

# OFFICIAL OPENING OF PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDINGS

## GUIDELINES

### BACKGROUND

An official opening is a significant event for a public school. The opening provides an opportunity to showcase the school (or other facilities) to the local community and promote or develop the ethos of the school.

Funding for building projects may come from the State Government, the Commonwealth Government or both.

It is the prerogative of the Minister for Education and Training, or a nominated representative, to officially open facilities that have been funded by the State Government, and to determine the date of these official openings.

Where the Commonwealth Government has funded more than 50% of the project cost, the Commonwealth Minister for Education and Training, or a nominated representative, is to officially open the facilities. However, if the Commonwealth Minister, or a nominated representative, is unable to open the facilities, the State Minister, or a nominated representative, has the option to officially open the facilities.

Where Commonwealth Government funding has been provided, but is less than 50% of the project cost, this is recognised by inviting the Commonwealth Minister for Education and Training, or a nominated representative, to attend the official opening. The Commonwealth Government requires official openings to be held within seven months of the building program being completed.

### WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THERE IS AN OFFICIAL OPENING?

#### **STAGE 1: SETTING THE DATE**

##### **The Ministerial Services Unit (MSU):**

- is requested by the Office of the Minister for Education and Training to confirm the proposed date of the official opening;
- seeks confirmation from the Capital Works and Maintenance branch, in conjunction with the Department of Finance – Building Management and Works (BMW):
  - that the building works will be completed in time for the proposed official opening date; and
  - whether the funding source/s for the building project is Commonwealth or State;
- liaises with the principal regarding the date proposed by the Office of the Minister for Education and Training; and
- advises the Office of the Minister for Education and Training that the proposed date is suitable for the school.

##### **The Office of the Minister for Education and Training:**

- confirms the date for the official opening and forwards a Briefing Note request to the MSU; and

- ensures that appropriate Commonwealth Government agencies/representatives (such as the Commonwealth Minister for Education and Training) are involved with the opening where Commonwealth Government funding has been used for the project.

## **STAGE 2: ORGANISING THE OFFICIAL OPENING**

### **The MSU:**

- forwards the Briefing Note request to the relevant Education Regional Office, which liaises with the principal to complete the Briefing Note;
  - If the opening is a Royalties for Regions project, please refer to Appendix B;
- forwards the Briefing Note request to the Capital Works and Maintenance branch and requests information relating to the facilities at the school and a template/proof of the commemorative plaque wording; and
- notifies the Media Unit of the Briefing Note request.

### **The Capital Works and Maintenance branch:**

- invites a representative from BMW to attend the opening;
- completes the Briefing Note information relating to the facilities at the school;
- organises for a suitable commemorative plaque to be provided to the school (a stand for the plaque can be made available for schools in the metropolitan area); and
- liaises as required with the principal regarding arrangements for the opening.

### **The Education Regional Office:**

- forwards the Briefing Note request to the principal;
- assists the principal with the finalisation of the Briefing Note where necessary;
- quality assures the information provided in the Briefing Note when received from the principal;
- forwards the endorsed Briefing Note to the MSU; and
- assists the principal with organising the ceremony, if required.

### **The principal:**

- completes the Briefing Note and returns it to the Education Regional Office;
- organises the ceremony at which the official opening will take place (refer to Appendix A and the Briefing Note request);
- refers to relevant protocols e.g. [Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country Protocols](#), [Correspondence Protocols](#), [Protocols for Hosting Dignitaries and Special Events](#), [Protocols for Politicians and Candidates for an Election to Visit Public Schools in Western Australia](#) and policies (e.g. [Visitors and Intruders on Public School Premises policy](#));
- issues invitations to interested parties, such as:
  - local Members of Parliament;
  - local government representatives;
  - Director General;
  - Regional Executive Director;
  - the builder and architect;
  - the Project Consultation Group representatives; and
  - other local dignitaries and members of the school community, eg School Council/Board and Parents and Citizens' Association.

