



## Hosting a Recognition Ceremony— a media checklist for schools

This is a significant time for your school and your community. Applying for funding, completing your project and then hosting an event to celebrate your school's achievement is a significant undertaking. Now that you have put so much effort into ensuring your project is a success, you may want to invite the media along to cover the event. Here are some tips that will help you get your message out there.

### Inform the School Community

Tell your own school community about the event. Your school may have its own newsletters, a P&C Newsletter, web site etc. Students, parents and teachers can be all informed in this way.

### External local media

The event is likely to interest the local media, such as TV/radio or newspaper. Media are always looking for stories to publish about what is happening in the local community. To make the most of this interest:

- Send an invitation to local media. You may want to do this by calling your local media outlet. Ask to speak to the newsroom and/or education reporter. Tell them briefly about the event and see if they would like to be emailed or faxed an invitation.
- The invitation should include the basis of who (specifically the VIPs including the Deputy Prime Minister or her representative), what, when, where and why.
- Inform them about any special or unique aspects to the project.
- Send it out 24 to 48 hours before the event.
- Follow up with them just prior to the event.

### Develop a unique opening ceremony

If possible and appropriate, consider developing some sort of ceremony that the media might find interesting to photograph and report on. For example, if you are opening a state of the art interactive library, consider linking into other schools by use of teleconferencing facilities. If you are opening a new Science Laboratory, factor in what makes this unique and have your dignitaries' undertake an experiment for the media showing the facilities at their best.

### Location

To make the day run as smoothly as possible ensure that the location is easy to find. Consider meeting your dignitaries' and the media at the front gate and placing signs around the area to direct them to the right place on the school grounds. Ensure there is enough parking.

Consider the lighting arrangement if possible, e.g. if the event takes place in a large dark room or the sun is behind the speaker it may be difficult to take good photographs.

Have a lectern available so that so that the media can attach microphones to capture any speeches. If the location is outside, make sure there is a rainy day alternative.

### Media Release Form

Before permitting children to be photographed for publicity, please ensure that parents have signed all the relevant media release forms.

### Don't be discouraged

Don't be discouraged if the media do not attend or say they will and then don't. Have fun with the event and involve the students and the community as much as possible. Be your own media team. Take photos and write stories of your event and send them to us for publication. This will provide a valuable pictorial record of your school's progress that can be shared with the broader community. There will also be an opportunity to link to your school website from the Australian Government's Nation Building—Economic Stimulus Plan website.