

#94788

BCC
KLKC
JM-R

Participation of Political Figures at School Events And Award Ceremonies

The Board of Trustees of the St. James-Assiniboia School Division believes strongly in working in close partnership with other levels of government. From time to time elected officials (MP's, MLA's and Municipal councillors) will be in attendance at school events that are open to all members of the public. The intent of this policy is to give clear direction to school-based administrators and senior administration so that the Division is viewed as being supportive of the democratic process.

At all times school officials shall take a non-partisan approach and not favour any one particular political position.

Division or School Sponsored Events - Curriculum Related Information

Instruction

During classroom work, teachers may invite elected representatives to speak to students. In all cases, staff must not allow elected officials to participate in an activity that promotes a political party. Politicians that wish to represent a political party will be asked to restrict their activities to events outside of the school.

Note that the Retired Members Association of the Manitoba Legislature is ready to provide this service and can be contacted through the Clerk of the Legislature.

Election Campaigns

During election campaigns, Town Hall meetings may be arranged at schools and students can be invited to attend providing that all registered candidates are invited. This will enable direct involvement of those students able to exercise franchise. It will also make involvement voluntary and without effect on instructional time. The principal will

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request approval from the Superintendent/CEO or Designate to arrange a Town Hall meeting.

During the election period, candidates may desire school locations as photographic opportunities. They may also desire the involvement of staff and/or students. These activities must be avoided in buildings or on grounds.

Scholarships

If active politicians seek to provide scholarships, they should be advised to consider a contribution to the St. James Scholarship Foundation. These donations are formally recognized annually.

Awards

A variety of awards may be established by other levels of government. These will be vetted by the Awards and Scholarship Advisory Committee (Policy JM-R).

Elected political figures representing constituencies contained all or in part within the boundaries of St. James-Assiniboia School Division will be allowed to present Board-approved awards.

Awards from Government shall be sent over the signature of the Vice-Regal representative, given that all actions of government are taken in right of the Crown. In this way, the recognition is rendered apolitical and in a manner similar to awards rendered by Canada.

Participation of Elected Officials at Graduation Ceremonies

The following are guidelines for the participation of political figures at awards ceremonies:

- a) Trustees of the school division will participate in awards ceremonies and closing exercises as set out in Policy BCC.
- b) In an effort to keep awards ceremonies focused on students, elected public officials shall not be invited to speak at such ceremonies, with the exception of the Prime Minister of Canada, the Premier of Manitoba or the Minister of Education.

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Division and School-Sponsored Events

- a) Greetings on behalf of the Board will normally be brought by the Chair or his/her designate.
- b) Politicians are welcome at all public school events. Principals are encouraged to recognize their attendance except during the period of election campaigns.

Government Sponsored Events

From time to time Ministers of Government may wish to use a school for a public press release and announcement. Permission for such activity must be:

- a) Relevant to the welfare of children and/or the public education system.
- b) Approved by the Superintendent/CEO.
- c) Non-political in nature.

Purchased Political Advertising

Advertising is not acceptable in school newsletters or the Divisional "Contact" newspaper, or other electronic means.

Sports and cultural events in schools may produce media funded by event revenues, rather than taxes. Political paid advertising is acceptable in these event program media.

Photographic Opportunities

From time to time elected officials attend school events that are open to all members of the public and take photos with students and/or staff. Such photographs shall not appear in school or division publications.

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