### **STAGE 3: FINALISING ARRANGEMENTS**

#### **The MSU:**

- proofreads and quality assures the Briefing Note;
- provides the Briefing Note to the Office of the Minister for Education and Training; and
- provides a copy of the Briefing Note to the Office of the Director General and the Media Unit.

#### **The Media Unit:**

- prepares a media statement.

### **STAGE 4: HOSTING THE OFFICIAL OPENING**

#### **The principal:**

- makes arrangements for the smooth running of the official opening, referring to relevant protocols (e.g. [Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country Protocols](#), [Protocols for Hosting Dignitaries and Special Events](#), [Protocols for Politicians and Candidates for an Election to Visit Public Schools in Western Australia](#)) and policies (e.g. [Visitors and Intruders on Public School Premises policy](#)).

**A SUMMARY OF THE PRECEDING GUIDELINES IS PROVIDED AT APPENDIX C.**

#### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

##### **North Metropolitan Education Regional Office**

T: 9285 3600 F: 9285 3730

A: Level 2/1 Puccini Court, WA Stirling 6021

P: PO Box 1126 Innaloo City WA 6918

##### **South Metropolitan Education Regional Office**

T: 9336 9563 F: 9430 8028

A: 184 Hampton Road, Beaconsfield WA 6162

P: PO Box 63 South Fremantle WA 6162

##### **Goldfields Education Regional Office**

T: 9093 5600 F: 9093 5656

A: Federal Road, Kalgoorlie WA 6430

P: PO Box 385 Kalgoorlie WA 6433

**Kimberley Education Regional Office**

T: 9192 0800 F: 9193 6718

A: 10 Coghlan Street, Broome WA 6725

P: PO Box 2142 Broome WA 6725

**Midwest Education Regional Office**

T: 9956 1600 F: 9964 1391

A: SGIO Building, Level 2, 45 Cathedral Avenue, Geraldton WA 6530

P: PO Box 63 Geraldton WA 6530

**Pilbara Education Regional Office**

T: 9185 0111 F: 9185 0137

A: Corner of Searipple and Welcome Roads, Karratha WA 6714

P: Box 384 Karratha WA 6714

**Southwest Education Regional Office**

T: 9791 0300 F: 9791 2228

A: Bunbury Tower 5th Floor, 61 Victoria Street, Bunbury WA 6230

P: Bunbury Tower, 61 Victoria Street, Bunbury 6230

**Wheatbelt Education Regional Office**

T: 9622 0200 F: 9622 3996

A: McIver House, 297 Fitzgerald Street, Northam WA 6401

P: Box 394 Northam WA 6401

**Ministerial Services Unit**

Department of Education

T: 9264 8181

E: [Ministerial.Services@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:Ministerial.Services@education.wa.edu.au)

**Capital Works and Maintenance branch**

Department of Education

Contact the relevant Project Officer

For information regarding the plaque, contact the Project Support Officer:

T: 9264 4674

## APPENDIX A: SAMPLE **ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS** FOR THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF A PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDING

Typically, public school openings take place at a whole-school assembly. As students of the school comprise most of the audience, the ceremony should not be long. Each Briefing Note request will state the date of the opening, along with the start and finish times.

The Minister for Education and Training requires key speaking points (not a written speech) and prefers to do the official part of the visit first, i.e. (the opening ceremony) **prior** to any tour of the school.

### **Welcome to Country or Acknowledgement of Country:**

A Welcome to Country is performed by an appropriate person, such as a recognised Elder or a traditional custodian within the local community. Alternatively, an Acknowledgement of Country can be performed by any individual, Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal, participating in an occasion of any kind.

Events should have *either* a Welcome to Country or an Acknowledgement of Country – not both.

For events involving dignitaries with a set agenda and time schedule, it is important to discuss with the person performing the Welcome or Acknowledgement the time that is available for this to be performed. A Welcome to Country or Acknowledgement of Country should be no more than five to 10 minutes for events of this nature. It is also important that this is discussed with the Master of Ceremonies (MC) to ensure the event/opening is completed in the allocated time.

