

# ELECTED OFFICIALS COMMUNICATIONS AND EVENT PROTOCOLS

## Background

The Superintendent has been given the responsibility to ensure positive internal and external communications are developed and maintained. In addition, the Superintendent is responsible for supporting the Board of Trustees in their governance role as elected officials in their community, ensuring that the Board and division speak with one voice. Proper protocol is to be followed for events and communications at the Division and its schools.

Effective communication about Foothills School Division's Engagement, Support and Success for each learner engenders understanding and support for the division and for public education. While the Board Chair acts as the official spokesperson for the Board, the Superintendent is the official spokesperson for the jurisdiction.

## Communications Protocols

When communicating with elected officials, effective protocol is to be followed by the division and its schools. Accordingly, when communicating with elected officials, the following procedures must be given special attention.

## Communications Procedures

When communicating with elected officials to invite them to a school based or Division based event, whether they be federal, provincial, municipal, First Nations, Métis or Inuit elected officials the following procedures will apply:

1. All staff should consult and/or seek approval with their direct supervisor and the Superintendents prior to communicating with elected officials.
2. The Board Chair, Superintendent and Manager of Communications and Community Engagement will be copied on the email, letter that invites the elected official to the school.
3. Should the invitation be made by phone or in person, the Superintendent will be made aware as soon as possible of the invitation and will inform the Board Chair and Manager of Communications and Community Engagement.
4. The same procedures will apply when inviting senior administration from neighboring school jurisdictions, First Nation, Métis & Inuit Education Authorities, heads of other organizations or prominent community members.

## **Event protocols**

Protocols will vary from one situation to another, depending on who is involved in the particular event. Accordingly, in the planning for an event, the order of introductions and speakers must be given special attention.

## **Event Procedures**

When organizing significant Division, school and/or community special events, celebrations and/or gatherings, administrators and school staff will acknowledge the traditional territories of the people of Treaty 7 and the Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3 with a Land Acknowledgement Statement. This should be done in conjunction with Administrative Procedure 222 - *First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education*.

1. When organizing a public event at which dignitaries are present, introduce the most senior dignitaries first:
  - 1.1 MLAs (cabinet members first).
  - 1.2 Members of the Senate representing Alberta.
  - 1.3 MPs (cabinet members first and senior members thereafter).
  - 1.4 Board Chair.
  - 1.5 Trustees.
  - 1.6 Mayors and Reeves.
  - 1.7 First Nation, Métis & Inuit Leaders: Chiefs of the Treaty First Nations in Alberta, in order of seniority of election to office; President of Metis Settlements General Council; President of Metis Nation of Alberta.
  - 1.8 First Nation, Métis & Inuit Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers.
  - 1.9 Municipal and/or First Nation, Métis & Inuit Councilors.
  - 1.10 Division senior administration including First Nation, Métis & Inuit Education Authorities.
  - 1.11 Heads of other organizations.
  - 1.12 Prominent community members.
  
2. When organizing an event within the schools of the Division, the introductions will take place in the following order:
  - 2.1 Board Chair.
  - 2.2 Vice-Chair.
  - 2.3 Trustees in attendance.
  - 2.4 Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents.
  - 2.5 Principal, Vice Principal.

3. When organizing the order of speakers, protocols vary depending on the situation. For example, normally speeches are given in ascending order, with the most important dignitary (according to the order of precedence established) being the last to speak – particularly when the event involves a ribbon cutting, unveiling of a plaque or model, opening of a building or inauguration of a facility, which typically comes at the end of a series of speeches. If the program for the ceremony or activity places the important moment at the very beginning, the speeches would then be given in descending order, with the most important dignitary being the first to speak. If you have questions or require assistance in determining speaking order, please contact the Communications & Events Manager.
4. Trustees are to be introduced at all times. Trustees will advise school administration upon arrival at an event.
5. Provision is to be made for trustees and other important guests to be greeted by staff or students.
6. As audience members, dignitaries are to be provided with reserved seating in the front row.
7. Invitations to trustees are to come to Division Office (a copy may be sent to the invited trustee(s)). Please focus invitations to school events on the ward trustee(s). The role and expectation is to be defined in the invitation, including any requests to speak.
8. Whenever possible, invitations should be sent at least two (2) weeks prior to the event (more lead time is beneficial).
9. When no trustee is available to attend, the MC will be advised to express regrets on behalf of the Board of Trustees.
10. For assistance, contact the Office of the Superintendent.

Reference: Relevant Legislation and Regulations