Event Protocol
Abbotsford Board of Education

This document is intended to assist schools and district staff in planning and establishing appropriate procedures when dignitaries are invited to school and district functions.

It is important that public education is connected to the greater community in many ways. School Trustees are elected by the community to represent the public interest in the education of our students, and as such, it is expected that Trustees will be invited to, recognized and involved at district or school events in a consistent and appropriate manner.

Invitations

1. It is expected that Trustees will be invited to significant district or school events (e.g. graduation ceremonies, awards nights, cheque presentations, etc.), where other dignitaries, such as; MPs, MLAs, Mayor, City Councillors, or the media (see #6) are invited. This does not preclude inviting Trustees to other school events.

2. Trustees are to be invited as soon as event details are known (preferably two weeks prior to the event). Invitations should be sent directly to the Secretary-Treasurer's Office. The Secretary-Treasurer's Office will apprise the Board of Education.

3. To request a Trustee speaker/presenter, address your email to the Board Chair and copy the Superintendent.

4. A draft agenda will be provided prior to the event, providing a brief outline of the purpose of the event, the Board/Trustee's role at the event, and the contact person for the event.

5. If Trustees are unable to attend, the master of ceremonies will express regrets on behalf of the Board of Education.

Welcome & Seating

1. Upon arrival at schools, provisions are to be made for Trustees and special guests to be greeted by staff or students.

2. All members of the platform party will be provided reserved seating, ideally with seat name cards.

3. Seating order for dignitaries in attendance is in the following order: the host/MC is seated as #1 in the centre of the dignitaries; to the MC's right is #2 the highest ranking guest doing an opening or delivering the keynote address; to the MC's left is #3 the next highest ranking dignitary, perhaps speaking, bringing greetings or not; then #4 is seated to #2; and #5 is seated beside #3. Your platform guests are seated alternately right and left to the centre of the MC.

Seating Example:

Audience in front of platform guests

7   5   3   1   2   4   6

Introductions

At events, the master of ceremonies should introduce the highest-ranking dignitaries first.

1. All ceremonies and large-scale events should begin with the singing of O Canada and recognition that the event is being held on the shared traditional ancestral territory of the Sumas and Matsqui First Nations.

2. Introduction of Trustees at school events will be provided by referencing the individuals' official title, followed by their last name. Introductions should take place in the following order:

    I. Board Chair (and last name);
    II. Vice Chair (and last name);
    III. Other Trustees in attendance (alphabetically by last name);
    IV. Superintendent of Schools (and last name);
    V. Assistant Superintendent and Associate Superintendent (and last name); and
    VI. Principal, Vice-principal (and last name).

3. At public events where dignitaries are present, the master of ceremonies should introduce the highest-ranking dignitaries first, following this order:

    I. Members of the Senate representing British Columbia;
    II. MP's (cabinet members first);
    III. MLA's (cabinet members first);
    IV. Civic Officials (Mayor first, followed by Councillors in alphabetical order by last name);
    V. Board of Education (Chair, Vice-Chair and Trustees in alphabetical order by last name);
    VI. Superintendent of Schools and Senior Management Team;
    VII. Senior bureaucrats and heads of other organizations; and
    VIII. Prominent community members.

Speakers & Presenters

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. The master of ceremonies should ensure that the highest-ranking dignitaries speak last.

1. The Board Chair (or designate) will bring greetings on behalf of the Board of Education at all district events where other dignitaries or guests are present. The following speaker order is suggested if a Trustee is bringing greetings at an event:
   a. introductory remarks by the Master of Ceremonies (MC), including recognition of Trustees and other dignitaries in attendance;
   b. recognition of Traditional Territories;
   c. Greetings from representatives of:
      i. Board of Education
      ii. Municipal government
      iii. Provincial government
      iv. Federal government
   d. Keynote speaker or ceremony
   e. Closing remarks by the MC

2. For significant events (such as school graduations), the designated Trustee (usually the Trustee liaison) and designated senior team member will be a platform guest and participate in the ceremony, by;

   a. addressing the graduating students;
   b. giving out the Board of Education scholarship award; and
   c. congratulating the students receiving their diploma.

Ceremonial or Royal Protocol

While rare, school districts or schools may occasionally be included in: royal visits (including those of Canada's Governor-General or British Columbia's Lieutenant Governor); visits by the Prime Minister or Premier, senior cabinet ministers, ambassadors; or other prominent dignitaries. In such circumstances, the formal protocol of either the Government of Canada or Province of British Columbia will take precedence over a local protocol.

Media Invitations

Prior to invitations being extended to any media, organizers must notify the Board Chair, the Superintendent and the Communications Manager.

The school district's Communications Manager will assist schools/staff in addressing protocol for events when additional assistance is required, or for clarification.

References
- AP 108 - Singing of the National Anthem
- AP 109 - Flags
- BC Office of Protocol
- Government of Canada Federal Dignitary Protocol