests received at the school will be directed to the Superintendent or designate.
7. Media representatives shall not be allowed to disrupt the normal operation of Division Office, a school or a class for the sole purpose of information gathering. This includes the interviewing of Division employees and/or students during the regular school day.
8. 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.

Adopted/Revised: JUN 2016/NOV 2019

Reference: Section 33, 52, 53, 55, 67, 68, 196, 197, 204, 222, 225, 256 Education Act
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act