Communications Protocol

Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board

COMMUNICATIONS ACTION TEAM

February 2013
Introduction

The Communications Action Team (CAT) is a committee comprised of representation from all work groups and departments of the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board. Their prime responsibility is to work collaboratively to develop and implement communication initiatives and practices that improve the quality and timeliness of Board communications and engage stakeholders in providing their perspectives, assessment and input.

CAT has developed this Communications Protocol as a resource for all board employees and committees. In this guide you will find tools and information to help improve your communications, from running effective meetings to managing email effectively.

This guide is a living document, and the committee will continue to work diligently to keep it current and relevant, and to ensure that it is a valuable resource for all. If you have any suggestions for content, please contact a CAT member and your recommendations will be considered by the committee.

Your Communication’s Action Team:

- Joyce Benninger, Supervisor of Payroll and Benefits
- Norm Bethune, Chair of the Board
- Denise Buttenaar, eLearning Consultant
- Cathy Colton, Superintendent of Business
- Veronica Davidson, Teacher Representative
- Derrick Farwell, Research & Systems Analyst
- Robyn Garvey, Parent Representative
- Theresa Harrietha, Computer Resource Consultant
- William King, OECTA Secondary/Occasional
- Amy Kieffer, Religious Education Consultant
- Brenda Leahy, Speech/Language Pathologist
- Bruce MacPherson, Director of Education
- Anna Morrison, OECTA Elementary
- Mike Murphy, Principal
- Roger Noble, Custodian
- Francine Pilon, Principal
- Doreen Schultz, Community Relations & Outreach Coordinator
- Jules Vanhalemeech, Trustee
- Michelle Walker, Educational Assistant
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<td>AP 4-7(iii) Communications Protocol</td>
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Establishing Norms

In order for any group to communicate effectively and run successful meetings, they must first establish ‘norms’. Meeting norms set ground rules or expectations on how people will behave at a meeting. The norms focus on respecting all participants and are a simple yet powerful statement about the way meetings can be run. Use these norms as a starting point for a group discussion about expectations of each other, adapt them to fit your situation, and post the norms in each of your meeting rooms as a consistent reminder of your fundamental meeting guidelines.

At the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board, we have adopted the **Holy Manners** as our norms, not just for meetings, but for all interactions with others.

Introduce your committee to the **Holy Manners (see Appendix A)**, and discuss how these norms will benefit your work as a team. Ensure that all committee members accept the norms, or develop a customized list of norms for your committee. If your meeting goes off track, or you are experiencing ‘communication’ challenges, refer to the agreed upon norms to resolve conflict and bring the team back to task.

**Holy Manners**

- We shall endeavour at all times to conduct ourselves in a manner that honours God.
- We shall act with respect, love, integrity and truthfulness towards all those with whom we associate, irrespective of position, race, gender or age.
- We shall incorporate respect, humour, calmness, a positive attitude, politeness and cooperation in our actions and in our words when interacting with others.
- We shall deal with one topic at a time when problems are presented. We shall state the problem clearly and focus on a respectful solution, incorporating compromise.
- We shall listen sincerely to others.
- We shall maintain confidentiality.
- We shall address unkind acts, not unkind people.
- We shall not harm or degrade any other person.
- We shall encourage input from others.
- We shall take time to reflect and be prayerful in our interaction with others.
- We shall be compassionate and understanding.
- We shall show integrity, fairness and sincerity with all persons, peacefully solving conflict.
- We shall seek to pursue reconciliation through compromise when conflict or division occurs.
- We shall agree to disagree.
- We shall be truthful and shall avoid exaggeration or misrepresentation.
- We shall be persuasive but not coercive or manipulative, accepting and respecting people's trust.
- We shall consistently seek guidance from the Spirit to govern our thoughts, words and deeds.
Running Effective Meetings

This section is designed to help you

- establish meeting processes and protocols
- identify roles and responsibilities
- develop your agenda template and minutes template

A. Effective vs. Ineffective Meetings

Everyone has experienced a meeting that has gone off track. Ineffective meetings can be frustrating for many reasons, the least of these being the valuable time that is lost. The pressure of busy schedules increases the importance of running effective meetings, and the benefits will include happy productive teams.

**Effective meetings are dependent upon good communication, and good communication is a product of an effective meeting.**

Does this sound like your meetings?

- Focus or goal of meeting unclear
- No meeting agenda or unclear agenda
- No time limits on discussions
- People haven’t done their homework
- Discussions go off track and spin in circles
- A few people dominating while others sit passively
- No action plan or next steps
B. Tips for Running Successful Meetings

1. Establish a ‘meeting agenda template’ and ‘meeting minutes template’
2. Establish roles and responsibilities for all participants
3. Set SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Action Orientated, Realistic and Time Based)
4. Establish meeting protocols (Holy Manners)
5. Establish strategies for moving the meeting forward

Other tips:

- Plan meetings well in advance when possible
- Invite participants (consider using First Class Calendar Events - see Appendix B, or Doodle – see Appendix C)
- Start your meeting on time and establish this as the norm
- Provide the opportunity for team participation
- Include activities for brainstorming, problem solving and planning
- Include opportunities for feedback and progress checks

(http://www.network-marketing-mlm-success-system.com/effective-meetings)
C. **Types of Meetings**

The typical meeting types are:

- problem-solving
- decision-making
- combination meetings
- feedback or follow-up
- planning

Many of our meetings are **committee meetings**. Committees are focused on a single purpose and may be either standing committees (formal, ongoing) or ad hoc committees (formed for a specific purpose or event, temporary). Committees usually have a leader (chair) or co-leaders (co-chairs) and volunteer members. If possible, rotate the position of chair to encourage all members to take an active role in the meetings.

Often committee meetings become “combination meetings” including reporting, planning, feedback/follow-up, and decision-making all in one meeting. This type of meeting can be difficult to manage. One suggestion is to break them down into segments of different meeting types, and identify on the agenda items requiring a decision, feedback, etc. Time management can also be difficult for combination meetings as you have more than one purpose to achieve. Make sure you have a detailed agenda, and stick to it. It may be necessary to bring members back to task often. Always state the purpose of your meeting on the agenda so members are clear before they arrive on what the outcomes will be.

D. **Technology-Enabled Meetings**

Conference calls and videoconferences are becoming more popular and are similar to in-person meetings, but the differences in media suggest some changes in the way these meetings are managed. For information on how to set up a teleconference within BGCDSB contact Anne Dietz at the CEC, ext. 234.

All Board Committees have access to Adobe Connects to host meetings. This can be a useful tool when schedules and distance make planning meetings difficult. Time and money can be saved by connecting online rather than meeting in person.

Adobe® Acrobat® Connect™ is web conferencing software that enables teachers, administrators and students to instantly communicate and collaborate through easy-to-use, easy-to-access online personal meeting rooms. It allows users to instantly communicate and collaborate through always-on, online personal meeting rooms. It improves the experience of online meetings through essential collaboration tools, including one-button screen sharing, chat, polling, video, teleconferencing, and whiteboarding. To learn more about using Adobe® Acrobat® Connect™ for your meeting, contact Denise Buttenaar at the CEC, X268 or email denise_buttenaar @bgcdsb.org
Here are some tips on managing technology-enabled conferences.

