

## Policy 20 - Communications

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The Division is committed to the principle of open, two-way communication with its internal and external publics. The purpose of communications in the Division is to achieve the following goals:

- To articulate and explain the Division's educational program activities and general operation to our staff, communities, parents and students.
- It is the Board's philosophy that everything that the Division does is a matter of public interest and concern.
- To "spotlight" and celebrate school, student and staff achievements, activities, and special events.
- To create opportunities for meaningful involvement of students, parents, and the community in decisions that affect them.
- Promotion of public interest and participation in the school system.
- Provision of objective, continuous, and comprehensive information about the school system.

### Specifically

1. The Division will maintain a unified corporate image in its style, presentation, and direction as outlined in the Administrative Procedure 158 - Brand identity. This unified approach will serve as the basis of communication activities to be planned and implemented at the school/community level.
2. Communication media can be categorized and described as follows:
  - 2.1. Website and Social Media:  
General Information about the Division and each of its schools is available on the Division website <https://www.clearview.ab.ca/>. Communications outlined below may also be shared through the website and social media, such as Facebook and Twitter.
  - 2.2. Board Highlights: Shortly after each Board meeting, Board Highlights will be distributed to all staff and media.
  - 2.3. Education Plan: The Division's approved Three Year Education Plan and Annual Education Results Report are forwarded to Alberta Education, distributed to all schools, school councils, the website, and the media.

- 2.4. Clearview Spotlights: Clearview Spotlights celebrate student, school and staff achievements, activities, and special events taking place in the school system. Spotlights appear on the Division's website and are distributed to the media.
  - 2.5. School Communications: Principals may communicate directly with the media on items of school-specific celebrations and recognition, or general information on school operations to help inform communities. Other communications are the responsibility of the Superintendent.
3. Media Relations
- 3.1. Information releases, which accurately communicate the Board's business to the public, may only be issued by persons authorized by the Board.
  - 3.2. The Board Chair shall act as the official spokesperson for the Board except for those instances where the Board has delegated this role to another individual or group.
  - 3.3. The Superintendent shall act as the official spokesperson for Division operations and approve all information released to the media from the Central Services' office.
  - 3.4. Employees who receive inquiries from the media shall contact the Principal and/or Superintendent prior to responding.
  - 3.5. Representatives of the media may be permitted onto Division sites for legitimate reporting and promotional purposes. This is at the discretion of the Principal or Director responsible.
  - 3.6. Media representatives shall not be allowed to disrupt the normal operation of a site or a class for the sole purpose of information gathering. This includes the interviewing of Division employees and/or students during regular class times.
  - 3.7. Media representatives may be asked by the Principal or Supervisor responsible to leave the premises or grounds where it is deemed to be in the best interests of the students and staff to do so.
  - 3.8. Communications guidelines related to dealing with crisis situations shall follow those outlined in the Incident Response Plan.
  - 3.9. School-Specific Media Relations
    - 3.9.1. Principals shall approve all information sent from their schools to the media.
    - 3.9.2. The Principal shall act as the primary spokesperson on school-specific matters. A designated school spokesperson may speak with the media as required.
    - 3.9.3. The Principal would consult with the Superintendent regarding the release of information to the media where such information is outside of

school-specific celebrations, recognition, or general information on school operations to help inform communities.

- 3.9.4. Provide guidance and direction to staff members who are required to speak to the media
- 3.9.5. In accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act where it is a public school event, the event is considered to be public and anyone in attendance may take photographs without first obtaining consent.
- 3.9.6. Particular care must be exercised in protecting the rights of students when media are present. Care shall be taken by the school/site to recognise requirements under applicable legislation/regulation/policy to protect the privacy of individuals, including knowledge of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy administrative procedure.
- 3.9.7. Legal guardian consent must be obtained before allowing those outside the school, including parents, visitors, or media, to take photographs of students in school, classrooms, and at non-public events. Consent is required only if individual students are identifiable in the pictures.

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Reference: Section 33, 52, 53, 55, 67, 68, 196, 197, 204, 222, 225, 256 Education Act

Effective: May 21, 2009  
Amended: November 10, 2020