

Administrative Procedures

<p>AP-412</p> <p>ACCESS TO SCHOOLS</p>	<p>Date of implementation: Fall 2006</p> <p>Date of update: September 27, 2022</p>
	<p>Related Administrative Procedures:</p> <p>AP 421- Media Relations and Division Communications</p> <p>AP-430 External Provider Involvement in Schools</p> <p>AP-434 Volunteers</p>

Purpose: Schools are places where students and staff are required to be during the school day. It is, therefore, important to be mindful of who is granted access to these spaces. This AP is intended to guide school administration to exercise discretion in granting individuals and organizations access to schools, classrooms, school facilities and grounds for the purpose of maintaining learning spaces that are safe and caring for the whole learning community.

1) General

- a) Schools are not open public spaces. All visitors to a school must make their presence known to the school administration. Signage to this effect will be present at the main entrance to the school.
- b) School administration determines right of access to the school premises (classrooms and grounds).
- c) If a visitor refuses to comply with the direction of school administration, the visitor shall be treated as a trespasser and necessary safety protocols will be enacted.

2) Sales and Commercial

- a) No individual or organization is to be allowed access to a school for the purpose of selling or promoting articles, items, materials, travel/trips, supplies unless prior permission has been granted by the Director or designate in consultation with school administration.
- b) The school administrator may authorize sales and promotions coordinated and conducted by students, related to the funding of school or community activities, and which are consistent with the guiding principles of the Division.
- c) Unless approved by the Director or designate, and in keeping with *The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (LAFOIP), access to school and student data should never be provided for promotional, commercial or political purposes.

3) Media Access

- a) See AP-421 Media Relations and Division Communications.

4) Political Organizations and Processes

- a) No individual or group seeking to exclusively promote the philosophy, platform or policies of one political party over those of another shall have access to the school.
- b) To foster the democratic process, help bring understanding of democracy and to further the concept of citizenship education, school administration may grant access to representatives of political parties during recognized election campaign periods or at times of significant local, provincial or national debate.
- c) When requested, the Director or designate may make provision for schools to be used to help conduct local, provincial or federal government elections.

5) Relationships with Various Faiths and Religions

- a) The Division recognizes that our society contains numerous different faiths, religions, religious and spiritual philosophies and sets of spiritual beliefs. As a public education system, the Division and its employees will consistently strive to honour and respect this diversity, but will favour no one faith perspective over another.

6) Outside Agencies

- a) Schools can be seen as practical places for provincial agencies, such as Child and Family Services, Health (Addictions and Mental Health), to connect with and support students and families. In consultation with the learning superintendent, schools are supported to provide access for these purposes in ways that are least disruptive to student learning and to the work of the school.
- b) Police agencies shall not be provided direct access to students for routine investigative work that is not related to school and student safety and/or child protection, and that could take place outside of the school day.
- c) Schools should not provide privately contracted health providers, educators (tutors) or researchers access to students, classrooms or school property without permission from the learning superintendent.

7) Guest Speakers, Performances and Spokespersons

- a) There is great value to the learning community in bringing guest speakers, performances and spokespersons to schools. Personal experience alone does not necessarily make a guest speaker, a performance or spokesperson an authority or qualify them to speak in schools on complex and sensitive issues related to mental health, wellness, diversity, etc.

- b) School administration must take steps to ensure that guest speakers, performances and spokespersons appropriately contribute to curricular learning in safe, caring and appropriate ways.
- c) School administration must consider the whole learning community in planning for guest speakers, performances and/or spokespersons and plan accordingly.

8) Volunteers

- a) Volunteers must be approved in advance by the principal after consultation with the teaching staff.
- b) Volunteers shall work under the direct supervision of a teacher or principal.
- c) Volunteers shall not to have access to confidential records or student progress reports.
- d) Volunteers, including parents, involved in any activities involving direct, unsupervised contact with students are to be required to submit to a police criminal records check as noted in AP-501 Recruitment and Placement (section 7).

References:

[*The Education Act, 1995, Sections 175 and 367*](#)

[*The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*](#)