

# some useful ideas

These suggestions may be used alone, or in tandem with one or more others to create a public relations "awareness" for your school. Many have been tried, successfully, in other schools. Adopt and adapt according to your needs.

- ✚ Parent-sponsored welcome for new teachers: letters to parents from new teachers on staff.
- ✚ A special events school calendar marking holidays, in-services, athletic events, parent-teacher conferences, informal receptions, a back-to-school night.
- ✚ Encourage volunteers in school, parent-child picnics, parent work planning sessions, guidance night for parents and students.
- ✚ Plan a weekly visiting day for small, invited groups.
- ✚ Display welcome signs in schools, set up a visitor's information rack, ask for student volunteer guides to take visitors through premises.
- ✚ Send home "Tell-a-grams" with good news on student activities.
- ✚ Inquire about cable TV coverage of school events; suggest students and teachers prepare a weekly information program for cable TV and local radio.
- ✚ Hold an Appreciation Night for parents, community volunteers, media, school board, bus drivers.
- ✚ Establish parent and grandparent volunteers.
- ✚ Carry out a blood donor campaign in your gymnasium or assembly area.

- ✚ Sponsor shopping mall displays for Education Week, or other special events.
- ✚ Suggest a community, bank or business adopt a class.
- ✚ Encourage home visits, phone calls as often as possible.
- ✚ Have speakers come to school to address special events, graduation, assemblies, special athletic events. Send "thank you".
- ✚ Hold a home and school evening with a reception for visitors, staff.
- ✚ Promote school concerts, plays, and invite guests, media.
- ✚ Try a newspaper ad series requesting sponsorship by area shopping malls or school suppliers.
- ✚ Open your premises for special meetings by community interest groups (school council, service clubs, senior citizens).
- ✚ Send out educational announcements to church bulletins.
- ✚ Encourage a school column, school photos, teacher-of-the-month feature in your local newspaper.
- ✚ Submit book reviews to your area media.
- ✚ Hold a Media Night, reception & tour, demonstration lessons, mini-concert.
- ✚ Prepare school information kits for distribution each year: school statistics, staff members, programs, extra-curricular activities, photos, school map, parking permission slip.



Prince Edward Island  
Teachers' Federation

A project of the teachers' associations of Atlantic Canada



## PUBLIC RELATIONS and school programs

Today's schools have a key role to play in developing and maintaining a positive public image. This brochure outlines suggestions for use in your school PR program which will assist in reaching your intended PR goals.



## public relations: the steps

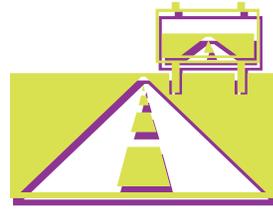
**PLANNING:** Define your PR needs, gather ideas and information, set goals, initiate program.

**INTEGRATION:** Shape your PR program to reflect policies and further your PR purpose.

**PREPARATION:** Put research into a practical format to do the required job.

**DELIVERY:** Use media to place your message before some or all of your publics.

**EVALUATION:** Did you reach your audience? Did they react? Was your PR program effective? Would you do it again?



## determine your audience

Keep an up-to-date list of everyone with whom your school has contact. Add new names to the list as the need arises. Some of the groups and individuals your school is in contact with may include:

staff, students, parents, administration, school board, school councils, paraprofessionals, volunteers, bus drivers, janitors, feeder schools, universities, specialist teachers, adult education teachers, department of education, community groups, service clubs, church groups, single parents, alumni, senior citizens, teacher training institutions, groups using your school (cubs, scouts, guides), business groups, government departments or agencies, local police, RCMP, provincial government leaders, opposition members, municipal leaders, professional organizations, labour groups, media, shopping centres, merchandising associations ... and more.

## how to reach your audience

There are many ways to reach your audience. Some of these include:

- ▶▶ School newsletters, annual reports, calendars or events;
- ▶▶ Posters, signs, billboards, report card stuffers;
- ▶▶ Radio, TV public service announcements, interviews;
- ▶▶ Advertising in the media and special interest publications;
- ▶▶ Handbooks, pamphlets, student newsletters;
- ▶▶ Open houses, exhibits, field trips, cable TV;
- ▶▶ Out-of-school displays, speakers' bureau;
- ▶▶ Education Week, concerts, social and athletic activities;
- ▶▶ Lectures, home and school, direct mail;
- ▶▶ Telephone calls, meetings, pre-school conferences;
- ▶▶ Restaurant place mats, banners, store window cards, bumper stickers.

## the basics

- ▶▶ Make it honest and reliable in order to achieve credibility and assure integrity.
- ▶▶ Don't lose momentum, keep it on-going.
- ▶▶ Cover as much area as possible in order to reach as many people as possible.
- ▶▶ Design it for flexibility; accept constructive criticism.
- ▶▶ Keep it two-way, listen as well as tell; invite reactions.
- ▶▶ Provide facts in order to develop understanding.