



ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINE

Title: Communications and Media Relations

Effective Date: January 2019

Responsibility: Director of Education

Rationale

The Near North District School Board recognizes that the provision of open, timely and appropriate information to our school communities, parents, students, the public and the media is necessary to strengthen relationships, promote program activities of the Board and remain open and transparent to constituents. Further, the Near North District School Board is responsible for providing education and communications that are barrier-free and accessible in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and associated Regulations.

Principles:

It is the intention of the Near North District School Board to encourage, promote and maintain open, accessible, timely and transparent communication with both its internal and external stakeholders; that is clear, accurate and supportive of the Board's commitment to provide quality education to educate learners to their fullest potential in order to prepare for life-long

- 1.3 All communication within the organization and external to the organization shall:
- a. Be provided openly, honestly and with integrity;
 - b. Contain accurate, timely, and understandable information;
 - c. Function two ways, with the creation of opportunities for meaningful dialogue;
 - d. Be prepared in an inclusive manner;
 - e. Be respectful, courteous and uphold the principles of the Human Rights Code.

Section 2 - Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Chair of the Board

The Board Chair is the official spokesperson for the Board of Trustees with respect to all external communications on matters under consideration by the Board, as well as explaining Board positions and decisions including budget and policy decisions.

2.2 Trustees

Trustees are not to speak on behalf of the Board unless authorized to do so by the Board Chair.

2.3 Director of Education

The Director of Education is the official spokesperson for the Board with respect to administrative matters and day to day operational matters.

2.4 Communications Officer

Under the supervision of the Director of Education, the Information/ Communications Officer is responsible for the review, coordination and issuance of all releases of information with respect to the Board and its operations.

2.5 Principals

Principals or supervisors are the official spokesperson for their individual school and are responsible for creating communication links with their local media personnel and for providing information on school specific activities.

2.6 Employees

Employees are responsible for referring requests for information and/or any sensitive matters to their immediate supervisor for further action and/or response.

Section 3 - Responding to Concerns

Public Inquiries

- 3.1 All response to Public Inquiries shall adhere to the requirements and process identified in the Administrative Guideline – Public Inquiries.

Section 4 - Media Inquiries and Response

Media Releases

The Information/Communications Officer is responsible for issuing system-initiated releases of information as part of an ongoing communications plan. These information releases will highlight Board initiatives and provide up to date information for students, parents, community partners, and all stakeholders with in the Near North District School Board jurisdiction.

Media releases issued on behalf of the Board of Trustees or Director of Education are generated and administered by the Information/Communications Officer. Request to issue media releases by Board of Trustee Members is to be done through the Board Chair. Prior to issuance, the media release shall be approved by either the Board Chair or Director of Education.

