



COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

CODE:	A.002
CATEGORY:	BOARD SERVICES
RESPONSIBILITY:	BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND BOARD ADMINISTRATION
APPROVAL:	BOARD OF TRUSTEES
APPROVAL DATE:	JUNE 17, 2014
ISSUE DATE:	JUNE 17, 2014
NEXT REVIEW:	JUNE 2019

POLICY OVERVIEW

Mamu Tshishkutamashutau – Innu Education recognizes the importance of effective communications. MTIE has a responsibility to engage in proactive, two-way communication with its partners in the belief that an informed community will enhance student learning and build support for public education.

This policy will strengthen the identification and principles regarding channels of communication, media relations and authorizations. The procedures will guide responsibilities of MTIE staff, Directors and School Administrators.

1.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 1.1 Any communication will comply with all applicable legislation, including but not limited to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the Indian Act, as well as the MTIE Acceptable Use of Computers and Internet/Intranet Technology Policy (F.003);
- 1.2 The Communications Policy applies to all forms of written, verbal and electronic communication.

2.0 PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 MTIE will consider the concerns and views of its partners when establishing priorities in developing and implementing its policies and programs.
- 2.2 MTIE will ensure that it is visible, accessible and accountable to the partners it serves.
- 2.3 All communications within the MTIE and with the partners it serves will:
 - 2.3.1 Be provided openly, honestly and with integrity;
 - 2.3.2 Contain accurate, understandable and timely information;
 - 2.3.3 Flow two ways, with the board creating opportunities for meaningful dialogue;

2.3.4 Be prepared in a culturally inclusive and gender neutral manner.

3.0 CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

3.1 The MTIE recognizes that a formal and proper line of communication encourages the immediate resolution of issues at the local level.

3.2 Individual complaints, concerns and/or questions should be referred to the employee closest to the point of concern unless otherwise stated in MTIE policy.

3.3 All formal communication between Board Members and staff will be coordinated through the Director of Education (or designate), unless otherwise prescribed in other MTIE policy.

3.4 It is understood that certain informal lines of communication exist between staff and Board Members; this policy is not meant to interfere with these lines of communication.

3.4.1 Invitations to individual Board members to attend school events or participate in school activities will be extended with the knowledge of the school principal.

3.5 Generally, the appropriate line of communication for employees extends through their direct supervisor unless otherwise prescribed in other MTIE policy.

4.0 SUPPORTING PUBLIC EDUCATION

4.1 Effective communication is a shared responsibility throughout the organization.

4.2 Board Members and all employees play an important role in building support for public education in the Innu communities of Labrador by:

4.2.1 Increasing public and employee awareness of its programs, services, student achievement and goals;

4.2.2 Supporting and promoting information sharing within schools and their communities;

4.2.3 Communicating Board decisions to their partners with accurate and concise interpretations;

4.2.4 Increasing awareness of the issues, trends and resources available to support public education;

4.2.5 Maintaining proactive measures to secure positive media coverage.

5.0 MEDIA RELATIONS

5.1 Newspapers, radio, television, school and board web sites, and other information media play an important role in keeping people informed about the operation of MTIE and its schools.

- 5.2 The Director of Administration and Professional Services and the Directors of Education for each community are considered to be the official spokespersons for MTIE when dealing with the media on issues regarding the day to day operations of the board.
- 5.3 The Board Co-Chairs are considered the official spokespersons for MTIE when dealing with the media for all matters pertaining to the responsibilities of the elected Board.
 - 5.3.1 When speaking with the media, the decisions and views of the MTIE supersede those of individual Board members.
- 5.4 The principal (or designate) is considered to be the official spokesperson for the school when dealing with the media on school-based issues.

6.0 AUTHORIZATION

- 6.1 The Director of Education is authorized to issue procedures in support of this policy.
- 6.2 All media requests for access at the school level must be first approved by the Director of Education for the community or a designate at the Board office.

COMMUNICATIONS PROCEDURES

1.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 All MTIE staff members are responsible for:

- 1.1.1 Understanding their roles as ambassadors of MTIE by communicating and publicly supporting the decisions of the elected Board and the Director of Education;
- 1.1.2 Following approved channels of communication;
- 1.1.3 Understanding their communication responsibilities extend to all written, verbal and electronic communications;
- 1.1.4 Alerting their supervisor of any issues, questions or concerns related to communication;
- 1.1.5 Striving to ensure all communication is prepared in a culturally inclusive and gender neutral manner.

1.2 The Directors are responsible for:

- 1.2.1 Ensuring staff are aware of all official communications, policies and directives of the board related to the operation of the system;
- 1.2.2 Maintaining effective and consistent channels of communication within the board;
- 1.2.3 Approving all media enquires, media requests and providing media with permission to be on school property;
- 1.2.4 Delegating responsibility to appropriate staff for responding to media enquiries;
- 1.2.5 Approving all system-level media releases.

1.3 Board Management and Staff are responsible for:

- 1.3.1 Coordinating the board's corporate communication efforts through a variety of methods, such as distribution of publications, utilization of the news media, and personal contacts;
- 1.3.2 Supporting school administrators with media relations;
- 1.3.5 Supporting schools with the promotion of activities and events;
- 1.3.7 Ensuring any public notification will adhere to all relevant Regulations, as well as to MTIE policies, in both content and timeline;
- 1.3.8 Writing and distributing all system-level media releases;

- 1.3.9 Posting all system-level media releases on the MTIE website and social media outlets;
 - 1.3.10 Ensuring the MTIE web site contains accurate, useful and up-to-date information;
 - 1.3.11 Overseeing other communications activities as determined by the Director of Administration and Professional Services and/or Directors of Education.
- 1.4 School Administrators are responsible for:
- 1.4.1 Ensuring informal and formal methods of communications are used within the school to foster two-way communication between home and school;
 - 1.4.2 Using a variety of communications techniques (i.e. meetings, school publications, signage, bulletin boards and personal contacts between school staff and the community) to promote student success;
 - 1.4.3 Ensuring staff members are aware of their communication responsibilities as outlined in MTIE policies and procedures;
 - 1.4.4 Ensuring school web sites contain accurate, useful and up-to-date information;
 - 1.4.5 Reporting any potential issue, headline event or crisis situation taking place in their school to the Board office in a timely manner;
 - 1.4.6 Approving all school-wide communication prior to distribution;
 - 1.4.7 Maintaining open lines of communication with stakeholders;
 - 1.4.9 Providing public notice of school or bus service cancellation;
 - 1.4.10 Celebrating and promoting student and staff accomplishments.
- 1.6 Instructional staff are responsible for:
- 1.6.1 Ensuring effective implementation of the School Success Plan for communicating student learning;
 - 1.6.2 Maintaining open lines of communication with the homes of students.