



Calgary Board of Education

## **Official School Opening Guide for Communications Services**

## **Introduction to Official School Opening**

- After a school is named, built and occupied, an official opening ceremony should be planned.
- The official opening should take place in the first year of operation so that children in the original classes may participate.
- Much of the planning will be undertaken by the school principal. Communications Services' job is to support the principal through the planning and execution of the ceremony.
- Encourage principals to be creative. This is a celebration for their new school!

# Communications Services' Tasks

## 1) Organization

- Create a folder to keep track of all official opening ceremony information:
  - Original copies of forms from principal
  - Contact information for *Quality Trophies*, Alberta Infrastructure, School, Principal, etc.
  - Guest list. (Who was invited and which invitation did they receive?)
  - Updated RSVP list. Continuously update and re-print RSVP list.
    - Include each guest's full name and title.
    - Break list into 3 sections:
      - Attending
      - Regrets
      - Not Yet Confirmed.
  - Copies of speeches, scripts, programs, etc. Keep only the most recent and up-to-date copies in this folder.
  - Map to the school.
  - Task checklist.

## 2) Forms

- Ensure the principal has necessary forms. Forms are attached in hard copy and available electronically.
  - Bronze Plaque Form
  - Notice of Official Opening
  - Information for Alberta Infrastructure
- Once the principal has returned the completed forms (no later than 8 weeks prior to ceremony) send them to Alberta Infrastructure.
- Send completed Bronze Plaque Form to *Quality Trophies and Engravings* and order wood stand and bell.

## 5) Invitations

- Once the principal has decided on a date and location:
  - Confirm availability with:
    - Chief Superintendent
    - Deputy Chief Superintendent
    - Chair or Vice Chair, Board of Trustees
    - Ward Trustee
- In advance, phone or e-mail "Save the Date" to:
  - Area Director
  - MP for the area
  - MLA for the area
  - Minister of Education
  - Minister of Infrastructure
  - Alderman for the area
  - Namesake (if applicable)

- If they RSVP as “attending”, follow up with a formal invitation signed by Board Chair:
    - See attached sample invitations to draft letter.
    - Have letter approved by Trustees’ Admin Assistant.
    - Once approved, print on Trustees letterhead.
    - Leave with Trustees’ Admin Assistant to be signed by Board Chair
- Create a guest list with Barb. In advance, phone or e-mail “Save the Date” (see attached samples) to the list, which should include:
  - All superintendents and directors
  - Architect
  - Contractors
  - Director, Zone 5, Alberta Education
  - Admin Assistant to the Board of Trustees (do NOT send directly to trustees)
  - Alberta Infrastructure
  - Anyone who works in the Area in which the school is located (conduct a search in Outlook for Area contacts)
- 2 weeks prior to the ceremony, send out another e-mail asking to confirm RSVPs
- Maintain RSVP list. Update principal regularly.
- Principal invites:
  - Parent council chair
  - Community Partners
  - Parents, if applicable
  - Religious leaders in the community

## **6) Program**

- Principal plans program.
- Retrieve program from principal 2 weeks prior to ceremony.
- Notify speakers of the program outline to help them plan their speaking notes accordingly.

## **7) Speeches**

- Communicate with the assistant to the Chief Superintendent and the assistant to the Board Chair to discuss who will be writing the speaking notes for the ceremony. (Often someone from Communications Services will write one of the speeches.)
- Speaking Roles (speeches should be given in the following order):
  - Principal - conducts welcome and greetings, recognizes important guests by name and title\*, speaks about the building and the creation of the school.
  - Area Director – speaks about the importance of learning and the personalization of learning.
  - Chief Superintendent – thanks everyone who contributed to making the school a reality, particularly internal CBE members.
  - Government Representative – speaks about the importance of a school in a community

- Board Chair – speaks directly to the students about how this school was specifically built for them to provide them with opportunities.

*\* See attached Event Protocol document for introduction and greeting order.*

#### **8) Media Coverage**

- Ensure that media release for ceremony goes out 2-3 prior to event. Speak with Ted Flitton.

#### **9) Day of the Ceremony**

- Bring plaque, bell, and bell stand to the school.
- Take extra copies of all speeches you have access to for back-up
- Take Communications Services camera and take photos (optional)
- Help principal/organizing committee in any way they need help
- Take one or two copies of the program and keep them at Communications Services for future reference

#### **10) Day After the Ceremony**

- Write a story about the opening for the CBE website. 250-400 words in length.
- Have it edited before sending it to website coordinator.
- Retrieve photos from the event's photographer and include them with the story. Add cutlines.