*The Order of Proceedings below is provided as an example.*

MC is Mr/Ms First Last name, position at the school

xx.xx am/pm	Minister arrives and in introduced to....
xx.xx am/pm	Minister is escorted to the venue for the official ceremony
xx.xx am/pm	Official ceremony begins
xx.xx am/pm	MC opens proceedings, welcomes guests
xx.xx am/pm	Welcome to Country OR Acknowledgement of Country by .....
xx.xx am/pm	MC introduces the Minister
xx.xx am/pm	Minister speaks and officially opens new facilities/school
xx.xx. am/pm	School performance item
xx.xx. am/pm	School Council/Board Chair speaks
xx.xx am/pm	MC concludes ceremony
xx.xx am/pm	Tour of new facilities/school
xx.xx am/pm	Refreshments with staff and guests
xx.xx am/pm	Minister departs

APPENDIX B: Royalties for Regions checklist

<p><b>Date and time</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Office of Minister for Education and Training liaises with Office of Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food and Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development on a suitable date and time. Minimum of one month's notice is required for proposed events.</li> <li>● Minister for Education and Training's office liaises with the Ministerial Services Unit (MSU) of Department of Education to confirm proposed date of official opening.</li> <li>● MSU seeks confirmation from Capital Works and Maintenance branch, in conjunction with Department of Finance – Building Management and Works (BMW), that building works will be completed in time for proposed official opening date.</li> <li>● MSU liaises with principal regarding the date.</li> <li>● MSU advises Minister for Education and Training's office that proposed date is suitable with the school.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Minister's attendance</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development Communications Unit confirms attendance by the Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food and notifies Minister for Education and Training's office.</li> <li>● Or directly Minister to Minister.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Confirmation of date and time</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Minister for Education and Training's office confirms date for official opening and forwards Briefing Note request to MSU.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Organising the official opening – MSU</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● MSU forwards Briefing Note request to relevant Education Regional Office which liaises with principal to complete Briefing Note.</li> <li>● Also forwarded are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Royalties for Regions Marketing, Communications and Acknowledgements Policy</i>; currently being updated</li> <li>– relevant protocols and policies (e.g. <i>Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country Protocols; Correspondence Protocols; Protocols for Hosting Dignitaries and Special Events and Visitors and Intruders on Public School Premises policy</i>).</li> </ul> </li> <li>● MSU forwards Briefing Note request to Capital Works and Maintenance branch and requests: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– information relating to facilities at the school; and</li> <li>– template/proof of commemorative plaque wording including 'Supported by Royalties for Regions'.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● MSU notifies Media Unit of Briefing Note request.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Capital Works and Maintenance branch</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Capital Works and Maintenance branch provides template/proof of plaque, including appropriate Royalties for Regions acknowledgement, to MSU.</li> </ul>
<p><b>MSU – Finalising the plaque</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● MSU provides Minister for Education and Training's office proof for commemorative plaque which is forwarded to Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development for approval. <a href="mailto:Drd_communications@dpird.wa.gov.au">Drd_communications@dpird.wa.gov.au</a></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On approval of plaque proof, MSU confirms order of plaque with Capital Works and Maintenance branch.</li> <li>• Considers the WA Government Style Guide where relevant <a href="https://www.dpc.wa.gov.au/GuidelinesAndPolicies/CommonBadging/Pages/Style-Guide.aspx">https://www.dpc.wa.gov.au/GuidelinesAndPolicies/CommonBadging/Pages/Style-Guide.aspx</a></li> </ul>
<b>Organising the official opening – Principal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School coordinates invitations to event.</li> <li>• School sends Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development Communications Unit the invitation for approval <b>before</b> distributing. <a href="mailto:Drd_communications@dpird.wa.gov.au">Drd_communications@dpird.wa.gov.au</a></li> <li>• Invitation list should include relevant local member/s, development commission and local government. Royalties for Regions acknowledgement guide provides a list of required Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development invitees.</li> <li>• Briefing Note acknowledges Royalties for Regions funding in all presentations and speeches relating to the project.</li> <li>• Briefing Note specifies parking arrangement. Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development requires one VIP bay for both Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; and Director General, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (or representative). Minister for Education and Training's office requires a VIP bay for the Minister for Education and Training (or representative).</li> </ul>
<b>MSU – Finalising the Briefing Note</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Education Office forwards endorsed Briefing Note to MSU, which is then quality assured.</li> <li>• MSU forwards copy to Media Unit, which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- drafts media statement; and</li> <li>- sends draft to Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development Communications Unit to add Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; quotes and approve.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• MSU forwards completed Briefing Note to Minister for Education and Training's office.</li> <li>• Attendees list is updated closer to event. MSU emails principal with a request for updated attendees and acknowledgement list approximately three days before the event.</li> <li>• MSU will advise Minister for Education and Training's office of updated attendees and acknowledgement lists approximately three days prior to event.</li> </ul>
<b>Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development Communications Unit provides speech notes for Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; in accordance with order of proceedings.</li> </ul>
<b>Photographs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Education provides Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development Communications Unit with photograph of plaque or event proceedings.</li> </ul>