- Set an agenda in advance.
- Choose a time that works for all participants.
- Confirm attendee list and make sure all handouts have arrived.
- If the call is incoming, be ready when the phone rings. If you're cutting it close, delegate someone to pick up.
- If the call is outgoing, dial in one or two minutes before the conference is scheduled to begin.
- If you're initiating, learn how to use the conferencing system ahead of time.
- Identify yourself by name even if your system does it automatically.
- Make sure you can see and hear everyone (videoconferences).
- Greet each person by name.
- Don't leave out the small talk.
- Repeat names during the call (especially teleconferences).
- If you're a silent participant, use your 'mute' button.
- Don’t place your phone on hold – the on-hold music will be heard by everyone.
- Let one person speak at a time, so that no one's words get cut off.
- Stick to your role: are you leading? facilitating? lurking?
- If a party becomes disconnected from a call facilitated by a teleconferencing system, that person should dial back in unobtrusively.
- If parties are disconnected from a three-way call, the person who initiated the call should reconnect the person.
- End on time. As in all meetings, it's important to stick to the agenda and manage time effectively.

(From http://www.salary.com/running-effective-meetings)

The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.
~ George Bernard Shaw
### E. Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone attending meetings has a role and responsibilities. We often focus on the role of the chair, but the role of meeting participant is equally important.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meeting Chairperson</strong></td>
<td>Plan and coordinate the meeting keeping in mind meeting protocol</td>
<td>Plan agenda and meeting objectives</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Book venue and invite attendees</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arrange and invite special guests when applicable</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Plan catering if applicable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manage the meeting</td>
<td>Make sure:</td>
<td>Expected outcomes are clear</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting protocols are known and agreed to by the entire team</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All members are able to attend as per agreed dates and times</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare resources and presentations as per the agenda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitate the meeting</td>
<td>Take the leadership role and direct the meeting through the agenda</td>
<td>Ensure that all participants are given the opportunity to participate, and that the</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contribute to the meeting</td>
<td>Ensure that no one particular meeting participant dominates discussions</td>
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<td>--------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clarify Action Plans and Follow-up</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>agenda runs on time</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contribute ideas and strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting Participant</td>
<td>Contribute to the meeting</td>
<td>Record Meeting Dates in your calendar as soon as they are set (i.e. at the end of the meeting, as indicated in minutes, or as notified) and respect scheduled meetings.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bring your calendar to the meeting to assist in scheduling future meeting dates.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Contribute items to the agenda.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Contribute during meetings by participating in discussions, brainstorming, and planning.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Seek to understand others’ viewpoints as well as sharing your own.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Help to re-focus the group when meetings go off track.</td>
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<td>Undertake special tasks or subcommittee assignments.</td>
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<td>Read the minutes and keep up to date on all aspects of your committee.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone</td>
<td>Respect the Holy Manners</td>
<td>Arrive on time</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Listen Actively to your colleagues</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Respect everyone’s opinions and ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mute your electronic devices</td>
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</tbody>
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F. **Agendas and Minutes**

The key to successful meetings is a well-organized and complete agenda. Subsequently, minutes should be accurate and reflect the discussions and decisions made at the meeting.

Agenda and minute templates are included as Appendix D and E and are available electronically by selecting the attachments to the left (in PDF view).

Other helpful tips:

- Request agenda items from participants prior to setting the agenda
- Distribute the agenda prior to the meeting. This also provides a reminder to participants
- ‘Review the agenda’ at the beginning of every meeting. Once approved, stick to it!
- The agenda provides the structure for your minutes.
- If your group does not have a secretary, it is helpful to assign someone to take the minutes. It is difficult to chair a meeting and also record minutes.
G. Dealing with Difficult Participants and Difficult Situations

In a meeting situation we often encounter people or situations that we are unsure how to handle.

Do you recognize any of these Challenging Participants from your meetings?

1. Argumentative Participant: Constantly argues with other members
2. Angry Participant: Vocal and outspoken on a regular basis
3. Overly Talkative: May be trying to help, but dominates
4. The Attacker: Attacks other participants or ideas
5. The Broken Record: Keeps bringing up the same topics and ideas
6. The Dropout: Sits in the back or away from the group and disconnects – passive behaviour
7. The Interrupter: Intervenes before people have finished speaking
8. Doubting Thomas: Always negative about suggestions and ideas
9. Impatient Participant: Wants decisions made immediately

Here are some tips on dealing with Difficult Participants

1. Argumentative Participant:
   - Model desired behaviours by remaining calm and respectful
   - Reassure that they have been heard and understood
   - Give merit to their point

2. Angry Participant:
   - Acknowledge their concern – restate in a calm, neutral tone
   - Inquire as to the cause of the anger – sort out the facts
   - Look to the group for a solution

“Speak when you are angry – and you’ll make the best speech you’ll ever regret.”
~ Dr. Laurence J. Peter
3. Overly Talkative:
   - Thank the participant for contributions and ask if others wish to speak
   - Remind participant of the time limit involved
   - Intervene and ask others to comment

4. The Attacker:
   - Intervene to deflect anger and refocus the group
   - Remind the group of Holy Manners
   - Refocus the group on the topic

5. The Broken Record:
   - Thank the participant for their contribution
   - Ask for other contributions “before moving on”
   - Remind the group that everyone needs an opportunity to voice an opinion

6. The Dropout:
   - Prepare activities to encourage participation
   - Move near the dropout and talk from there to engage the person
   - Check with the group to make sure participants aren’t “dropping out” due to content or process

7. The Interrupter:
   - Intervene immediately, and use your voice and physical presence to stop the interrupter
   - Ensure original person is able to finish
   - Remind group of Holy Manners, speak privately to the person if necessary
8. Doubting Thomas:
   - Ensure that all members of the group feel free to comment without criticism
   - Remind “Thomas” that not all ideas are ready to be evaluated
   - Ensure that “Thomas” has an opportunity at the appropriate time to state views

9. Impatient Participant:
   - Reinforce the idea that all the information must be presented before decisions are made
   - Reinforce that all group members must have opportunities to participate
   - Refer to timelines and assure the group decisions will be made

In all cases:
   - Presume positive intentions of participants
   - Refer to Holy Manners when necessary
   - Seek to understand and be respectful
   - Make positive statements
   - Instead of saying “You are wrong” try “I see it another way” or “Can you help me understand why you think…”
   - Keep the focus on ideas, not personalities
   - Be ready to intervene

“To effectively communicate, we must realize that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others.”
~ Anthony Robbins
Email Etiquette

Why do we need email etiquette?

“Email etiquette refers to a set of dos and don’ts that are recommended by business and communication experts in response to the growing concern that people are not using their email effectively or appropriately.” (www.emailreplies.com)

The Bruce Grey Catholic District School Board has developed email etiquette rules:
• To enhance communication
• To improve the effectiveness and efficiency with which we use our First Class tools
• To ensure that all employees convey a professional image through proper use of email

1. Do not type in all caps. Typing in all caps is considered yelling or screaming.

2. Do not overuse Reply to All. Only use Reply to All if you really need your message to be seen by each person who received the original message.

