

## FACILITIES

## Policy 701.12-G

### School Opening Ceremony

#### 1. Introduction

The School Opening Ceremony Committee is essential in organizing and delivering a memorable event that embodies the district's vision, mission, and values. These comprehensive guidelines are designed to help the committee ensure the ceremony is inclusive, well-coordinated, and representative of the broader school community. The committee will hold consistent meetings to plan, monitor progress, address challenges, and maintain open communication.

#### 2. Membership

- Principal (Chairperson)
- School Staff
- Communications Lead
- Parent Advisory Council (PAC) Representative
- Trustee School Liaison
- Assistant Superintendent
- Student Representative
- Other

#### 3. Responsibilities

- Develop a comprehensive project plan with clear timelines for invitations, logistics, rehearsals, and final agenda confirmation.
- Coordinate all aspects of the event, including venue setup, decorations, refreshments, guests, and speakers.
- Assign roles and responsibilities to committee members to ensure all tasks are covered and executed efficiently.
- Hold regular planning meetings, provide timely progress updates, and promptly address any challenges or changes.
- Foster collaboration with school and district leaders, staff, families, and community partners to ensure the event's success and broad participation.
- Prepare contingency plans for potential disruptions (such as inclement weather or technical difficulties) and assign clear responsibilities for implementing these measures to ensure a seamless event experience.

## 4. Key Considerations

The following information is designed to assist with the planning of the official opening of schools:

- **Timing**

The date and time for the event should provide sufficient time for the Committee to plan and coordinate all aspects. It is not necessary that the school opening ceremony occur prior to students starting at the school but ideally should occur in a timely manner within 6-8 weeks after students begin attending the building.

- **Attendees and Suggested Speakers**

Invitations should be sent to the following six to eight weeks before the planned event date:

- a. Board of Education
- b. Elder (representing Indigenous rights holders)
- c. Minister of Education and Child Care
- d. Members of Parliament (MP)
- e. Members of Legislative Assembly (MLA)
- f. Mayor and City Council

- **Dedication Plaque**

A dedication plaque will need to be ordered through Facilities Services at least five to six weeks before the opening event. See Board policy [701.11-R Naming of Board-Owned Facilities or Parts of Board-Owned Facilities](#) for inscription guidelines.

- **Media**

Event invitations should be sent to local media outlets and distributed using the appropriate district communication channels to ensure broad coverage and community awareness.

- **Agenda**

The agenda for the event should clearly outline the sequence of activities, including speeches and presentations. It is recommended to feature a variety of entertainment and promotional segments such as choir and band performances, drama and dance routines, as well as slide or video presentations. Student-led tours of the new school facility prior to the official start of the ceremony offer an excellent opportunity to showcase the school to guests. When planning the order of speakers, be sure to follow proper protocol by having the most senior dignitary speak last. The ceremony should open with a land acknowledgment and a welcome to all attendees.

- **Decorations**

When planning decorations, strive to showcase the diversity within the school and ensure they reflect the board's mission and values. Selecting a cohesive theme for the event can help guide decoration choices and create a unified approach. Incorporating student work throughout the venue adds a personal and meaningful touch—consider ways to represent every student in the decor to foster a sense of inclusivity and pride during the opening ceremony.