

## AVON MAITLAND DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

*We Will: Create Positive, Inclusive Learning Environments, and Maximize Outcomes for Students*

### CHAIR'S ACTION REPORT

**TO: Regular Board Meeting – Tuesday, October 10, 2017**

**AGENDA ITEM: 5.3 a)**

**SUBJECT: Communication and Advocacy Plan 2017/2018**

#### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The Avon Maitland District School Board is committed to improving communications with all stakeholder groups.
- 1.2 Trustees reviewed their Communications and Advocacy Plan during the Committee of the Whole, Open Session on September 26, 2017. The revised Plan is attached (Appendix A).
- 1.3 Trustees provided edits to sections 'Social Media', 'Key Messages', 'Letters', and 'School Councils'.

#### **2.0 Recommendation**

It is recommended that

the Avon Maitland District School Board approve the Communication and Advocacy Plan for 2017/2018.
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Randy Wagler  
Chair

***Avon Maitland District School Board***  
**Communication & Advocacy Plan 2017/2018**

**MPPs and Municipal Representatives**

When trustees meet with the MPPs and the elected municipal representatives, they will discuss items of mutual interest, highlighting good news messages, and discussing capital funding review. The respective meetings for MPPs will attempt to be held at least once each school year. The Board highlights and board agenda will be sent to municipalities, MPs and MPPs for information.

**Principals and Vice-Principals**

Trustees will attend principals' and vice principals' conferences as time permits. The emphasis will be on building a relationship of mutual trust.

**Schools Councils**

Trustees are encouraged to stay in contact with their individual and regional school councils. Board meeting dates will be sent directly to school council chairs for information as well as the Board meeting highlights after each Board meeting.

**Community Presentations**

In the broader community, trustees and staff from the board will make themselves available, schedules permitting, to communicate to communities (in particular service clubs) about educational initiatives and board goals. Staff will help prepare any presentations that are requested.

**OPSBA**

OPSBA advocates on behalf of member Boards such as AMDSB, and Trustees provide input to OPSBA on its priorities through our Director, and attendance at regional meetings whenever possible and individual trustee input. AMDSB will continue to use OPSBA as one avenue for advocacy, especially for issues of common concern among public school Boards in the province.

**Board Meetings in Communities**

Trustees will consider holding a board meeting in one or two communities in the district.

**Newspaper Articles**

All trustees are welcomed to submit articles to local newspapers.

**Social Media**

Trustees will develop guidelines on use of social media.

**Letters**

The Board occasionally writes letters as the situation arises to advocate or communicate the position of the Board pertaining to certain aspects of student achievement. At these times the Board will consider copying the letter to various newspapers, either for use as a letter to the editor or background material, and copying OPSBA, Ontario Boards and Ministry of Education.

**Letters to Staff**

The chair will occasionally write letters to be distributed by email to the board's staff. Target dates are Education Week, International Teacher's Day, and the first day back after Christmas holidays. The chair will also send season greeting messages to staff.

### **Federations**

The director, chair and vice chair will be encouraged, and will endeavor, to meet at least once a year with the federations as a step towards maintaining relationships between the federations and the board of trustees.

### **Attendance at Events**

Trustees will attend various events throughout the district. Staff will be reminded that trustees need notice ahead of time, and it would be helpful, where possible, that schools do not schedule events that could conflict with Board meetings.

### **Accommodation Review Process**

Once an accommodation review is complete, trustees will invite members of the ARCs and the Transition Committees to a meeting to thank them and get feedback on the process. This feedback will then be discussed in Committee of the Whole, Open Session following the completion of the process, so that we can refine/improve the process.

### **Key Messages**

Key messages will be developed in relation to current/controversial issues. The chair, vice chair, director and manager of communications will develop such messages in a timely manner (following relevant board meetings or when certain issues arise), so that trustees can articulate a consistent message. We will create 'key messages' for senior administration and trustees to consult for such time-sensitive messages.

Generic key messages will also be developed (and provided to trustees) to address other issues that are anticipated arising in the coming year, such as capital construction and the transition process for communities whose school configurations are changing. For the latter, staff will create a one page guide describing the generic process, which may include a list of possible committees to look at student issues, staff issues, community issues (based on the Stratford experience/binder). In each area where transition will occur, the superintendent with primary responsibility for that area will run the process.

### **Other Issues**

Playground Equipment – trustees, where necessary, will continue to work with communities, schools and staff to define process for taking equipment out and assist communities to develop a playground committee. AP 520 re Playground Equipment will be shared with the committee.