   **If you are responding to someone who has posted their email on First Class, do not send an automatic reply unless you want all board employees to read your email. It is important to Reply to Sender only.**

3. Answer swiftly. Responding promptly is the courteous thing to do. Don’t let the sender wonder if you received the email or are ever going to respond to their communications. If you need more time, longer than 48 hours, to gather your thoughts, simply pop off an email stating you are planning to respond in more detail and when.

4. Be concise and to the point. Do not make an email longer than it needs to be. Remember that reading an email is harder than reading printed communications and a long email can be very discouraging to read.

5. Use proper spelling, grammar and punctuation. This is not only important because improper spelling, grammar and punctuation give a bad impression. It is also important for conveying the message properly. Emails with no full stops or commas are difficult to read and can sometimes even change the meaning of the text. Don’t overuse acronyms, and always explain the acronym when first used.

6. Read the email before you send it. A lot of people don’t bother to read an email before they send it out. Reading the email will give you an opportunity to correct errors, and reading your email through the eyes of the recipient will help you send a more effective message and avoid misunderstanding and inappropriate comments.
7. **Don't reply to an email message when angry**, as you may regret it later. Once the message has been sent, you will not be able to recover it. If you receive a nasty email – do not respond immediately – if at all.

8. **Do tell your correspondent if you forward a message to somebody else** to deal with, so they know who to expect a reply from.

9. **Do not leave the Subject: field blank**. Always fill in the Subject: field with a brief and concise description of the content of your email. This is very important in helping those you communicate with organize and manage their email. Important: avoid using all caps or all small case, terms such as Hi, Help or Please Respond, or the recipient’s name in the Subject: field as you may be misidentified as a spammer and your email deleted.

10. **Do not forward virus warnings!** Virus warnings received from others are generally always hoaxes. Especially if an email tells you to forward to everyone you know–don’t!! Delete those emails and do not forward them! Definitely ignore those forwarded emails instructing you to delete files on your computer – they could be critical files that your computer needs to operate.

11. **Never put anything in an email that you don’t want the world to know about.** Emails can be copied and forwarded, and can be produced at a later date.

12. **Don't mark things as urgent if they aren't**, because then when you really do have an urgent message it may not be treated in the way it deserves.

13. **Don’t post your email address on web sites** and other public parts of the Internet. You will be deluged with spam.

14. **Make sure the recipient has the same software** as you before sending attachments or they may not be able to open your attachments. Use PDF when possible.

15. **Don't keep mail longer than necessary**, especially large attachments. Routinely clean out your inbox by deleting any emails that you do not need to keep.

16. **Limit personal use of your First Class email.** The Board allows the use of e-mail by employees for limited personal reasons provided that such usage does not take place on Board time but is confined to before and after work. Employees should not send chain letters or mass mailing nor should they send or store messages that are inconsistent with the Criteria for Use.
17. Set up an Email Signature in First Class

The email signature is a key component of good communication. A good signature is concise yet informative. A good signature for a Teacher, Principal, or any BGCDSB employee should also be friendly and welcoming. For assistance to set up your email signature, contact Tri-Tech, Derrick Farwell, or Doreen Schultz, or access instructions in First Class Conferences – Technology folder.

18. Check before you send

Always check the “To”, “CC” and “BCC” before you hit send to make sure you are sending your message to the correct recipient.

19. Maintain Professionalism

Maintain professionalism at all times, even if you are sending a personal email using your board email system.

20. Be cautious of your tone.

One of the biggest pitfalls of email is the lack of context and body language. It is very easy to misinterpret an email. When composing your message be aware of the ‘tone’ of your email, and be cautious not to send a message that could be interpreted in a way you did not intend.
### Terminology & Acronyms

In the table below are some common acronyms used in the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terminology or Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>What does it mean?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADD / ADHD</td>
<td>Attention Deficit Disorder / Attention Deficit with Hyperactivity Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>AEP</td>
<td>Annual Education Plan</td>
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<td>ASCD</td>
<td>Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASD</td>
<td>Autism Spectrum Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIPSA</td>
<td>Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement</td>
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<td>CAS</td>
<td>Children’s Aid Society</td>
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<td>CASI</td>
<td>Comprehension, Attitude, Strategies and Interest – Reading Assessment – grades 4-8</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCAC</td>
<td>Community Care Access Centre</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CTCC</td>
<td>Care, Treatment, Custody and Correctional facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEC</td>
<td>Catholic Education Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>Content Management System</td>
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<td>CODE</td>
<td>Council of Ontario Directors of Education</td>
<td>The Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) is an advisory and consultative organization composed of the CEOs of each of the 72 District School Boards in Ontario; Public, Catholic and French Language. CODE meets monthly with the Deputy Minister and other senior officials of the Ministry of Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONED</td>
<td>Continuing Education</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CPCO</td>
<td>Catholic Principals’ Council of Ontario</td>
<td>The Catholic Principals’ Council of Ontario (CPCO) is a voluntary, professional organization that serves the principals and vice-principals in Ontario's 29 publicly-</td>
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funded Catholic school boards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CPIC</td>
<td>Catholic Parent Involvement Committee</td>
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<td>CUPE</td>
<td>Canadian Union of Public Employees</td>
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<tr>
<td>CYW</td>
<td>Child &amp; Youth Worker</td>
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<tr>
<td>DRA</td>
<td>Developmental Reading Assessment – for grades 4-8</td>
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<td>DSB</td>
<td>District School Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>EA</td>
<td>Educational Assistant</td>
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<tr>
<td>EAP</td>
<td>Employee Assistance Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELL</td>
<td>English Language Learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EQAO</td>
<td>Education Quality and Accountability Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPO</td>
<td>Education Program Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBI</td>
<td>Functional Behaviour Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FI</td>
<td>French Immersion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FNMI</td>
<td>First Nations, Métis, Inuit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOI</td>
<td>Freedom of Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSL</td>
<td>French as a Second Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTE</td>
<td>Full-Time Equivalent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSN</td>
<td>Grants for Students Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H&amp;S</td>
<td>Health &amp; Safety</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each school will have an elected Parent Advisory Committee, and the chair from each committee will sit on the District Council.

This is the term used to describe a student whose first language is a language other than English.

ESL is a program designed for ELL students identified as previously having school instruction in another country, to improve their skills in reading, writing, and oral communication in English.

ESL is a program designed to instruct students in the French language.

