



# Riverside School Board

<b>Policy Name:</b>	<b>Communication Policy</b>
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Riverside School Board recognizes the key role played by communications in support of its mission, its obligation of accountability to the public and in the implementation of the actions described in its Strategic Plan 2010-2015. Riverside School Board will continue to foster, promote and encourage open communication with its stakeholders in all areas related to education.

### 1.1 Definitions:

**Board** - Riverside School Board

**Clientele** – Students and parents

**Commissioner** – Commissioner elected or appointed to the Council of Commissioners for Riverside School Board

**Council** – Council of Commissioners of Riverside School Board

**Parent** – The parent or legal guardian identified as such on the student’s registration form

### **Stakeholders**

#### Internal

- parents;
- youth and adult sector students;
- all staff;
- unions, organizations and associations;
- members of the Council of Commissioners;



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- members of the various committees of the School Board (Parent Committee, Governing Boards, etc.)

## External

- population on the territory of the School Board;
- community organizations;
- political representatives;
- Ministry of Education and the regional directorate;
- other school boards in Quebec;
- business;
- suppliers of goods and services;
- local, regional, national and international media.

## 2. GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- To establish and maintain effective communication within Riverside School Board and the communities it serves;
- To increase awareness about Riverside School Board programs and services, activities, successes and accomplishments;
- To promote Riverside School Board schools and centers and to support their programs and services with an effective communications program focused on system-wide application;
- To facilitate Commissioner involvement within the Riverside School Board as well as the community at large;
- To inform our clientele, partners and community and promote:
  - the strategic orientations of the school board;
  - policies and strategic decisions;
  - the educational projects of and the activities taking place in our schools;
  - the orientations and objectives of our adult education and vocational centres;
  - the success plans of our schools;
  - the variety of programs and services offered by Riverside School Board;
  - student achievement and school life.
- To determine a clear division of responsibility;
  - To develop and maintain favorable media relations.

## 3. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The Communications Policy involves four parts: internal communications, external communications, media relations and public relations.



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## 3.1 Objectives of Internal Communications:

- To ensure the management and distribution of information to commissioners, staff, parents and students;
- To provide an opportunity for feedback;
- To respond promptly to requests for information;
- To ensure that all staff members receive information in a timely manner regarding decisions made at Board level.

## 3.2 Objectives of External Communications:

- To ensure the transmission of official information to the public (e.g.: public notices, requests for access to information, the annual report);
- To inform the public of the services offered by Riverside School Board and its schools and centers and to make known the accomplishments of its students and staff members.

## 3.3 Objectives of Media Relations:

- To ensure coherent and consistent dissemination of information;
- To establish positive relationships with the media that enhance favorable and timely coverage.

## 3.4 Objectives of Public Relations:

- To build rapport with stakeholders;
- To manage the flow of information;
- To create a positive exposure of Riverside School Board to the community.

## 4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 4.1 Council of Commissioners:

- The Chair of the Council of Commissioners is the official spokesman of Riverside School Board; however, the Director General may be authorized by the Chair to represent the Board;
- The role of Commissioners in the area of communications is to convey information about the overall direction, policies and decisions of the Council while respecting the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct of Commissioners;
- At the request of the Chair, a Commissioner may also represent the School Board at a public event.

### 4.2 Office of the Director General:

The Director General may represent Riverside School Board on matters related to the administrative and pedagogical operations of the Board Office, schools and centers. The Director General may delegate this authority to another administrator as required.



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## 4.3 Directors:

Directors are responsible for the daily communications related to the work of their departments and shall collaborate with the Office of the Director General to ensure the application of this Policy.

## 4.4 School Administrators and Staff of Riverside School Board shall:

- Familiarize themselves with the Media Authorization Form;
- Advise the office of the Director General of all public relations efforts;
- Provide immediate notification to the Office of the Director General of any issue or occurrence with the potential to generate media coverage;
- Ensure that access to a Riverside facility by the media has been approved by the school or center's administration and that the office of the Director General is advised;
- Provide advance notice, when possible, of special events to ensure adequate public relations support (i.e.: press releases, staff notification, pre-publicity, follow up with media, assignment of photographers, commissioner invitations etc.).

## 5. MEDIA RELEASES

- The Chair of the Council of Commissioners or the Director General may issue media releases on behalf of Riverside School Board;
- Media releases issued on behalf of the Board must be in keeping with the Board's mission statement and may not contravene Board resolutions, policies, or procedures;
- Media releases issued by the Board will be forwarded to all commissioners and school administrators via email or voice mail prior to their release to the media;
- Staff members contacted by the media shall inform their superior immediately, who shall in turn notify the Office of the Director General;
- The Office of the Director General in consultation with the Chair will determine who shall respond to a media request for information. In the event that it is an administrator, support/guidance shall be provided;
- An up-to-date media contact list will be maintained by the office of the Director General.

## 6. VISUAL IDENTIFICATION OF THE SCHOOL BOARD

The logo of Riverside School Board shall be used in accordance with the Graphic Standards Guide (see Annex A). The logo must appear on all official documents of the Board including public tenders, job postings, etc. as well as on all publicity designed by Board departments, schools and centres.

## 7. CRISIS OR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Any crisis or emergency situation, defined as an extraordinary event that has serious consequences on the safety and security of students and/or staff, must be reported



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to the Office of the Director General in accordance with the Administrative Procedure to Deal with Accidents or Incidents in Schools (see Annex B).

## 8. GOVERNANCE

Application of the Communications Policy shall be guided by the following rules, regulations, and laws:

- Quebec Education Act;
- Act on Access to Information and Protection of Personal Information;
- Riverside School Board Code of Conduct;
- Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct for Commissioners.

## 9. COMING INTO FORCE

This Policy shall come into force on the date of its adoption.