APPENDIX C

**Stage: 1**

<b>Minister's Office</b>	<b>MSU</b>	<b>FPD</b>	<b>MEDIA UNIT</b>	<b>Regional Office</b>	<b>Principal</b>
Requests advice on proposed date for opening	Seeks confirmation from the Capital Works and Maintenance branch (CWM) that facilities will be completed by proposed date and confirms funding source/s	Confirms, in conjunction with BMW, all works will be completed by proposed date, and confirms whether funding source/s is Commonwealth or State or both			
	Contacts school Principal to check proposed date is suitable				Checks that proposed date is suitable for school and advises MSU
	Advises Minister's Office proposed date is suitable with school				
Confirms date for official opening and forwards Briefing Note (BN) request to MSU					
Ensures appropriate Commonwealth Government agencies/representatives are involved with opening					

**Stage: 2**

<b>Minister's Office</b>	<b>MSU</b>	<b>FPD</b>	<b>MEDIA UNIT</b>	<b>Regional Office</b>	<b>Principal</b>
	Forwards BN request to relevant Education Regional Office, which liaises with principal to complete BN. If opening is a RfR project, refer to Appendix B.			Forwards BN request to principal	Prepares BN

<b>Minister's Office</b>	<b>MSU</b>	<b>FPD</b>	<b>MEDIA UNIT</b>	<b>Regional Office</b>	<b>Principal</b>
	Forwards BN request to CWM branch and requests information relating to facilities at school and a template/proof of plaque wording			Assists principal in completion and finalisation of BN. Assists principal with organising ceremony, if required.	Completes BN and returns to Education Regional Office
	Notifies Media Unit of BN request	Invites representative from BMW to attend opening	Commences preparations to draft a media statement	Forwards endorsed BN to MSU	Organises ceremony at which official opening takes place
		Completes BN information relating to facilities at school and forwards endorsed BN to MSU			Refers to relevant protocols and policies
		Organises suitable commemorative plaque be provided to school			Issues invitations to range of interested parties
	Forwards a non-quality assured version of BN to Media Unit	Liaises as required with principal regarding arrangements for opening	Prepares draft		

**Stage: 3**

<b>Minister's Office</b>	<b>MSU</b>	<b>FPD</b>	<b>MEDIA UNIT</b>	<b>Regional Office</b>	<b>Principal</b>
	Proofreads and quality assures BN				
	Provides BN to Office of Minister for Education and Training				
	Provides a copy of BN to Office of the DG and Media Unit		Completes draft		

**Stage: 4**

<b>Minister's Office</b>	<b>MSU</b>	<b>FPD</b>	<b>MEDIA UNIT</b>	<b>Regional Office</b>	<b>Principal</b>
					Makes arrangements for smooth running of official opening