FTE is a measure of workload/work duration that represents the percentage of a full-time student or staff member.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>The Human Resources Department is located at the CEC. Human Resources provide a service supporting personal information for all BGCDSB employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEP</td>
<td>Individual Education Plan</td>
<td>An IEP is a written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a particular student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILC</td>
<td>Instructional Leadership Consultant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IP Address</td>
<td>Internet Protocol Address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPRC</td>
<td>Identification, Placement and Review Committee</td>
<td>Exceptional students are identified as such by an IPRC. Upon receiving a written request from a student’s parent(s)/guardian(s), the principal of the school must refer the student to an IPRC. The IPRC will decide whether the student is an exceptional student and, if so, what type of educational placement is appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISA</td>
<td>Intensive Support Amount</td>
<td>Funding model for intensive funding grants for “qualifying” student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JK</td>
<td>Junior Kindergarten</td>
<td>To be eligible to attend school in September, JK students must be at least 4 years old by December 31st of the same calendar year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LD</td>
<td>Learning Disability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDCC</td>
<td>Locally Developed Compulsory Courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LNS</td>
<td>Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTO</td>
<td>Long Term Occasional</td>
<td>An occasional teacher who replaces a permanent teacher who is absent from regular duties for a period of 15 or more consecutive teaching days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maplewood</strong></td>
<td><strong>Student Information System</strong></td>
<td>This is our board's student management system, to track enrolment data and student information, and is a computerized enrolment register.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MCSS</strong></td>
<td>Ministry of Community and Social Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MCYS</strong></td>
<td>Ministry of Child and Youth Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEN</strong></td>
<td>Ministry Educator Number</td>
<td>The MEN is a unique identification number that has been assigned by the Ministry to educators across the province.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MMA</strong></td>
<td>Ministry of Municipal Affairs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MISA</strong></td>
<td>Managing Information for Student Achievement</td>
<td>MISA is a 3-year initiative to augment existing and develop new initiatives that focus on managing data to improve student learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MPAC</strong></td>
<td>Municipal Property Assessment Corporation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NSL</strong></td>
<td>Native as a Second Language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NTIP</strong></td>
<td>New Teacher Induction Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NVCI</strong></td>
<td>Non-violent Crisis Intervention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OASBO</strong></td>
<td>Ontario Association of School Business Officials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OCD</strong></td>
<td>Obsessive Compulsive Disorder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OCSSOA</strong></td>
<td>Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers Association</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OCSTA</strong></td>
<td>Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OCT</strong></td>
<td>Ontario College of Teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OECTA</strong></td>
<td>Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **OEN**       | Ontario Education Number       | The OEN is a unique student identification number that is assigned by the Ministry of Education (via school secretarial staff) to elementary and secondary students across the province. An OEN must be assigned to a student by the secretary within 15
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OESS</td>
<td>Ontario Educational Software Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OHS</td>
<td>Occupational Health &amp; Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OIC</td>
<td>Office Index Card</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OISE</td>
<td>Ontario Institute for Studies in Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLA</td>
<td>Ontario Library Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OMB</td>
<td>Ontario Municipal Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OnSIS</td>
<td>Ontario Student Information System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSBIE</td>
<td>Ontario School Boards Insurance Exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSR</td>
<td>Ontario Student Record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSSC</td>
<td>Ontario Secondary School Certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSSD</td>
<td>Ontario Secondary School Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSSLC</td>
<td>Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSSLT</td>
<td>Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OST</td>
<td>Ontario Student Transcript</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSSTF</td>
<td>Ontario Secondary School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The office index card provides the school with immediate access to information about a student. Office Index cards are printed from Maplewood, and kept in a file at the school.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OSTA</td>
<td>Ontario Student Trustee Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Occasional Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An occasional teacher who replaces a permanent teacher who is absent from regular duties for a temporary period</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OYAP</td>
<td>Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA Day</td>
<td>Professional Activity Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The students have a day away from school while staff has the opportunity to attend workshops/meetings to enhance professional development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBSP</td>
<td>Positive Behaviour Support Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PD</td>
<td>Professional Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIM</td>
<td>Privacy and Information Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLAR</td>
<td>Prior Learning Assessment &amp; Recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLAR is a formal evaluation and credit granting process whereby pupils may obtain credits for prior learning. (It is not recognized as classroom instruction)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPM</td>
<td>Program/Policy Memorandum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry directions on specific programs/policies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM</td>
<td>Records Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAC</td>
<td>School Advisory Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEA</td>
<td>Special Equipment Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEAC</td>
<td>Special Education Advisory Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEPPA</td>
<td>Special Education Per Pupil Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding model that is granted based on all students in the Board and an amount is allocated to Special Education programs and services intended to cover most of the Board model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIS</td>
<td>Student Information System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maplewood is our board’s student information system, to track enrolment data and student information, and as a computerized enrolment register.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHSM</td>
<td>Specialist High Skills Major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SK</td>
<td>Senior Kindergarten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAL</td>
<td>Supervised Alternative Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SERT</td>
<td>Special Education Resource Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIP</td>
<td>School Improvement Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO</td>
<td>Supervisory Officer / Superintendent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spec Ed</td>
<td>Special Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SST</td>
<td>Student Success Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW</td>
<td>Social Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIC</td>
<td>Teacher in Charge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTYC</td>
<td>Thinking Together for Youth and Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP</td>
<td>Vice-Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHMIS</td>
<td>Workplace Hazardous material Information System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRAP</td>
<td>Working to Reinforce all Partners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Useful Website:** [www.acronymfinder.com](http://www.acronymfinder.com)
Active Listening & Paraphrasing

Active Listening in Groups

To encouraging active listening, group members need to set aside unproductive patterns of listening. There are three major set aside areas which allow for fuller and more non-judgemental group participation:

**Me Too** – autobiographical listening. Leads to problems in group work. We hear others’ stories through the lens of our own experiences. Can be a source of empathy but also lead to distortion and miscommunication. Can be a source of wasted time as it can lead to endless storytelling.

**Tell Me More** – inquisitive listening. Triggered by the autobiographical. We inquire to see how others’ stories compare to our own. It is pure curiosity but the question is, “how much detail do we need?” Need to avoid unnecessary specificity.

**I Know What To Do** – solution listening. We like being good problem solvers. The press of time pushes us towards action and away from reflection. The down side; getting trapped in situations and action plans before we have time to fully understand each other’s perspectives and the perspective of other groups and individuals. Solution listening stifles the generation of new possibilities and pushes groups towards action before creating clear outcomes.

A useful tool to promote Active Listening is “Pausing”:

- Listening attentively to others’ ideas with mind and body
- Allows time for thought and reflection before speaking, after asking a question and after making a response
- Provides time to reword in your own mind what others are saying to further understand their positions and points of view
- Wait until it seems appropriate before jumping into the dialogue

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is one of the most valuable and least used communication tools in meetings. It is a basic tool for illuminating thought and challenging misconceptions. A well crafted paraphrase communicates, “I am trying to understand you – and therefore, I value what you have to say” and establishes a relationship between people and ideas. Reflective paraphrases do not use the pronoun “I”. The phrase, “What I think I hear you saying” signals to many speakers that their thoughts no longer matter and that the paraphraser is now going to insert his or her own ideas into the conversation.

"You cannot truly listen to anyone and do anything else at the same time."

-- M. Scott Peck
Structure and flow of paraphrasing:

Listen and observe carefully to calibrate the content and emotions of the speaker. Signal your intention to paraphrase. Use an approachable voice and open with a reflective stem which puts the focus and emphasis on the speaker’s ideas, not on the paraphraser’s interpretation of those ideas.

These three types of paraphrases provide you with a logical level in which to respond.

1. Acknowledge and clarify content and emotion – a brief statement in the listener’s own words - if your paraphrase isn’t accurate, the speaker will offer corrections. (“You’re concerned about…”)

2. Summarize and organize statements or issues – good to use when multiple speakers are contributing, offers themes and containers to organize statements and issues. (“You seem to have two goals here…”)

3. Shift focus to higher or lower level – can be used if the group is ready to move to a higher logical level like naming concepts, goals, values and assumptions (“So a goal here is…”) or if they need to move to a lower logical level when abstractions and concepts need grounding in details – use a concrete example to down shift.

