

11 Laurentian Drive  
Kitchener ON N2E 1C1  
Telephone: (519) 576-6700



Fax: (519) 576-2583  
Web Site: [www.lhcs.ws](http://www.lhcs.ws)  
General Inquiries:  
[inquiries@lhcs.ws](mailto:inquiries@lhcs.ws)

### **LHCS Statement of Purpose**

We believe it is our responsibility as Christians to raise children in the light of God's Word. The education of children must be Christ-centered, equipping them to become responsive disciples of Christ who seek the will of the Lord in all aspects of life.

### **LHCS Mission Statement**

Kitchener-Waterloo Christian School Society advances dynamic, excellent Christ-centered education through unconstrained facilities, exceptional programs, and extensive resources that cultivate responsive disciples of Christ.

### **LHCS Vision Statement**

As a diverse community, Kitchener Waterloo Christian School Society intentionally engages God's world, locally and globally, through distinctive educational programming, strategic partnerships and sustainable growth.

Effective Date: <b><i>September, 2006</i></b>	Review Date: <b><i>September, 2016</i></b>
Revision Date(s):	Committee: <b><i>Community Relations</i></b>

## **Policy 801 – Media Policy**

1. The principal is the school's spokesperson and is responsible for all communication with the media. In the absence of the principal, a designated vice-principal or board member will assume this role.
2. All requests for information from the media must be referred to the school's media spokesperson.
3. No one is required to be interviewed by the media; if the media want to interview a teacher, the teacher's permission and the principal's permission must be obtained.
4. The principal has the right to deny press interviews with staff on the school premises; staff have the right to deny an interview with the media at any time or place.
5. If the media arrive uninvited, they will be escorted to the principal's office and the ground rules concerning interviewing staff and students and disrupting school routines will be explained.
6. The media will not be allowed access to students or to roam hallways or the grounds of the school.
7. Normally, the principal will decline any attempts by the media to interview students. If it seems appropriate for a student to speak to the press, parental permission must be obtained in writing. The decision to allow a student on camera should be very carefully considered, weighing all the consequences.

8. If a press conference is called, a pressroom will be set up at a site away from the scene of the incident (e.g. local church or office board room).
9. Members of the media will be contacted by phone or fax to inform them of the press conference.
10. During the press conference, the principal will read the prepared statement and state when further information will be available.
11. Copies of the press release will be made available to all media personnel.
12. The name of a young person (as defined by the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*) who is alleged to have committed an offence or of a young person who is a victim or witness will not be released to the press unless the school is authorized to do so by the police.
13. If there is the possibility of a criminal investigation, a police spokesperson will be responsible for releasing the details of the incident.
14. The Guidelines may be updated by the Principal without further approval from the BOD.

### **Guidelines:**

Determine if the police will be making a statement to the media.

Follow the school's media policy.

Identify the media spokesperson

- the principal is usually the designated spokesperson for the school
- designate an assistant who has been trained in media relations

Contact the media before the school is contacted by the media

- the principal will likely know whether or not the incident will generate media attention
- the information should be shared as soon as possible

Caution staff, students, and others about speaking to the media

- all requests for information or interviews must be referred to the principal

Inform the media when a prepared statement will be available

- inform the media if a press conference will be held

Prepare a written statement

- state the facts clearly and concisely, avoid statements which are speculative
- answer as many of the following as possible: who, what, when, where, why, and how
- don't release the names of the victims or persons involved
- focus on the positive actions the school is taking to help students and staff
- express sorrow on behalf of the staff and student body
- make positive comments about the student(s) involved
- announce events open to the school community: memorial service. parent meeting
- avoid disclaimers of responsibility until all the facts are known
- state when and how the information will be up-dated

#### Share the prepared media statement with the staff

- remind staff to avoid speculations

#### Involve community media spokesperson

- ask the police/RCMP's trained media spokesperson to assist in the press conference
- meet with this person before the press conference and agree on what information should and will be shared by the police and/or school

#### Set limits

- establish geographic and time limits by informing the media as of where, when, and for how long the press conference will be
- inform the media as to what types of questions will and will not be answered. For example, "Until we have been advised by the coroner, we are not able to state the cause of death." "The police are investigating the situation and have advised us that they will be the ones to release information about the suspect and the victim."

#### Prepare for the press conference

- brainstorm a set of questions the media is likely to ask
- decide which questions will be answered
- have a variety of ways of responding to questions you are not able to answer at this time
- have a media coach (another administrative team member) at the back of the press room giving support and signals on which questions to answer and when to cut an answer short

#### Prepare the site for the media's visit

- if possible, hold the press conference away from the scene of the incident
- if held at school, close off hallways or rooms so the media will not have access to class lists, teachers' names, and other private information about the school population
- post signs directing the media to the press room
- have refreshments available
- greet the media as they arrive; escort them to the assigned area
- provide copies of the prepared press release
- be sure the media vacate the premises at the end of the press conference

#### Do

- present the facts
- be cooperative
- be prepared for questions which might violate confidentiality or hinder investigation
- insist that the privacy rights of your students, staff, and parents be protected
- offer to find out answers to questions you don't know the answers to; invite the reporter to call you back at a designated time
- limit the number of questions you will answer
- take your time to form your answers

#### Don't

- speak "off the record"
- argue with a reporter
- adlib or speculate or lie. Stick with what was stated in the prepared statement.
- say "no comment". If you can't answer a question, explain why (e.g. "The relatives need to be notified." "Answering that would jeopardize the investigation.")
- panic

- lay blame
- play favourites and invite only certain members of the media to the press conference

After a Crisis

- compile media accounts and press releases for future reference
- address the media several weeks or months after the incident to inform the public of new programs or changes the school has made
- announce how the joint effort of the community has resulted in changes to the school's programs and/or policies
- thank the media for its involvement and assistance

- **adapted from SCSBC "Responding to a School Emergency"**