

EASTERN TOWNSHIPS SCHOOL BOARD	<i>Title:</i> COMMUNICATIONS POLICY	
<i>Source:</i> Communications Advisory Committee Secretary General	Resolution ETSB01-09-11 Effective September 25, 2001	<i>Reference Number:</i> P020

PREAMBLE

The Communications Policy of the Eastern Townships School Board is a set of principles for communicating successfully so that we may all better understand each other.

Everyone involved in the ETSB has a responsibility to follow this Policy's principles and practice them in all their communications – verbal, written or other. Its purpose is to reduce misunderstanding and to act as the base for effective relations between all participants in the education of our students.

POLICY STATEMENT

The ETSB believes that its communication (both internal and external) should be respectful, honest, timely, clear, concise and inclusive.

- Respectful* : the communication should be polite, tactful, sensitive and follow rules of confidentiality (see **Legal Framework**).
- Honest* : the communication should be truthful and direct.
- Timely* : the communication should be transmitted to all concerned at the earliest possible moment.
- Clear* : the communication should be appropriate for the intended audience (as jargon-free as possible).
- Concise* : the communication should be as brief and precise as possible.
- Inclusive* : the communication should be such that all concerned receive the same message within an appropriate time-frame.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

In its communications, the ETSB hereby undertakes to honour the following Laws and collective agreements :

- ❖ the sections of the *Education Act* (R.S.Q., c. I-13.3) pertaining to consultation;
- ❖ the clauses of the Provincial and Local Agreements of teachers, professionals and support staff personnel concerning consultation and participation;
- ❖ the *Act respecting Access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information* (R.S.Q., c. A-2.1). As a consequence, the ETSB undertakes to

protect the confidentiality of nominative information, in any form (verbal, written or other), concerning its students or its employees.

DEFINITIONS

1. *To communicate* : to successfully exchange information, verbally, in writing or by other means.
2. *To consult* : to seek advice from a person or a group of persons in order to aid in making an informed decision.
3. *To participate* : to work together, to take part in.

PRINCIPLES

I. Communications

1. Communicating successfully between all participants in order to develop trust and cooperation is a top priority and of utmost importance to the Eastern Townships School Board.
2. Within the context of individual roles and responsibilities, all members of the ETSB educational community will be held accountable for their expressed views. All communication should have a clearly defined purpose. In the same light, there is an implicit expectation that great care will be taken to ensure that all forms of communication will be based on principles of mutual respect, recognition of individual expertise and personal responsibility for one's actions.
3. All communications must respect the confidentiality of information that, if disclosed, could be prejudicial to the best interests of our students, staff, parent volunteers and committee members. All participants in the education process must realize that in many ways they are entrusted with confidential information and that their individual right to disclose such information is limited. The principle of confidentiality toward students, staff, parent volunteers and committee members shall be respected at all levels of communications, from official documentation down to casual conversation.

II. Consultation

1. The ETSB will consult in good faith.
2. In order for consultation to be taken seriously, it is important that a process be established that provides the participants with adequate time to respond, that their recommendations be given proper consideration, that acceptance or rejection of their ideas be noted, and that such a process be followed consistently in all official consultations.
3. The ETSB values the input of all concerned parties in the consultation process. Therefore, consultation will extend beyond what is legally required, whenever possible, to allow for greater participation.