Use these paraphrase stems:

1. Acknowledge and Clarify
   - You’re suggesting….
   - So, you’re feeling….
   - You’re noticing that….
   - So, you are thinking that….
   - Hmmm, you’re pondering….

2. Summarize/Organize
   - So, there seem to be two issues here….
   - On the one hand, we __________ and on the other hand we __________
   - For us, then, several themes are emerging, they are __________
   - It seems that we have a sequence or hierarchy here __________

3. Shift Focus
   So, a(n) __________________ here is ______________________________
   - Value
   - Belief
   - Assumption
   - Goal
   - Intention
Before you speak, ask yourself, is it kind, is it necessary, is it true, does it improve on the silence?

- SAI BABA

Before you speak, ask yourself, will what I say cause damage to a relationship with people important to me? Which is more important to me; to say what I want to say, or to continue a positive relationship?

Before you speak, ask yourself, will what I’m going to say be considered a criticism? If so, shouldn’t I wait until a more suitable time and place? Shouldn’t I say it in private?

Before you speak, ask yourself, will what I plan to say bring sunshine to a dim place? Or will it bring darkness? Will it open a window of opportunity for someone or some idea? Or will it close a door in someone’s face? Will it create or kill?

Communication has consequences. You may say, “I take it back.” But you really cannot. It’s better that you ‘give it’ right in the first place.

It’s better that you think before you speak.

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Communications and Media Relations Tips for Staff

Facts:
• Good communication is everyone’s business. How effectively you communicate determines the public’s perception of your school and school board.
• School employees rank first as sources of impressions about the schools and those impressions are the most influential.
• Good teacher attitudes are the most important factor in causing people to gain confidence in schools; poor attitudes are the most important factor in causing people to lose confidence.
• Administrators’ attitudes rank second in gain and loss.
• Media is the least influential information source about schools. The most effective means of communication is face-to-face, one-to-one. Always consider the information or message you need to communicate, and then carefully select your delivery method, using the Hierarchy of Effective Communications as your guide, with number 1 being the most effective and number 10 the least effective method:

Hierarchy of Effective Communications

1. One-to-one, face-to-face
2. Small group discussion/meeting
3. Speaking before a large group
4. Phone conversation
5. Handwritten, personal note
6. Typewritten, personal letter not generated by computer
7. Computer generated or word-processing-generated “personal letter”
8. Mass-produced, non-personal letter
9. Brochure or pamphlet sent out as a “direct mail” piece
10. Article in organizational newsletter, magazines, tabloid
11. News carried in popular press
12. Advertising in newspapers, radio, TV, magazines, posters
13. Other less effective forms of communication (billboards, skywriters, etc.)
Benefits of Good Public Relations

- builds stronger links between schools, parents, staff and the community
- encourages parent involvement in the education process, thereby supporting student achievement
- increases support and recognition of staff accomplishments to encourage teamwork, innovation and educational excellence
- closes the gap between parent and public school experience and education today
- increases student and staff pride in educational endeavours
- increases public understanding of Board programs, available resources and services, objectives, and accomplishments of students and staff
- develops effective and cost-efficient public relations/communication channels
- When there is bad news - it is very important that parents hear the bad news first from the school and not the media.

When communicating with the media remember:

- Phrase your statements in simple, direct terms
- Think before you speak. Prepare responses to all likely questions
- Repeat the major points
- Don’t speak “off the record.” Never tell a reporter anything you are unwilling to see in print
- Don’t say “no comment”
- Get to know the reporters in your area
- Decline to answer questions outside of your area of expertise or responsibility
- Be polite and considerate to reporters
- Stay calm and pleasant
- Avoid attempts at humour which can injure credibility
- When dealing with news stories, correct factual errors, but let opinions go
- Above all, be professional. Remember, your attitude will be the most influential factor
Test Your Telephone Habits

Find out how effective you are in communicating through the telephone.

✓ I answer the phone promptly, before the third ring.
✓ I identify myself at the start of the conversation both in answering and placing a call.
✓ I speak directly into the telephone, clearly and slowly.
✓ I “put a smile” into my voice while talking.
✓ I personalize my conversation by frequently using the caller’s name.
✓ I keep a calm voice even when dealing with angry people.
✓ I put energy and enthusiasm into my voice and keep it from sounding monotonous.
✓ When placing callers on hold, I return to them every 30 seconds or so to reassure them, or I offer to call them back.
✓ When taking messages, I write all essential information and, if necessary, double check it.
✓ I end the conversation in a positive upbeat way.
Sources


http://www.acronymfinder.com

http://www.adaptiveschools.com

http://communicationideas.com

http://www.doodle.com

http://www.emailreplies.com


http://www.network-marketing-mlm-success-system.com/effective-meetings

http://www.salary.com/running-effective-meetings

http://stevenmsmith.com/types-of-meetings/
Holy Manners

• We shall endeavour at all times to conduct ourselves in a manner that honours God.

• We shall act with respect, love, integrity and truthfulness towards all those with whom we associate, irrespective of position, race, gender or age.

• We shall incorporate respect, humour, calmness, a positive attitude, politeness and cooperation in our actions and in our words when interacting with others.

• We shall deal with one topic at a time when problems are presented. We shall state the problem clearly and focus on a respectful solution, incorporating compromise.

• We shall listen sincerely to others.

• We shall maintain confidentiality.

• We shall address unkind acts, not unkind people.

• We shall not harm or degrade any other person.

• We shall encourage input from others.

• We shall take time to reflect and be prayerful in our interaction with others.

• We shall be compassionate and understanding.

• We shall show integrity, fairness and sincerity with all persons, peacefully solving conflict.

• We shall seek to pursue reconciliation through compromise when conflict or division occurs.

• We shall agree to disagree.

• We shall be truthful and shall avoid exaggeration or misrepresentation.

• We shall be persuasive but not coercive or manipulative, accepting and respecting people’s trust.

• We shall consistently seek guidance from the Spirit to govern our thoughts, words and deeds.
FirstClass Calendar

Adding Participants to Calendar Events

You can invite participants to a meeting (event) by using your FirstClass Calendar.

Select ‘Calendar’ from your FirstClass desktop.

Then create a new event by:

- double clicking on the date of the event in your calendar or
- selecting ‘New Event’ from the New icon in the tool bar or

Once an event is created, you can invite/add participants to your event.

Select ‘Participant’ tab in the new event window.

Each participant will be sent an email to their FirstClass mailbox notifying them of the scheduled event.
Receiving a Calendar Event Invitation

Invitations to participate in calendar events are displayed in your FirstClass Mailbox along with other email messages.

Upon opening an invitation to an event, you will need to indicate your status to participate.

Click 'accept', 'tentative' or 'decline' to indicate your status/participation.

You can view other participants and their status by selecting the 'Participant' tab in this event.

Selecting 'Accept' or 'Tentative' status will place the event in your FirstClass calendar.

Participants Status

Participants can view the status of each participant in an event.

Double click the event in your calendar to open it, then select the participant tab.

To the left of each participant's name is an icon with a check mark or an X to indicate accepted or declined invitations.