## Communications Services Contacts for Official School Openings

<b>Quality Trophies and Engraving</b>	Theresa	Fax: (403)272-9539	Fax form: Bronze Plaque
<b>Alberta Infrastructure</b>	Stephanie Wigston	Fax: (780)422-4756 Stephanie.Wigston@gov.ab.ca	Fax forms: Bronze Plaque, Notice, Information
<b>Trustees Admin. Assistant</b>	Grace St.Croix	Phone : (403) 294-8487	Invitations to Trustees



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## **Recommended Protocol for Events Involving Special Guests**

*Care should be taken to ensure names and positions are correct. Names should be spelled phonetically if necessary to help with pronunciation.*

### **Recognition (Order of Introduction)**

Once an invitation is extended and accepted, the following order for introducing guests\* is suggested (if elected officials are to be recognized at the event):

1. Members of the senate representing Alberta
2. Members of Parliament (Cabinet ministers first)
3. Members of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta (Cabinet ministers first)
4. Mayor
5. School Board Chair
6. Trustees and Aldermen
7. Other dignitaries (i.e. superintendents, senior bureaucrats, heads of other organizations)

### **Greetings (Speaking Order)**

The most appropriate order of speakers will vary based on the type of event, number and nature of speakers, the keynote speaker, or the ceremony to be performed (if any). The following speaking order is suggested:

1. Introductory remarks by Master of Ceremonies, principal, etc.
2. Greetings from the Calgary Board of Education
  - a. Directors
  - b. Superintendents
  - c. Trustees
3. Greetings from municipal government
4. Greetings from provincial government
5. Greetings from federal government
6. CBE Board Chair
7. Closing remarks by MC, principal, etc.

# Official Opening Checklist

## 3 months:

- ☐ Create official opening folder for school
- ☐ Retrieve forms (3) from principal
- ☐ Send forms (3) to Alberta Infrastructure
- ☐ Send Bronze Plaque form to *Quality Trophies and Engraving*

## 2 months:

- ☐ Create guest list with Barb
- ☐ Send appropriate invitations to guests

## 1 month:

- ☐ Retrieve program schedule from principal
- ☐ Communicate with assistants to Chief Superintendent and Board Chair to arrange speaking notes

## 2 weeks:

- ☐ Confirm guest RSVPs
- ☐ Retrieve formal program from principal
- ☐ Distribute program to speakers

## 1 week:

- ☐ Ensure media release is prepared and sent

## Week of/Day of:

- ☐ Take bell, bell stand and plaque to the school
- ☐ Take photos of ceremony (optional)
- ☐ Take one or two copies of the program and keep at Communications Services for future reference

## After ceremony:

- ☐ Write, edit and include pictures with a web story





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## **Forms for Principals**

**BRONZE COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE**

12" x 18" (18" wide)  
(for School Openings)

**NAME OF SCHOOL:**

**DATE OPENED:**

**BOARD CHAIR:**

**VICE CHAIR:**

**TRUSTEES:**

**CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT:**

**SUPERINTENDENT OF FACILITIES & ENVIRONMENTAL  
SERVICES:**

**PRINCIPAL:**

**ARCHITECT:**

**CONTRACTOR:**

*This plaque is purchased and paid by Design & Construction Services*

SCHOOL OPENINGS INFORMATION SHEET

School Board: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

Opening Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Construction Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Background on School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Enrolment: \_\_\_\_\_

Grades: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Vice Principal's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Board Chairman's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Trustees' Names:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Number of Staff: \_\_\_\_\_

School Philosophy: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

School Colours: \_\_\_\_\_

Programs Offered: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Special Features: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Community Involvement: \_\_\_\_\_

*This information will be used for briefings. Please include any additional information that may be of interest such as special classes, architecture, location, etc. The Capital Programs Branch of Alberta Infrastructure will provide the technical information specific to the project such as school capacity, architect, contractor, date of tender approval, tender amount, government support, etc.*

MAIL OR FAX TO:

Executive Director, Capital Programs Branch, Alberta Infrastructure  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 6950 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5V7      Telephone: 422-7224    Fax: 427-5816

# Government of Alberta ■

## Infrastructure

### NOTICE OF SCHOOL OPENING CEREMONY

**School Board:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Local Contact Person:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Opening:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Type of Project:** (please check) ☐ New School ☐ Addition ☐ Modernization

### CEREMONY PARTICIPANTS

**Ministers:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MLA(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**M.P.(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Alberta Infrastructure Representative(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other Representative(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

#### MAIL OR FAX TO:

Executive Director, Capital Programs Branch, Alberta Infrastructure  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 6950 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5V7  
Telephone: 422-7224 Fax: 427-5816

The following practices will be followed with regard to presentations at official school openings.

