CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF EASTERN ONTARIO
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BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

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1013 Media Relations

DIRECTIONAL POLICY

1000 Positive Communications

Title of Administrative Procedure:

Media Relations

Date Approved: October 2025

Projected Review Date: October 2030

Directional Policy Alignment:

The Media Relations Administrative Procedure aligns with Directional Policy 1000 - Positive Communications by supporting the Board's commitment to provide accurate, clear, timely and accessible communication regarding programs, services, events and activities.

Alignment with Multi-Year Strategic Plan:

The Media Relations Administrative Procedure outlines the Board's commitment to maintain positive and proactive media relations, which assists the Board in the implementation and promotion of its vision and strategic priorities.

CDSBEO Strategic Plan 2025-2030

Purpose

The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario recognizes the important role the media plays in providing timely and important information to the communities the Board serves. The Board values its relationship with the media and is committed to maintaining proactive and positive media relations. The Board understands the deadline-orientated environment in which the media operates and is committed to providing timely and accurate responses to media inquiries.

Guidelines:

- The Chair of the Board is the spokesperson for the Board.

- The Director of Education and Communications Lead shall approve and/or designate other Board spokespersons on a case-by-case basis as appropriate.
- All media inquiries concerning Board operations are to be directed to the Communications Lead.
- All release of information to the media will be subject to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the Education Act, Board policies and all other pertinent acts and regulations.

Responsibilities

The Board Chair is responsible for:

- Acting as Board official spokesperson to the public, on matters that fall under Board of Trustees' responsibilities (Education Act, s.218.4) or their designate
- Directing media inquiries to the Communications Lead for follow-up

Trustees are responsible for:

- Directing media inquiries to the Board Chair and the Communications Lead for follow-up
- Reviewing the Media Relations Administrative Procedure as part of its regular policy and procedure review cycle
- Any communication between a Trustee and the media regarding local matters must be aligned with this procedure and the Trustee Code of Conduct

The Director of Education is responsible for:

- Directing media inquiries to the Communications Lead for follow-up
- Delegating Board staff to respond to the media on behalf of the Board as appropriate
- Approving Board-issued media releases and communications as appropriate

Superintendents of Schools and Managers are responsible for:

- Notifying the Communications Lead about media opportunities or high-profile events occurring at the school prior to the event.
- Directing all media inquiries to the Communications Lead for follow-up
- Ensuring any employee for whom they have supervisory responsibility is compliant with the requirements under this Administrative Procedure
- Under the direction of the Director of Education, providing media responses for matters that fall under their responsibility and/or expertise
- Assisting the Communications Department with providing timely and accurate responses to the media

The Communications Lead is responsible for:

- Preparing and distributing all system-level media releases and communications
- Gathering and providing timely and accurate responses to media inquiries
- Maintaining proactive and positive media relations with local and regional media
- Providing media relations support to schools
- Identifying opportunities to engage media in Board and school activities
- Liaising with media at Board-wide or system-level media events

Principals and Vice-Principals are responsible for:

- Notifying the Communications Lead about school-level media opportunities or high-profile events occurring at the school prior to the event
- Directing all media inquiries to the Communications Lead for follow-up
- Acting as spokesperson for their individual school
- Assisting Communications in providing timely and accurate responses to the media when required
- Informing staff of the process around media inquiries
- Maintaining positive relations with local media, facilitating positive media coverage about staff and student activities, and inviting media to school-level events as part of school promotion around school initiatives and accomplishments
- Deferring media requests about provincial or system-level education matters, or any sensitive matters that may result in negative media coverage to the Communications Lead
- Informing the Communications Lead about school-level concerns that may garner media attention or pose a public relations issue to the Board
- Ensuring all students who participate in media activities at the school or Board have the appropriate media consent, including a signed copy of the Use and Disclosure of Student Information and Image form

Staff are responsible for:

- Directing all media inquiries to their school principal
- Obtaining principal permission for any proposed media activity in the school
- Notifying the school principal of any media activity or requests prior to responding and/or prior to the media attending a school event
- Ensuring all students in their classroom have the appropriate consent to participate in school-level media activities

Members of the media are responsible for:

- Obtaining permission from the school principal before attending/entering school property
- Obtaining permission from the school principal to conduct interviews on school property, to take photographs or record video or audio on school property, and using due diligence to ensure that all students have the appropriate media consent before capturing footage of any students on school property

Progress Indicators

- Regular news stories highlighting good news from the Board on a local and provincial level

References

- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Education Act
- Use of Student Information and Image