

## Administrative Procedures

<b>AP-421</b>  <b>MEDIA RELATIONS AND DIVISION COMMUNICATIONS</b>	<b>Date of implementation:</b> May 2009 <b>Date of update:</b> October 9, 2019
	<b>Related Administrative Procedures:</b>

**Purpose:** The purpose of this administrative procedure is to outline how media relations are handled, as well as to ensure strong internal and external communications.

The Director has been given the responsibility to ensure positive internal and external communications are developed and maintained. Communication with internal and external audiences supports the vision and work of the Board of Education and Administration.

### 1) Media Relations

Prairie Spirit School Division recognizes the valuable role the media plays in informing the public about our schools, programs and initiatives. The Division also recognizes its obligation to protect our students and staff from unwelcome intrusions into the operation of its schools and to ensure privacy legislation is followed by members of the media.

#### a) Division

- The Director or Designate shall approve all information released to the media from the Division. Media releases for the Division shall be developed by the Communication Manager.
- The Director of Education and the Board Chair, or their Designate, are the media spokespeople for the Division.
- In the event of crisis or emergency situations, the Director/Designate shall determine what information will be given to the media, and by whom.

#### b) Schools

- The Principal, in consultation with the Director/Designate and the Communication Manager, must approve any information released by the school to the media. The exception would be sports scores and sports announcements and School Community Council activities, which shall be handled at the school level, as approved by the Principal.
- All requests by media to contact and/or visit a school for reporting purposes shall be directed first to the Division Office for review by the Communication Manager and approval from the Director or Designate.

- Media contacts must make an appointment with the Principal before arriving at the school to take pictures, record students or conduct interviews. The Principal or Designate will escort the media during their time in the building to prevent disruptions to the learning environment.
- Particular care must be exercised in protecting the rights of students when media are present. All students featured in media coverage must have written parental consent for their participation, as part of the student registration process.
- Media representatives may be asked by the Principal or Division staff to leave the premises or grounds of a school when it is deemed to be in the best interest of the students and staff.
- If a member of the media approaches a Prairie Spirit employee for an interview or comment at a Prairie Spirit workplace, the employee will defer the request to the Communication Manager.

## 2) Division Communications

Prairie Spirit believes that good communication, both internal and external, is vital to the success of the organization.

The Communication Manager provides Division-wide communication advice to senior levels of the organization including Administrative Council, Principals and Vice Principals in the areas of issues management, reputation management, public relations, media relations and strategic communications planning.

The Communication Manager is responsible for implementing division-wide communication policies, practices, procedures and plans that support the overall strategic direction of the organization. In this effort, the use of the Division's logo will be monitored by the Communication Manager to ensure proper usage for internal and external communications. The Communication Manager is to be consulted for all major communication pieces, for both internal and external audiences.

The Division uses social media to share news and engage staff, parents, community members and other public and government organizations in conversations to promote learning for life. Our social media accounts – Twitter (@prairiespiritsd), Facebook (@prairiespiritsd) and Instagram (prairie\_spirit) – are managed by the Communication Manager on behalf of the school division and Board of Education.

All advertising in the media will be authorized by the Communication Manager, with the exception of tenders.