

Adopted	May 25, 2006
Revision Date	November 18, 2020
Review Year	2026

Background/Purpose:

Engagement with Stakeholders is a primary goal of the Aurora School Board. The following protocols recognize the importance of clear engagement and communication through the correct channels.

This policy is in place to:

1. provide a framework that outlines who should communicate with whom, when they should do so, and the scope of communication with attention to potential conflict of interest and confidentiality;
2. ensure clear and consistent protocols for all Directors to prevent any miscommunication or damage to stakeholders’ and Directors’ confidence; and
3. respond to requests for information or reporting.

Board communications are:

1. a clear and united message, through the Board Chair, unless otherwise delegated;
2. only on issues within the scope or authority of the Board;
3. considerate of the Board’s responsibility to the public;
4. consistently aligned with Aurora School policies and processes;
5. considerate of confidentiality obligations.

Policy Statement:

In recognition of Aurora School’s mission, vision and values, the Communication Protocols for its Board of Directors supports the transparency of practices, expectations and roles. Clear, consistent processes are critical to ensuring effective, consistent messaging with stakeholders in accordance with Aurora School’s mission, vision, and values.

Guidelines:

1. Formal Board Communications

- a. All media requests should be directed to the Board Chair or the school’s designated media representative as appointed.
- b. The Superintendent, or delegate(s), communicates on behalf of, and represents Aurora School.
- c. The Board Chair communicates on behalf of, and represents the Board of Directors.
- d. Individual members of the Board of Directors refer all enquiries to the Board Chair and Superintendent. This applies to event invitations, media, public, management, staff and other stakeholder requests and communications.

2. Informal Board Communications

- a. Individual Directors will inevitably and legitimately have informal communications with stakeholders, including staff, parents/guardians, and other stakeholders. In all these instances, it is incumbent upon Directors to be explicitly clear that they are communicating in a personal capacity and not in a Board capacity.
- b. If specific operational issues arise, It is appropriate for the Director to direct the individual to the appropriate communication channels in accordance with Board Policy 2035.

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3. Media Relations

- a. In the interest of keeping Directors aware of issues, the Board Chair and Superintendent will share relevant media and other emerging communications issues or requests.
- b. In instances where the issues are high profile or contentious, the Board Chair and/or Superintendent will ensure that Directors receive key messages in a timely manner.
- c. Directors will refer any requests for media interviews to the Board Chair and Superintendent.
- d. Media requests for information may require a timely response and will be handled on a priority basis.
- e. The Board Chair and Superintendent may be required to respond during a crisis situation.
 - i. The Emergency Response Plan and Crisis Policy outline overall organizational protocol in such situations.

4. Social Media

- a. Social Media refers to online tools that provide individual users and/or organizations with the ability to create and share content with online communities. This could include, but is not limited to Facebook, Twitter, video/photo sharing sites such as Instagram, YouTube, blogs, etc. Aurora’s website and social media platforms will enhance engagement with stakeholders.
- b. The Superintendent will ensure that the use of social media on behalf of Aurora School will reflect the principles outlined in this policy and in accordance with the Aurora School brand.

5. Considerations for Board and Staff Communications

- a. Communication between the Board and staff should be carried out with recognition of the distinct reporting relationship between the Board and the Superintendent as its only employee.
- b. In Board Meetings there are two situations that arise involving Director/staff communication.
 - i. The first is where an agenda item is identified with a staff member other than the Superintendent as the presenter. In this case, questions to and/or dialogue with the named staff are appropriate. The Board Chair, or the staff in question, should redirect questions that go clearly beyond the topic being presented, to the Superintendent or person delegated on a specific subject.
 - ii. The second situation involving general discussion will see questions to staff being directed through the Board Chair. The Board Chair will normally refer the questions to the Superintendent who may respond directly, may request a response from staff or may defer a response if internal discussion or decisions are required. The Board Chair may also defer a response based on his/her responsibility to ensure the effectiveness of the meeting.

Accountability:

Superintendent.

References:

*Education Act
Alberta Charter Schools Regulation
Aurora School Ltd. Charter*