Also available in  First Class > Conferences > Committee Updates > CAT
Appendix C

What is Doodle?

Doodle helps finding suitable dates and times for group events, e.g., an appointment, a conference call, a family reunion, etc. Doodle is particularly easy to use.

**Easy scheduling ~ Free of charge and without registration ~ www.doodle.com**

3 easy steps:

1. Create poll
2. Invite participants
3. Confirm date and time

Create poll

Give your event a title and Location

Pick the days

Pick the times

Return to Table of Contents
Select “Basic Poll” for the free service

You’ll receive this confirmation notice, and….

An email notification. Send this to your participants to invite them to take the poll.

You’ll also receive an email giving you an admin link. Don’t forget to email your participants to confirm the time and date of the meeting.
## Agenda

**Bruce Grey Catholic District School Board**

<Committee Name>

---

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Location:**

**Attendees:**

**Regrets:**

**Purpose of Meeting:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Time Allotted</th>
<th>Discussion &amp; Decision</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Action Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Welcome &amp; Prayer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Review of Agenda</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Review of Previous Meeting’s Minutes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Item #1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Item #2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Item #3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Item #4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Communication – What do we need to communicate and to who as a result of today’s meeting?**

**Next Meeting date:**

---

*<Committee Name>* Agenda

Copies of Minutes/Agenda will not be provided unless specifically requested. Please contact meeting chair if you require paper copies.

U:\Communications\Agenda Template portrait.doc

Electronic templates available as attachments (on left if viewing PDF)

or go to First Class > Conferences > Committee Updates > CAT
Appendix E

Minutes
Bruce Grey Catholic District School Board
<Committee Name>

Date: ____________________________
Time: ____________________________
Location: _______________________
Attendees: _______________________
Regrets: _________________________

Purpose of Meeting:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Discussion &amp; Decision</th>
<th>Action Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Item #1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Item #2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Item #3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Communication – What do we need to communicate and to who as a result of today’s meeting?

Next Meeting date: ____________________________

<Committee Name> Minutes

Copies of Minutes/Agenda will not be provided unless specifically requested. Please contact meeting chair if you require paper copies.

Document 4

Electronic templates available as attachments (on left if viewing PDF) or go to First Class > Conferences > Committee Updates > CAT
Appendix F

BRUCE GREY CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Trustee Communications

BP: 3-4

REFERENCES
Educating Together, 2006- A Handbook for Trustees, School Boards, and Communities: Effective Communication, Confidentiality and Privacy; Communication and Media Relations

RELATED FORMS/PROCEDURES/DOCUMENTS
Administrative Procedure: AP 4-7(i) Guidelines for Trustees, Parents and Staff in Addressing School Related Concerns

POLICY STATEMENT
Fulfilling the representational role is challenging to school board trustees, particularly to those serving large and/or diverse constituencies. Trustees must also consider that not all their constituents have school-aged children. A democratic government system entitles everyone to a voice but does not ensure that everyone will get exactly what they want. Effective communication is critically important. There are various ways to promote effective communication with the community, such as through school councils, community groups, parent organizations, public meetings, newsletters, the media, the telephone, and the Internet. Regular dialogue will enhance a trustee’s ability to represent constituents and help to build understanding and consensus in the community.

POLICY REGULATIONS
1) Until a member of the Board shall notify the Secretary in writing of his official address, all notices or communications delivered, mailed or e-mailed to the member at his address as set out in his nomination paper shall be deemed to have been received by him.

2) Each member shall have a personal laptop computer and printer made available for board business at the beginning of their term of office. Information for Committee of the Whole meetings will be sent to members by e-mail only. Members shall have access to personal e-mail and Trustee Conferences on the Board’s BBS system through the Board’s dial-up or high-speed accounts. A trustee may reject the offer of Board owned equipment if they prefer to use their personal equipment. All Board equipment shall be returned promptly when their duties as trustee cease.

3) The Secretary shall notify each member of all regular and special meetings of the Board at least forty-eight hours (except in the case of emergencies) previous to the time at which such meetings are to take place, by written or electronic notice to each member.

4) The Secretary shall have delivered the Regular Board Meeting agenda, minutes of the previous meeting, a copy of all Reports of Committees, a list of all accounts paid from the general and capital bank accounts and the Report to each member of the Board at least forty-eight hours prior to the meeting which the same is to be considered.

5) All minutes of committee meetings and reports of all conventions and conferences shall be submitted to the Board as soon as possible after such meeting or convention has taken place.

6) All press releases shall be made by the Communication Outreach Coordinator of the Bruce-Grey

3-4(a)
Catholic District School Board. Hard copies of these releases shall be kept on file at the Board Office. This will include corrections and retractions by the media when false statements are made from public meetings.

7) The Director and Secretary may, on behalf of the Board, issue statements to the press on administrative matters coming under his/her duties and responsibilities. Press releases shall be given in writing with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board and a copy shall be kept in the Board Office.

8) Trustees shall, on all matters, respect the Privacy Policy, BP: 5-11 and its intent.

9) The Chair of the Board may have a Board smart phone for use on Board related matters. The smart phone shall be returned promptly when the term as Chair is completed.

10) Our trustees are partners in education. Consequently, communications with our Board of Trustees is encouraged. When contacted, the trustee will not resolve problems but will instead ensure that concerns are directed to the appropriate staff member. Trustees do not normally communicate concerns/suggestions with school Principals. Rather, trustees communicate with the Board Chair and/or Director of Education. To facilitate communication with trustees, the Board web page, www.hgcsdsh.org includes a Trustee section.

11) With respect to overall trustee communications, Principals are encouraged to provide trustees with the following:

• A copy of the school’s monthly newsletter.
• A copy of school events to which Principals wish to extend a standing invitation to trustees.
• An invitation to all trustees to attend Secondary School Graduation ceremonies.
• A list of School Council meeting dates to which School Councils wish to extend a standing invitation for trustees to attend.

12) It is understood that due to their work schedules, some trustees may be unavailable for day time events. However, when trustees are able to attend, they will communicate their plans directly with the school concerned.
REFERENCES
Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board Strategic Plan
Municipality Freedom of Information Protection of Privacy Act

RELATED FORMS/PROCEDURES/DOCUMENTS
BP: 3-4 Trustee Communications
AP: 4-7(i) Guides for Trustees, Parents & Staff in Addressing School Related Concerns

POLICY STATEMENT
The Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board is committed to providing accurate and timely information to our stakeholders as well as engaging stakeholders in providing their perspectives, assessments and inputs.

All Board Communication shall follow these guiding principles:

A) Student Focused
   Board communications shall support and promote student learning and student success.

B) Accountability
   The Board is accountable to stakeholders for the resources used, the decisions made and the outcomes achieved.

C) Integrity and Transparency
   Board communications shall be open, honest, accurate, understandable and timely.

D) Collaboration
   The Board uses collaborative strategies and partnerships to bring community resources together to support the learning and development of students.

E) Respect
   The Board recognizes that each person is worthy of respect, fair treatment and dignity.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
The Chair of the Board and the Director of Education/Secretary of the Board (or designate) are the Board’s primary spokespersons in all situations where a system level comment or response is required.

In an individual school, it is the expectation that the Principal is the primary spokesperson, unless the situation warrants a system level response.

