



Q & A
GORDON THOMAS,
Executive Secretary

Parents taking photographs at school

Q: During our staff meeting a teacher asked about parents taking photos at celebrations, concerts etc. and then possibly posting the photos. Should we be telling parents not to do this or banning cameras (this seems drastic)?

A: The Ministry responsible for FOIP—Service Alberta—has directly addressed this very issue for FOIP: Who can photograph students at public events at schools? I quote their response (The source document is online at http://foip.alberta.ca/faq/school_jurisdictions.cfm)

“Classrooms are not public places. Schools control who has access to school property and to students. When students are at school, school staff act in the place of parents to protect students.

Schools can decide to invite spectators, including parents or media, to certain school events. This is a school policy issue rather than a FOIP issue. Once parents or other members of the public are invited (other than as volunteers within the school), the event becomes a public event, and anyone in attendance may take photographs without first obtaining consent.”

However, if someone—a parent, teacher, or professional—is taking the photographs specifically for use or for publication by the school, as a precaution I would recommend seeking consent from the people in the photograph before the photographs are used in school publications.