

Ministry of Education

Ministère de l'Éducation



Capital and Business Support
Division

Division du soutien aux
immobilisations et aux affaires

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2023: SB21

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Memorandum to: Directors of Education
Senior Business Officials
Secretary/Treasurers of School Authorities

From: Didem Proulx
Assistant Deputy Minister of Education
Capital and Business Support Division

Subject Updates to Communications Protocol- New Public
Communications Requirements

This memorandum highlights updates made to the Communications Protocol to reflect new Public Communications requirements for school boards.

The changes support increased transparency in public communications of the government's investments to build modern schools faster to support the needs of growing communities and ensure value for taxpayer dollars.

Public Communications- Events and Announcement Updates

As a reminder, school boards are required to provide an opportunity for the Minister of Education or their representative to participate in public communications related to:

- New schools
- Additions or retrofits that include new student spaces, child care spaces, EarlyON Child and Family centres, or community hubs.

NEW – MEDIA EMBARGO: An embargo requirement will now be applied to media releases and media/public events for these milestones:

- ministry capital project approvals
- site acquisition related to the capital project
- awarded construction contracts
- significant project scope changes (such as additional funding or capacity)

- ground breakings
- opening ceremonies.

School board meeting discussions, web postings, minor social media interactions, operational/internal communications or reactive responses to media calls related to these milestones are not included in this media embargo.

The issuance of tender documents or provision of a targeted notification to the sector of the availability of tender documents is a permitted activity during the embargo period. Please see **Appendix A** for the Updated Communications Protocol.

To clarify, the issuance of tender documents or provision of a targeted notification to the sector of the availability of tender documents is a permitted activity during the embargo period.

Requirement: To invite the minister to be quoted in your media release and/or participate in your event:

- Send a request **at least 30 days** in advance of the proposed communication or event to minister.edu@ontario.ca
- Copy the ministry's regional manager in the Field Services Branch for your area.
- Inform the ministry via the email address above if the proposed date changes.

Note: The ministry will respond if the Minister or another government representative will be attending the event and/or providing a quote for media materials. Please do not move forward with your communication or event until you have received a response from the ministry.

The ministry may also choose to issue its own news release about various project milestones. If the ministry chooses to do so, school boards, CMSMs/DSSABs, and/or community partners will be notified.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the communications protocol after reviewing this information, please contact MinistryofEducation@ontario.ca. You may also direct your inquiries to your board's capital analyst.

Thanking you in advance for your help as we roll out these new requirements and we look forward to continuing to work with your school board.

Sincerely,

Didem Proulx
Assistant Deputy Minister
Capital and Business Support Division

Appendices:

Appendix A: Updated Communications Protocol

C: Early Years Leads, District School Boards

Children's Services Leads, Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and District Social Services
Administration Boards

Andrew Locker, Director, Field Services Branch, Ministry of Education