The Community Relations/Outreach Coordinator shall provide advice, support and coordination for communications activities.
Administrative Procedure

Date: March 2012
Subject: Guidelines for Trustees, Parents and Staff in Addressing School Related Concerns

Purpose

The Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board is committed to providing a learning environment for our students supported by fair and equitable system wide policies focused on improving the achievement and well being of all students. Effective and ongoing communication at every level of the system is integral to ensuring we are meeting this commitment. Positive working relationships among trustees, staff, and parents, respectful of the important and distinct role each plays in promoting student success, are strengthened by establishing clear and effective lines of communications. The role that trustees and staff play in addressing parent or stakeholder concerns is vital to ensuring the success of all of our students.

The programs and policies of the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board are intended to foster and enrich student learning. When individuals or groups raise concerns staff will identify the issue, investigate and propose resolutions.

In addressing parent and stakeholder concerns, staff is to resolve issues at the source, whenever possible, respect the spirit and practice of system wide policy, and respond in a timely and effective manner. A first response acknowledging receipt of the concern is expected within two school days. Trustees, as elected officials, are sometimes asked by parents to intervene on local school and system wide issues. The Education Act requires trustees to entrust the day to day management of the Board to its staff through the Director of Education. Trustees have the responsibility to ensure that policies and practices are in place to address issues and that Board staff, through the Director of Education, are accountable for implementation. Therefore, the role of the trustee is to hear the request or concern and advise the parent/stakeholder to contact the appropriate staff to resolve the matter. The Trustees of the Board engage regularly in productive and supportive dialogue with the leadership of schools to encourage and champion student achievement and community engagement. Any direction to principals comes from the principal's School Superintendent.

Guidelines

A parent/stakeholder who expresses a concern about a local school-related issue will be directed to the appropriate teacher/staff member to resolve the matter.

1. If the parent/stakeholder has not been successful in resolving the concern with the teacher/staff member, the parent will address the concern with the principal. If not resolved at the school level, the parent will be directed to the School Superintendent.

2. When a specific staff member is involved in the concern, the principal or School Superintendent will inform the staff member of the nature of the concern and the process for its resolution, in accordance with the terms of the appropriate collective agreement.

3. Trustee inquiries, information or suggestions to staff about possible resolutions to a school concern are to be directed to the appropriate School Superintendent who can then assist the principal, in accordance with the terms of the appropriate collective agreement.

A.P. 4-7(i)
4. Where the School Superintendent determines that the concern about a school or community of schools requires informing and consulting with other appropriate central staff, the School Superintendent will initiate such communication with those persons and inform all affected parties.

5. The School Superintendent will communicate with the trustee and other concerned parties in a timely manner regarding the resolution/decision about the concern raised and/or information that may impact their school community.

6. The School Superintendent will ensure that the Director of Education, Chair of the Board and the local Trustee are apprised of any local concerns that may have system wide implications or may be the object of media interest, and may require a system response or Board motion.

Guiding Principles for Addressing Parent/Stakeholder Concerns

a) Foster a climate of respect and trust which focuses on working towards mutually acceptable solutions and is consistent with relevant Board policies.

b) Ensure that every parent with a concern has an adequate opportunity to express the concern fully.

c) Encourage the parent to address the concern at the level at which the concern originates.

d) In addressing a concern, respond in a manner consistent with the principles of procedural fairness and that is seen to be fair by the parent and by all other parties directly involved.

e) Maintain a written record of the concern and response, where appropriate.

f) Provide the parent and other parties involved with timely updates, as needed, about the progress made in resolving the concern.

(g) Ensure that confidentiality is maintained by all parties regarding student and personnel matters.

Guidelines for Parents

(a) Present their concern to staff and allow the opportunity for due consideration of the concern.

(b) Address the concern first to the staff member responsible for the area to which the concern directly relates.

(c) Ensure that confidentiality is maintained by all parties concerning student and personnel matters.

Guidelines for Principals

(a) Advise the parent to discuss the concern directly with the staff member and, if possible, resolve it at that level.

(b) Gather any relevant information to determine the facts and circumstances.

(c) Discuss the concern with the staff member; consider the staff member’s perspective and offer advice, where advice is required to resolve the concern, and inform the parent and all affected parties of the outcome.

(d) Meet jointly with the staff member and the parent to discuss the concern and work together toward resolution.
(e) Consult with the School Superintendent and/or other Board staff in order to assist in resolving the concern.

(f) Refer the concern to the School Superintendent if the parent does not agree with the decision of the principal and wishes to appeal to a higher staff authority.

(g) Where the principal refers the concern to the School Superintendent, the School Superintendent will consult with the principal and parent and, in collaboration with them, will make a final decision that reflects school and system policy and is in the best interests of the student.

Guidelines for School Superintendents

(a) Refer the parent to the principal where prior discussion with the principal has not taken place and follow up with the principal on the outcome.

(b) Gather any relevant information to determine the facts and circumstances.

(c) Consult with the principal about the concern and advise the principal of options to consider, or make a recommendation to the principal for addressing the concern and inform the parent of the outcome.

(d) Make a final decision about the concern in consultation with the principal and inform the parent and principal about the outcome.

(e) Inform the trustee about the outcome.

(f) Where the School Superintendent determines that the concern about a particular school or community of schools requires informing and consulting with the Director, or other appropriate central staff, the School Superintendent will initiate such communication with those persons.

Guidelines for Trustees

(a) Encourage the parent to address concerns with the staff member and/or school principal. If the situation is not resolved, direct the parent to the School Superintendent. Inform the School Superintendent of the concern and/or make the inquiry on behalf of the parent to the School Superintendent for investigation and resolution. The School Superintendent will apprise the Trustee of the resolution to the concern and provide any information which will assist the Trustee in communicating with the affected parties.

(b) If the concern involves a personnel matter, inform the appropriate School Superintendent about the inquiry. If apprised of the concern by a third party, inform the party that the concern has been shared with the appropriate School Superintendent for investigation and resolution. Indicate that all further inquiries about the concern should be directed to the School Superintendent who will follow-up.

(c) Share information or perspectives which are pertinent to the resolution of parental concerns and issues with the appropriate School Superintendent who, if needed, will assist the Principal to resolve the issue.

(d) A concern regarding school facilities will be directed to the School Superintendent or the Supervisor of Maintenance.

(e) Ensure that confidentiality is maintained by all parties concerning student and personnel matters.

(f) Ensure that exemplary policies and practices are established and that, through the Director of Education, Board staff are held accountable for responding to parent/stakeholder concerns.

A.P. 4-7i(c)
Guidelines for School Council

The School Council is not a forum to discuss parent-teacher-student issues. If these matters are brought to any School Council member or any School Council meeting, the concern is to be referred immediately to the principal who will ensure the proper process is followed.
Administrative Procedure

Date: March 2012
Subject: Email Etiquette Guidelines

Why do we need email etiquette?

"Email etiquette refers to a set of dos and don'ts that are recommended by business and communication experts in response to the growing concern that people are not using their email effectively or appropriately." (www.emailreplies.com)

Bruce Grey Catholic District School Board has developed email etiquette rules:

- To enhance communication
- To improve the effectiveness and efficiency with which we use our First Class tools
- To ensure that all employers convey a professional image through proper use of email

1. Do not type in all caps. Typing in all caps is considered yelling or screaming.

2. Do not overuse Reply to All. Only use Reply to All if you really need your message to be seen by each person who received the original message.

