

Chapter 4 Human Resources Management

4.9 Media Relations

Policy Statement

The Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA) recognizes the role of news media in providing accurate, timely and special interest information to the community. APSEA is committed to cooperating and proactively working with the news media. APSEA makes every effort to accommodate media requests where practical, appropriate, within APSEA protocols and applicable legislation, and with privacy of children, youth, and families, employees, and the Board of Directors as a priority.

Definitions

APSEA Spokesperson - The Chair of the APSEA Board of Directors and the Superintendent are the official spokespersons for APSEA. The Superintendent or designate may delegate the authority to release information to APSEA employees as appropriate. Any requests for information, media interviews, etc., directed to APSEA employees must be shared with their director, who will contact the Superintendent or designate.

Employee – A person whose terms and conditions are set out in accordance with a contractual agreement of employment with APSEA, as well as other direct employees performing work for APSEA.

Media - Media include traditional news media, online, and social media.

Policy Objectives

This policy was established to help facilitate media requests. It outlines who is authorized to interact with the media on behalf of APSEA in an official capacity; when, how, and why to initiate or respond to inquiries from media outlets. Employees will share media requests with their direct supervisor who will in turn share them with their director. The Director will bring the media request to the attention of the Superintendent or designate.

APSEA will make every effort to ensure spokesperson(s) are knowledgeable on the media issues, equipped with key messages that align with the organization's position on the issue and align with the media relations policy.

APSEA is committed to working with the media. APSEA is obligated to protect the privacy of children and youth on the APSEA caseload and their families, along with the privacy of APSEA employees and the Board of Directors. With respect to all communication matters, APSEA abides by its obligations within APSEA protocols and/or applicable legislation.

Application

This policy applies to APSEA employees, volunteers, Committee members, and any individual in a contractual relationship with APSEA.

Policy Directives

1. APSEA employees will share media requests with their direct supervisor who will in turn share them with their director. The Director will bring the media request to the attention of the Superintendent or designate.
2. The Superintendent or designate may delegate the authority to release information to APSEA employees as appropriate.
3. Any requests for information, media interviews, etc., from APSEA employees must be shared with their director who will contact the Superintendent or designate.
4. To protect the privacy of children and youth on the APSEA caseload and their families, along with the privacy of APSEA employees and the Board of Directors, media representatives are not permitted to interview, record, or photograph without prior approval.
5. If deemed appropriate, by the Superintendent or designate APSEA employees may engage families, schools, and students to participate in a media story, fully adhering to all required permissions, protocols, and consents.
6. Media requests for information:
 - 6.1 APSEA will not release any information that may reveal the identity of a child/youth without prior appropriate consent.
 - 6.2 APSEA will not release any employee or related information without appropriate consent.
 - 6.3 In cases where police are involved and/or there is an ongoing police investigation, APSEA will not provide comment which may impact the ongoing or future court matters. Questions related to police investigations should be referred to the relevant police agency.

6.4 APSEA will not release names of deceased children and youth, employees, or members of the Board of Directors out of respect for their families.

7. Failure to comply with the Policy will be assessed by APSEA and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Accountability

All APSEA Employees

APSEA employees are responsible to understand and follow all APSEA policies and documents related to media relations.

Superintendent/Directors/Supervisors/Managers

As members of the Leadership Team, these individuals are responsible for implementing APSEA's operational policies and any applicable documents. Members of the Leadership Team will take reasonable measures to bring this policy to the attention of all employees and to ensure directives are being followed.

Any known instances of non-compliance with APSEA's Media Relations Policy will be addressed. Given APSEA's scope, some violations may go unnoticed. Employees should be aware that this does not mean APSEA condones unacceptable use.

Monitoring

- The Superintendent of APSEA or their designate will review this policy annually.

References

- 3.4 Social Media Policy
- 4.7 Conflict of Interest and Commitment Policy

This is an organizational policy designed to supplement other APSEA policies and is not intended to replace or preclude them. If a situation occurs where there is a conflict between application of this policy and any other APSEA policy, the policy most specific to the situation will apply.

Approval Dates

Approved: June 2021
Reviewed/Revised: January 2024