COMMUNICATIONS

General Administration

February 2020

Purpose/Background
The jurisdiction is committed to an open, honest, transparent and professional environment for working with the public and the media across the school system.

Procedures

1. **Issues Management**

1.1. Issues may arise at the system level, school level or community level.
1.2. The responsibility for initial communication will be accepted at the level at which the issue arises.
1.3. Communication and action will be deferred until adequate information is obtained.
1.4. If the communication involves topics of a sensitive or controversial nature, the director of communications, the appropriate area director and/or the superintendent is to be advised as soon as possible.

2. **Media Relations**

2.1. Responding to Media Enquiries
2.1.1. In order to best facilitate media enquiries, jurisdictional staff is asked to forward all phone calls and e-mails from news media to the director of communications at 403.945.4012. This measure ensures the jurisdiction is fairly represented given local, regional, provincial and national events and issues. It further builds awareness among media outlets that their first point of contact is the director of communications when covering stories of a contentious or sensitive nature.

2.2. Soliciting Media Attention
2.2.1. Departments and schools wishing to pitch story ideas are to contact the communications officer at 403.945.4146.

2.3. Spokespersons
2.3.1. The Board chair and the superintendent are the primary spokespeople for the jurisdiction.
2.3.2. The superintendent, in consultation with the director of communications, will determine who the most appropriate spokesperson for school site issues and activities will be.
2.3.3. All news releases to the media must be approved by the superintendent and/or Board chair.
2.3.4. Copies of all public service materials (print or audio/visual) to be released to the media are to be sent to the superintendent for approval.
2.3.5. Staff shall deal with the media only with the approval of the superintendent, principal or their designates.
2.3.6. As official spokesperson for the Board, the chair shall:
2.3.6.1. Release all statements concerning the Board, including major changes in policy affecting the public, alterations to any fees or rates, school closures, contract

settlements, budget matters and the transfer, promotion or other activities of senior staff; and

2.3.6.2. Direct the superintendent to develop a communications plan and prepare news releases or statements as required.

2.3.7. In the absence of the Board chair, the vice-chair shall carry out the chair's responsibilities.

2.3.8. Trustees shall make it clear when they are speaking as members of the corporate Board or as individuals; and

2.3.9. The superintendent shall release all statements concerning the school system, including special activities or events, staff achievement or recognition and new program or curriculum initiatives.

2.4. Working with the Media

2.4.1. Media representatives shall not be allowed to disrupt the normal operation of the jurisdictional office, a school or a class for the sole purpose of information gathering. This includes the interviewing of jurisdictional staff and/or students during the regular school day.

2.4.2. Media representatives may be asked by the principal or jurisdictional staff to leave the premises or grounds where it is deemed to be in the best interests of the students and staff to do so.

3. Distribution of Information to Schools

3.1. To create efficiencies in the flow of information from the jurisdiction to schools, Education Centre staff is to identify and use the appropriate communication vehicles to distribute system and external information to school-based administrators and their respective staffs.

Nature of Information	Primary Communication Tool
Action Item for School Administrators	The Charter Newsletter
Agendas, Minutes, and Meeting Resources	SharePoint*
Department How-To's	Procedure Manual*
Department Updates	The Narrative and/or The Charter Newsletters / Administrative Leadership Meetings
Deadline Dates	Operational Calendar / The Charter
EC Roles and Responsibilities/Key Contacts	Service Directory / Department Directory
External Newsletters	Staff and Curriculum News
External Professional Learning Opportunities	Staff and Curriculum News / Professional Learning Collection
New Operational Directives	Memorandum*
Operational Reminders	Memorandum* / The Narrative and/or The Charter Newsletters

Policy/Procedures Update / Feedback	Memorandum* / The Narrative and/or The Charter Newsletters
Project Updates	Memorandum*/ The Charter and/or The Narrative Newsletters
RVS Professional Learning Opportunity	RVS Professional Learning System / The Charter and/or The Narrative Newsletters / Staff and Curriculum News / Professional Learning Collection

** Information items are to be posted to the appropriate online repositories (see below), with the URL link distributed by e-mail, if necessary.*

4. **Communication Vehicles**

4.1. Newsletters

4.1.1. The Narrative – A weekly news bulletin designed for all staff, to inform, educate, and celebrate jurisdictional, school and educational initiatives, activities and achievements.

4.1.1.1. Distribution Date/Method: Tuesdays (school year)/all Outlook users

4.1.1.2. Deadline for Submissions: Wednesdays at 9 a.m. (school year)

4.1.1.3. Send Items to: thenarrative@rockyview.ab.ca

4.1.2. The Charter – A bi-weekly news bulletin designed specifically for system and school-based administrators, school office staff and executive assistants outlining relevant action items, department processes and deadlines and relevant procedures. The Charter also includes industry news, staff profiles and suggested resources.

4.1.2.1. Distribution Date/Method: Second and fourth Monday (school year)/admin Outlook users

4.1.2.2. Deadline for Submissions: Wednesdays at 9 a.m. (school year)

4.1.2.3. Send Items to: thecharter@rockyview.ab.ca

4.1.3. The Brief – A high-level summary of each Board meeting.

4.1.3.1. Distribution Date/Method: After the Board meeting/all Outlook users and external subscription list

4.2. Online Repositories

4.2.1. Service Directory (internal) and Department Profiles (external) – Online repositories outlining the roles/responsibilities and key contacts of Education Centre and third-party practitioners.

4.2.2. Administrative Procedures Manual – Online repository of all internal procedures.

4.2.3. Staff Memos – Online repository of Education Centre memos.

4.2.4. RVS Professional Learning System – Online repository of all professional learning offerings. Includes course descriptions and a registration system.

4.2.5. Staff and Curriculum News – Online repository of curriculum announcements and industry news, such as external professional learning offerings and resources.

4.3. Calendars

4.3.1. Operational Calendar – Online calendar of deadlines.

4.3.1.1. An online calendar of monthly deadline dates for administrators and school office staff.

Reference:

- AP 144 Public Use of Student Images/Work
- AP 149 Crisis Incident Communication
- AP 150 Community Engagement
- Section 33, 52, 53, 55, 67, 68, 196, 197, 204, 222, 225, 256 Education Act
- Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act