



REPORT TO

GOVERNANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

Blessing and Official Opening of Schools Policy and School Events Communications and Invitee Protocols Policy Engagement Results

Then the king consulted the sages who knew the laws for this was the king's procedure towards all who were versed in law and custom. - Esther 1:13

Drafted

May 30, 2024

Meeting Date

June 4, 2024

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INFORMATION REPORT

Vision: IN GOD'S IMAGE: Growing in Knowledge, with Justice and Hope.

Mission: Nurturing the faith development and academic excellence of our Catholic learning community through the love of God, neighbour, and self.



MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN 2022 - 2025

IN GOD'S IMAGE: Growing in Knowledge, with Justice and Hope



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## **A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

To provide engagement results for Blessing and Official Opening of Schools Policy (Appendix A) and School Events Communications and Invitee Protocols Policy (Appendix B) policies.

**The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 23 hours.**

## **B. PURPOSE**

1. Provide the Governance and Policy Committee (GAP) with engagement results for Blessing and Official Opening of Schools Policy and School Events Communications and Invitee Protocols Policy.

## **C. BACKGROUND**

1. As part of the review of communications policies, Blessings and Official Openings of Schools Policy and School Events Communications and Invitee Protocols Policy were identified for review and engagement.
2. Blessings and Official Openings of Schools Policy was last updated in May 2019 and School Events Communications and Invitee Protocols Policy was last updated in May 2018.
3. Reviewing both policies in tandem enables opportunities to streamline the list of speakers at school events, order of speakers and consideration for circumstances that may require flexibility.
4. On January April 2, 2024, GAP passed the following motions regarding the two policies:
  - a) That the Blessing and Official Opening of Schools Policy be referred back to Staff to proceed to: i) engage with the Catholic Schools Parent Councils (CSPCs), Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (CPIC) and Principals and return to GAP with feedback prior to drafting the Policy; and ii) reconsider the wording and order of speakers.
  - b) That the School Events Communications and Invitee Protocols be referred back to Staff to engage with the CSPCs, CPIC and Principals and return to GAP with their respective feedback.
5. CSPCs and Principals/Vice-Principals had an opportunity to provide feedback via survey from May 14 – May 24.
6. CPIC were engaged at their May 27, 2024 meeting and provided input.

## **D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS**

1. A total of thirty-nine surveys were completed.

<b>Group</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Principal/Vice Principal	77
Catholic School Parent Council (CSPC)	23

- a) Respondents strongly preferred speakers from the local school and the board over representatives from other levels of government.

<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Principal of the School	90
Local Trustee	87
Archbishop/Bishop/Parish Priest	77
Superintendent	77
CSPC Chair	77
Director of Education	61
Student Council President	38
Chair of the Board (Vice-Chair or designate)	33
Local member of Parliament	31
Minister of Education/Member of Provincial Parliament designate	28
Mayor/Councillor designate	18
Other (please specify*)	3
* Valedictorian/Salutatorian	

- b. Respondents strongly preferred hearing from fewer speakers.

<b>Number of Speakers</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1-3	64
4-5	28
More than 5	8

- c. Respondents were asked if they recently celebrated a new school opening/blessing or anniversary, to identify the type of celebration and associated cost. Eleven respondents celebrated a new school

opening/blessing or anniversary which included mainly anniversaries, and one school opening.

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	28
No	72

d. The costs incurred are as follows:

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percent</b>
\$0-249	11
\$250-499	33
\$500-749	22
\$750+	33

2. CPIC provided the following feedback and insights:

- a) Consider inviting the CPIC ward member to events.
- b) Consider increasing reimbursement for anniversaries up to \$1000 due to inflation.
- c) Consider reimbursement to schools that are unable to fundraise significant amounts and are in financial need.
- d) Identify other possible uses for identified funds.
- e) Recognition of the importance of inviting elected officials to schools and consider brief opportunities for greetings.
- f) Importance of inviting the local parish priest.
- g) New CSPC chairs may be unaware of costs associated with these events/celebrations.
- h) CPIC endorsed the principles of these two existing policies.

3. Based on the collective feedback received, and best practices, below are for GAP's consideration:

- a) Consolidate both policies into one and breakdown types of events (ie. blessing/new school opening/addition, anniversary, graduation).
- b) Align lists of speakers for blessings/new school openings, anniversaries and other school events/celebrations (ie. graduations);
- c) Condense/streamline the speakers lists/order;
- d) Consolidate new school and addition speaking order lists into one;
- e) Identify the Principal or designate as the Master of Ceremonies (MC);
- f) Identify parish priest/representative at the start of the program to lead prayer/blessing before formal speakers;
- g) Identify local Trustee as first speaker at local school events;
- h) If any head of government (Prime Minister, Premier, Mayor) or Minister of Education is present, identify the Chair as first speaker;
- i) Consider speaking opportunities for elected officials only if there is a formal

- partnership/involvement (ie. funding for a school project);
- j) Ensure acknowledgement of all elected officials and other VIPs;
- k) Consider local discretion by the Principal in consultation with the local trustee and Superintendent on speaking list;
- l) Invitee lists should say “may include” instead of “will include” as each event varies; and
- m) Consolidate invitee lists into one.

## **CONCLUDING STATEMENT**

This report is for the information of the Governance and Policy Committee.