   **If you are responding to someone who has posted their email on First Class, do not send an automatic reply unless you want all board employees to read your email. It is important to Reply to Sender only.

3. Answer swiftly. Responding promptly is the courteous thing to do. Don’t let the sender wonder if you received the email or are ever going to respond to their communications. If you need more time, longer than 48 hours, to gather your thoughts, simply pop off an email stating you are planning on responding in more detail and when.

4. Be concise and to the point. Do not make an email longer than it needs to be. Remember that reading an email is harder than reading printed communications and a long email can be very discouraging to read.

5. Use proper spelling, grammar and punctuation. This is not only important because improper spelling, grammar and punctuation give a bad impression. It is also important for conveying the message properly. Emails with no full stops or commas are difficult to read and can sometimes even change the meaning of the text.

6. Read the email before you send it. A lot of people don’t bother to read an email before they send it out. Not only will this give you an opportunity to correct errors, but reading your email through the eyes of the recipient will help you send a more effective message and avoid misunderstanding and inappropriate comments.

7. Don’t reply to an email message when angry, as you may regret it later. Once the message has been sent, you will not be able to recover it. If you receive a nasty email – do not respond immediately – if at all.

A.P. 4.7ii(a)
8. Do tell your correspondent if you forward a message to somebody else to deal with, so they know who to expect a reply from.

9. Do not leave the Subject: field blank. Always fill in the Subject: field with a brief and concise description of the content of your email. This is very important in helping those you communicate with organize and manage their email. Important: avoid using all caps or all small case, terms such as Hi, Help or Please Respond, or the recipient’s name in the Subject: field as you may be misidentified as a spammer and your email deleted.

10. Do not forward virus warnings! Virus warnings received from others are generally always hoaxes. Especially if an email tells you to forward to everyone you know—don’t!! Delete those emails and do not forward them! Definitely ignore those forwarded emails instructing you to delete files on your computer – they could be critical files that your computer needs to operate.

11. Never put anything in an email that you don’t want the world to know about. Emails can be copied and forwarded, and can be produced at a later date.

12. Don’t mark things as urgent if they aren’t, because then when you really do have an urgent message it may not be treated in the way it deserves.

13. Don’t post your email address on web sites and other public parts of the Internet. You will be deluged with spam.

14. Make sure the recipient has the same software as you before sending attachments or they may not be able to open your attachments. Use PDF when possible.

15. Don’t keep mail longer than necessary, especially large attachments. Routinely clean out your inbox by deleting any emails that you do not need to keep.

16. Limit personal use of your First Class email. The Board allows the use of e-mail by employees for limited personal reasons provided that such usage does not take place on Board time but is confined to before and after work. Employees should not send chain letters or mass mailing nor should they send or store messages that are inconsistent with the Criteria for Use.

17. Set up an Email Signature in First Class
   The email signature is a key component of good communication. A good signature is concise yet informative. A good signature for a Teacher, Principal, or any BGCDSB employee should also be friendly and welcoming. For assistance to set up your email signature, contact Tri-Tech, Derrick Farwell, or Doreen Rogers, or access instructions in First Class Conferences – Technology folder.

As employees of the Bruce Grey Catholic District School Board, we have a responsibility to follow the policies and procedures as established by the board. BGCDSB has several policies and procedures regarding email and internet use. Below is a summary. You can reference the complete policy/procedure in the Board Policy Manual/Administrative Procedure Manual.

BP 8-15: Use of E-mail

POLICY STATEMENT

The Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board provides employees with access to the internet and the e-mail system as a means of enhancing communications and the performance of Board business.

A.P. 4-7a(h)
“The e-mail system and the contents of all files are the property of the Board. Misuse by an employee will result in disciplinary action and/or loss of access.”

Criteria for Use:
Employees are encouraged to utilize the e-mail system, including Conferences, to enhance information sharing among colleagues about Board related business. Although the system is for Board business, employees may use the system for limited personal reasons subject to the understandings in this policy.

Employees must not create, send, or store any messages or attachments that:

1. Are offensive or harassing in terms of the criteria in the Human Rights Code including comments dealing with race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, national origin, or disability.
2. Are offensive in the sense of containing any type of pornographic or obscene material.
3. Contain derogatory, inflammatory, or defamatory remarks that could create legal liability for the employee or the Board.
4. Contain abusive or profane language.
5. Involve copyright infringement or unauthorized installation of software from the internet.
6. Are related to a private business in which the employee has an interest.
7. Contain information that would be deemed to be unlawful.
8. Make negative, inflammatory, or derogatory comments about the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board, the Trustees, or any employee.

Personal Usage:
The Board allows the use of e-mail by employees for limited personal reasons provided that such usage does not take place on Board time but is confined to before and after work. Employees should not send chain letters or mass mailing nor should they send or store messages that are inconsistent with the Criteria for Use.

BP 6-32: Acceptable Use of Telecommunications
This policy states that the “Use of telecommunications provided by the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board is a privilege, not a right”, and includes the Board Responsibilities with regards to the internet –

- Provide Internet access to schools through the Board’s Local and Wide Area Networks
- Provide and update, as necessary, appropriate rules for Internet use as well as permission forms to be signed by students and parents before Internet access is granted.
- The Board reserves the right to monitor all accounts on the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board LAN and WAN systems
- Train all staff in the use of the Internet and provide resources to help staff train students for appropriate Internet use.
- Investigate cost-effective ways to limit student access to information sources to those that are appropriate for educational use.

It also defines “Network Etiquette/Citizenship”

A.P. 4.7ii(c)
Users will not post, publish, or display any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, sexist or illegal material

- Users will not send or receive offensive messages and pictures from any source
- Users will not transmit or download information or software in violation of copyright laws
- Only public domain resources or resources for which the author has given expressed consent for on-line distribution may be uploaded or downloaded. Software and resources downloaded will be used only under the terms and conditions specified by the creator or owner of those resources
- Posting messages and attributing them to another use is unacceptable
- Users will footnote and include in a bibliography any information that is obtained from the Internet or a CD ROM and used for an assignment. This information needs to be reference in the assignment bibliography

The Board also has Administrative Procedure 6-32: User Application for Internet Access through sites located within the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board, which again describes rules for internet/email use.

Users will not:
1. Send or display any offensive pictures or messages.
2. Use obscene language, or language reflecting racial, sexual, ethnic or religious prejudice.
3. Willfully damage computer software, computers, computer systems, computer networks, or computer peripherals attached to school computers
4. Use passwords, e-mail addresses belonging to other individuals
5. Employ Board-provided Internet access for commercial purposes.
6. Violate security systems which have been put into place to protect computers, file servers, networks and users, both within and outside the Board.
7. Play games, or use Internet access in any ways which waste finite resources. This includes printer paper, diskettes, printer ribbons (cartridges) and other materials provided by the Board.
8. Purchase products through the School Internet.

Some of the information in this document has been adapted from resources found at http://www.emailreplies.com

Visit the site for more information on email etiquette.