- For all government-funded projects, school boards are presented with the provincial Coat of Arms, an Alberta flag and a bronze plaque.
- Bronze plaques and commemorative certificates will be presented by the Minister or a department representative on behalf of the government.
- The provincial Coat of Arms will be presented by the MLA for the constituency in which the school is located.

**Please allow a *minimum of 8 weeks* to provide sufficient time for manufacturing of presentation items.**



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## **Invitations to School Openings**

Use the following samples to send invitations to the appropriate guests.

- **“Save-the-Date” E-Mails**
  - Area Director
  - MP for the Area
  - MLA for the Area
  - Minister of Education
  - Minister of Infrastructure
  - Alderman for the area
  - Namesake (if applicable)
  - Guest list created with Barb Kuester:
    - All superintendents and directors
    - Architects
    - Contractors
    - Director of Zone 5, Alberta Education
    - Admin Assistant to the Board of Trustees (do NOT send directly to trustees)
    - Alberta Infrastructure
    - Anyone who works in the area in which the school is located (conduct a search in Outlook for area contacts)
- **Formal Invitations**
  - Send to those listed below who confirmed attendance after Save-the-Date
  - Work with Barb to decide who among the following should be asked to speak at the ceremony.
  - Send the appropriate letter (attendance/attendance and greetings)
    - Area Director
    - MP for the Area
    - MLA for the Area
    - Minister of Education
    - Minister of Infrastructure
    - Alderman for the area
    - Namesake (if applicable)
- **RSVP Confirmation**

## Sample “Save-the-Date” E-Mail

Hi Candice,

There is another Official School Opening for **McKenzie Towne School**.

Date: **Thursday, June 10, 2010**

Time: **9:00- 10:00 am**

Location: 679 Prestwick Circle S.E.  
Calgary, AB T2Z 0V3

Please let me know if the Honourable Ray Danyluk will be able to attend and bring greetings on behalf of Alberta Infrastructure.

Thanks very much.

## Sample Formal Invitation to Attend

April 01, 2010

Mr. Darshan Kang, MLA  
Calgary McCall  
12, 2110 – 41 Avenue NE  
Calgary AB T2E 8Z7

Dear Mr. Kang :

**Re : Official Opening of Taradale School – May 18, 2010**

Taradale School is holding its official opening celebration. We would be honoured if you would attend this event in your official capacity as MLA for Calgary-McCall:

**Date:** May 18, 2010  
**Time:** 9:30 am – 10:30 am  
**Place:** Taradale School  
170 Taravista Drive NE

Please contact Jennifer Hazard at 403-294-8200 or email [jehazard@cbe.ab.ca](mailto:jehazard@cbe.ab.ca) before April 20, 2010 to confirm your attendance at this celebration.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Pat Cochrane, Chair  
Board of Trustees



## **Sample Formal Invitation to Attend and Speak**

April 01, 2010

Ms. Darlene Selby  
Director  
Area III Office

Dear Darlene:

**Re: Taradale Official Opening Celebration**

Taradale School is holding its official opening celebration. We would be honoured if you would attend this event in your official capacity as Director of Area III.

We would also like to invite you to deliver greetings and/or say a few words (2-3 Minutes) at the ceremony.

Details are as follows:

**Taradale School Official Opening**

**Address:** 170 Taravista Drive N.E.

**Date:** May 18, 2010

**Time:** 9:30 am- 10:30 am

Please contact Jennifer Hazard at (403) 294-8200 or [Jehazard@cbe.ab.ca](mailto:Jehazard@cbe.ab.ca) before April 20, 2010 to advise if you will be attending the official opening celebration and if you wish to speak as requested.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Pat Cochrane, Chair  
Board of Trustees

