

Policy 4

TRUSTEE CODE OF CONDUCT

Each trustee, representing all Catholic school supporters of the community and responsible to this electorate through the democratic process, recognizes:

- That trustees are accountable to the Magisterium of the Church, and that, according to the Code of Canon Law, a Catholic school is an instrument of the Church and is one in which Catholic education is established, directed, recognized or converted to, by the local bishop, who is competent to issue prescriptions dealing with the general regulation of Catholic schools.
- That, legally, the authority of the Board is derived from the province, through the Constitution Act, which ultimately controls the organization and operation of the Division and which determines the degree of discretionary power left with the Board and the people of this community for the exercise of local autonomy.
- That fellow citizens have entrusted them, through the electoral process, with the educational development of the children and youth of the community.
- That trustees are the children's advocates and their first and greatest concern is the best interest of each and every one of these children without distinction as to who they are or what their background may be.
- That trustees are educational leaders who realize that the future welfare of the community, of the province, and of Canada depends in the largest measure upon the quality of education provided in schools to fit the needs of every learner.
- That trustees must never neglect their personal obligation to the community and their legal obligation to the province, nor surrender these responsibilities to any other person, group, or organization but that, beyond these, trustees have a moral and civic obligation to the nation which can remain strong and free only so long as schools in Canada are kept free and strong.

In carrying out the role of trustee, the Board expects members to adhere to the following Code of Conduct:

1. Devote time, thought and study to the duties of a trustee so that they may render effective and creditable service.
2. Exercise the powers and duties of their office honestly and in good faith. Trustees shall exercise the degree of care, diligence and skill that a reasonably prudent person would exercise in comparable circumstances.
3. Work with their fellow trustees in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that arise during vigorous debate of points of issue.

4. Consider information received from all sources and base personal decisions upon all available facts in every case; unswayed by partisan bias of any kind, and thereafter, abide by and uphold the final majority decision of the Board.
5. Be loyal to the interests of the Division as a whole in the context of Catholic Education. This loyalty supersedes loyalty to:
 - 5.1 Any advocacy or special interest groups; and
 - 5.2 The personal interest of any trustee.
6. Maintain the confidentiality of privileged information, including statements made during in-camera sessions of the Board.
7. Work together with fellow trustees to communicate to the electorate, respecting the role of the Board Chair as Board spokesperson.
8. Provide leadership to the Catholic community through setting goals and policies for educational programs and by regularly evaluating these in the light of the wishes and expectations of the community and the local Bishop.
9. Remember at all times that individual trustees have no legal authority outside the meeting of the Board, and therefore relationships with school staff, the community, and all media of communication is to be conducted on the basis of this fact.
10. Refrain from using the trustee position to benefit either oneself or any other individual or agency apart from the total interest of the Division.
11. Recognize that a key responsibility of the Board is to establish the policies by which the system is to be administered, and that the administration of the educational program and conduct of school business shall be left to the Superintendent and Division staff.
12. Encourage active cooperation by stakeholders with respect to the creation and maintenance of policies.
13. Provide effective trustee service to the Catholic community in a spirit of teamwork and devotion to education as the greatest instrument for the preservation and perpetuation of representative democracy.
14. Represent the Board responsibly in all Board-related matters with proper decorum and respect for others.
15. Represent the perceived concerns or needs of the community to the Board or Superintendent as appropriate and accurately communicate the Board's decisions to stakeholders.

16. Declare any conflict of interest between personal life and the position on the Board and abstain from voting when appropriate.
17. In addition to the aforementioned points, the Board expects members to adhere to the Code of Conduct for Roman Catholic Trustees as provided by the ACSTA and available as Appendix A.
18. Breaches of these Codes of Conduct may result in sanctions and actions as outlined in Appendix B.

Legal Reference: Section 33, 34, 51, 52, 53, 64, 67, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96 Education Act