

Board Development Topic: Advocacy and Communications

Date of Board Meeting:

December 16, 2021

Strategic Priority:

- High Quality Teaching and Learning
- Engagement of All Students, Families, and Communities
- Effective Policy and Procedures
- Healthy, Sustainable Physical & Social Environments

Quality Indicator(s):

QI 6.2 – The Director keeps the Board informed about Division operations.

QI 6.3 – The Director provides the Board with balance, sufficient, concise information and clear recommendations for actions items in agendas.

QI 6.6 – The Director ensures high quality management services are provided to the Board.

Information for the Board (10 fast facts):

1. **Governance role in communications and advocacy:** your role is about being prepared to communicate and/or respond to questions, listen to concerns, take action, change policy, etc., at an appropriate governance level (as opposed to administrative level) with focus on the four main governance areas: **strategy, risk, people and resources.**
2. You (the board) have three **main roles when it comes to communications and stakeholder engagement**, just as you do with other areas of governance:
 - **Leadership through Direction:** Review and approve direction of the Communications Plan and Policies, e.g. for public relations and engagement.
 - **Stewardship through Control:** Monitor effectiveness of the above, to gain reasonable assurance, using periodic and incident reports, dashboard, and meetings.
 - **Relationship through Culture:** Engage when appropriate in public and community consultations.
3. Focus your **goals for communications and advocacy** on: **influence, advocate, engage and champion.**
4. **Plan your communications efforts** – research, analyze, communicate and evaluate
5. **Plan your advocacy efforts** – What is the issue? –What is the impact? What would it look like if the issue was solved? One ask.
6. **Consider key characteristics of your audience and stakeholders** – what are their wants, interests and needs related to the issue(s)?

7. There is a **large menu of strategies, tools and tactics to choose from** – please remember to choose a mix and...
 - Connect tools and tactics with audiences and strategy. Be realistic – budget, timelines and human resources. Think creatively but choose wisely – look for the simplest and most logical way. Make connections and build relationships Be consistent and focused in your efforts. Capture the heart – tell your story.
8. **Board communications and advocacy should be planned – but prepare for impromptu.**
9. While **public and media relations are primarily the role of staff, there are times that you will directly engage with members of the public and as locally elected trustees** that is part of your role. Be... prepared, a good listener, honest, clear, calm, alert, proactive, and transparent.
10. **The best public relations is good work.**

Respectfully submitted,

Quintin M. Robertson, Director/CEO
Good Spirit School Division