

Policy Name	PUBLIC RELATIONS		
Policy #	803	Category	INFORMATION MANAGEMENT
Steward	Marketing & Communications	Date Approved	December 13, 2023
Next Review Date		Date Reviewed or Revised	

POLICY

The College will implement an effective communication strategy, both internally and externally, as an important part of the Suncrest College marketing strategy. This policy will be conducted, coordinated, and managed by the Marketing department. Roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined regarding public relations and media.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Suncrest College:

- Informs the public of Suncrest College programs and services provided to the community;
- Promotes Suncrest College achievements, activities and events of significance;
- Increases awareness and visibility of the College within the region and beyond; and
- Provides the community with accurate information regarding incidents of a controversial and/or sensitive nature.

PRINCIPLES

In regard to public relations, Suncrest College is committed to the following:

- Conducting public relations in a manner that is objective, understandable, open and transparent within the law;
- Making available the most appropriate spokesperson based on accountability and responsibility; and
- Providing timely and accurate responses to media inquiries.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all college staff members, board of governors, and volunteers, and governs the College's relationship with the general public, government officials and any news media professionals, including all print and broadcast media, online and social media.

DEFINITIONS

Internal Communications students, governing board, committees, unions, personnel
Target Audience

**External Communications
Target Audience**

taxpayers, parents, population of the region, local associations and organizations, government (municipal, provincial and federal), Indigenous communities, leadership or organization, school boards, commercial enterprises, professional associations, media

PROCEDURES

Government Relations

Suncrest College recognizes that the actions of public policymakers impact our daily business operations. The College demands the highest standards of professional conduct and ethics from those representing the organization. The purpose of this guideline is to provide a foundation for communicating with government bodies at the civic, provincial and federal levels.

Statements on matters of policy and public interest on behalf of the College are the prerogative of the President and, in the President's absence, the Board Chair or other designate.

1. Procedure in Response to a Request for Comment on Government Policy or Legislation
 - Obtain reporter's contact information including:
 - Reporter's name and who they work for
 - Contact number
 - Their deadline
 - Date and time the story is scheduled to run
 - The topic of the interview, specific questions if possible
 - Contact Marketing and the President by email or phone message
 - The President will determine the response to the issue and consult with the Board and/or Executive as necessary.
 - The President will respond to the media question.
 - Marketing will draft press release and distribute as necessary.

2. Protocol for College Events

When a representative from municipal, provincial or federal government or senior Indigenous leadership (ex. First Nation Chief or Tribal Chief) is invited to and accepts an invitation to participate in a virtual and in-person College event, the President should be notified.

Corporate Media Relations

1. Official Spokespersons

The President and Board Chair serve as the official College spokespersons and convey the official position of the College issues of College-wide significance or situations that are of a particularly controversial or sensitive nature. Inquiries from the media about such issues should be referred to the Marketing department.

2. News Releases and Media Relations

Marketing is solely authorized to handle news media interactions on behalf of the College as an institution. This includes writing and distributing the College news releases and official College statements to the media; responding to or coordinating responses to inquiries from reporters; and scheduling interviews or news conferences.

The protocol for issuing news releases is:

- a) Identify potential news story.
- b) Have preliminary discussion with Marketing team.
- c) Marketing will draft the text or edit a draft submission from another team using College guidelines.
- d) Marketing seeks approval from CEO, followed by submission to ministry contact.
- e) Marketing notifies communication contacts from the Ministry of Advanced Education of the upcoming news release.
- f) Marketing will distribute the news release, copy to relevant staff and post on the website.
- g) All new releases will list the marketing department as the contact for further information. Marketing will direct to the appropriate staff member for follow up.

Marketing will review and update media contacts annually.

3. Guidelines for Staff

If the news story contains a corporate element and there is possibility for it to go provincial or federal, a quote from the President is required. The President may assign others to provide a quote as deemed appropriate. For example, if a story is picked up beyond the locale of the College Region (Leader Post, Star Phoenix, Western Producer, CTV Regina and etc.) a piece should be supplied by the President in addition to information provided on the program or service.

Media inquiries should be directed to the Marketing department who will gather the information below and direct the inquiry to the appropriate person:

- Reporter's name and who they work for
- Contact number
- Their deadline
- Date and time the story is scheduled to run
- The topic of the interview, specific questions if possible

Guidelines for staff when responding to media as directed by Marketing:

- Return media contact within a half-day in order to assist media persons with their deadlines. If you are not available, assign an alternate employee to handle any media enquiries.
- Clarify any question before responding. If you do not know the answer to a question, or feel uncomfortable responding, take the reporter's name and contact

information and advise him/her that someone else with that information will contact him/her as soon as possible.

- Provide your phone number and email address for any follow-up questions.

The following table provides some brief **examples** of media relation situations:

Circumstance	Spokespeople
Personnel issues	President or Board Chair
Crisis management	President or Board Chair
Emergency situations	President or Board Chair
College policy or legal affairs	President or Board Chair
Government policy	President or Board Chair
Factual information regarding programs and services	<p>Vice President - shall speak on behalf of his/her area of accountability and responsibility as the chief spokesperson for the department.</p> <p>Chairs, Managers, Coordinators, Instructors - provide clarification and/or information on programs, services, activities and initiatives that relate specifically to their business area.</p> <p>Corporate issues and/or provincial/federal matters are the responsibility of the President.</p>

4. Advice and Training

- All employees who are expected to deal with the media will receive training. The Marketing department will arrange a suitable training course.
- All new employees should be made aware of this policy and how it affects them through an orientation and discussion with Marketing.
- Advice on all aspects of media relations and publicity is available from the Marketing Team who can provide preparation assistance on media interview techniques.

LEGISLATIVE AND COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT REFERENCES

N/A

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Social Media Policy