

DATE: January 17, 2012

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Trustee Leslie Cleary, Chair, 2010 – 2011 Policy Review Committee
Trustee Michael Janz, 2010 – 2011 Policy Review Committee
Trustee Catherine Ripley, 2010 - 2011 Policy Review Committee

SUBJECT: Review of Board Policy JBC.BP - Communications Framework (formerly titled News Media Relations)

ORIGINATOR: David Fraser, Executive Director, Corporate Services

RESOURCE STAFF: Cheryl Oxford, Cory Sinclair

REFERENCE: JBC.BP News Media Relations

ISSUE

The Administration has created a new policy JBC.BP Communications Framework (Attachment I).

RECOMMENDATION

That revised and re-titled policy JBC.BP Communications Framework (Attachment I) be considered for the third time and approved.

BACKGROUND

The draft policy JBC.BP Communications Framework will replace the existing version of the policy, JBC.BP News Media Relations (Attachment II). In consultation with the Policy Review Committee, the Administration has revised the policy to be broader in scope and it now applies to all district communications.

RELATED FACTS

- The survey soliciting public feedback on the draft policy was available on the district website from September 6 to October 4, 2011.
- A total of 16 people participated in the online survey on JBC.BP Communications Framework (three parents, three community members, one community/professional organization, three principals/decision unit administrators; five staff members; and one individual who did not select an identifier).
- The participants provided the following input:
 - Five respondents (31.3 per cent) felt aspects of the policy required clarification.
 - Eight respondents (53.3 per cent) wanted additional elements to be considered.
 - Six respondents (40.0 per cent) had concerns with elements of the policy.
- Most of the concerns raised by participants involved requests for specific guidelines on enforcing the policy, responding to inquiries, response times and incorporating parent feedback; the suggestions involving staff will be addressed in the associated administrative regulation.
- There were several requests for rules regarding communication between individual Trustees/senior administrators and constituents/parents; this input was not incorporated into

the policy. The suggestions regarding staff will be incorporated into the associated administrative regulation. The suggestions involving Trustee communications could be included in Section B of the Policies and Regulations Manual (Trustee Manual), if desired by the Board.

- One participant requested information on how parents would be involved in decision making; the level of involvement when consulting with stakeholders is already addressed in AA.BP Stakeholder Engagement and therefore has not been added to JBC.BP Communications Framework.
- A second suggestion was to make public the Superintendent's guidelines and standards; these will be posted on the district website as part of the associated administrative regulation.
- A third comment pointed out some overlap with the wording in CN.BP Managing District Information regarding staff having access to the information necessary for them to carry out their work; this wording has been removed from JBC.BP Communications Framework.

NEXT STEPS

Once JBC.BP Communications Framework is approved by the Board of Trustees, the Administration will prepare the associated administrative regulation and post both documents on the district website.

ATTACHMENT I New Board Policy JBC.BP Communications Framework

ATTACHMENT II Existing version of JBC.BP News Media Relations

DMF:co

Edmonton Public Schools Board Policies and Regulations

CODE: JBC.BP

TOPIC: Communications Framework

EFFECTIVE DATE:

ISSUE DATE:

REVIEW DATE:

To support the success of all district students, the Board of Trustees believes it is vital for district communications to be clear, consistent and meaningful to its stakeholders. Information on the work of the Board, Administration and individual schools should be shared with stakeholders to build understanding of and support for the District Vision, Mission, Priorities and Plan, as well as the importance of public education.

The Board further believes that:

- Trustees are elected to represent the values, interests and perspectives of the community they serve, and that students; parents, guardians and families; staff; district partners; media; Alberta Education; community organizations and the general public are all stakeholders in the success of Edmonton Public Schools;
- district communication with stakeholders must be clear, open, honest, transparent, respectful and involve two-way interactions on the part of the Board and Administration;
- stakeholders should have the opportunity to provide input to the Board before significant decisions are made, and the Board must demonstrate accountability by communicating its decisions in a timely fashion using a wide range of communication vehicles;
- staff must be informed of decisions that affect them and their work; and
- schools are diverse communities with unique identities, and are also part of a larger district organization; and that, as such, district branding and school identities must be used in such a way as to complement one another wherever possible in district communications.

The Board expects the Superintendent to develop, publicly post, monitor and enforce appropriate guidelines and standards to foster district communications that reflect the Board's beliefs as outlined in this policy.

Reference(s):

AA.BP – Stakeholder Engagement

AD.BP – District Priorities

AE.BP – District Vision and Mission

JA.BP – Parent and Community Involvement

JAA.BP – Educational Partnerships and Sponsorships

JBC.AR – Communications Framework

Edmonton Public Schools Board Policies and Regulations

CODE: JBC.BP

TOPIC: ~~News Media Relations~~

EFFECTIVE DATE: 09-05-1989

ISSUE DATE: 11-12-1990

REVIEW DATE: 05-1994

-
- ~~1. The board believes that it is in the public's interest for its public deliberations to be disseminated to as large a number of Edmonton citizens as possible.~~
 - ~~2. The board encourages the various media services to televise, tape record and broadcast public meetings of the board, provided that such arrangements do not interfere with the conduct of its meeting.~~

Reference(s):
