

TRUSTEE CODE OF CONDUCT

The Board commits itself and its members to conduct which meets the highest ethical standards. It is expected that all personal interactions and relationships will be characterized by mutual respect, which acknowledges the dignity and affirms the worth of each person.

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 Education 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 not 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.

Specifically

1. Trustees shall carry out their responsibilities as detailed in Policy 3: Role of the Trustee with reasonable diligence.
2. Provide an example to the Catholic Community by active participation in the communal life of a parish and by a personal lifestyle that reflects the teachings of the Church.
3. Trustees must represent fidelity to the interests of the whole division. This accountability supersedes any conflicting loyalty such as that to advocacy/interest groups and membership on other Boards or staffs, or acting as an individual consumer of the division's services.
4. Devote time, thought, and study to the duties of a trustee so that they may render effective and creditable service.
5. 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.

6. 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.
7. 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.
8. Work together with fellow trustees to communicate to the electorate all the facts about our schools. Reflect the Board's policies and decisions when communicating with the public.
9. Support the provincial and national school Board associations for the future of trusteeship in this province and the nation.
10. Provide effective trustee service to the community in a spirit of teamwork and devotion to publicly funded Catholic education.
11. Represent the Board responsibly in all Board-related matters with proper decorum and respect for others.
12. Trustees shall abide by the Code of Ethics for trustees established by the Canadian Catholic Schools Trustees' Association (see Policy 4-Appendix A) and the Alberta School Boards Association (see Policy 4 – Appendix B).
13. Trustees shall respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature, including statements made during closed sessions of the Board.
14. Trustees shall avoid conflict of interest with respect to their trusteeship responsibility.
 - 14.1 There shall be no conduct of private business or personal services between any member of the Board and the organization except as procedurally controlled to assure openness, competitive opportunity, and equal access to "insider" information;
 - 14.2 When the Board is to decide upon an issue about which a member has an avoidable conflict of interest, that member shall absent him/herself without comment from not only the vote, but also from the deliberation;
 - 14.3 Trustees shall not use their positions to obtain employment in the organization for themselves, family members or close associates. Should a trustee desire employment in the organization, (s)he shall first resign;
 - 14.4 Trustees shall disclose their involvement with other organizations, with vendors, or any other associations which might produce a conflict; and
 - 14.5 Trustees who receive a pecuniary benefit or gift which exceeds fifty dollars (\$50.00) in value from any person or group having an association with the Board shall disclose the matter at a closed meeting of the Board.
15. Trustees shall not attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization except as explicitly set forth in policies of the Board:
 - 15.1 Trustees' interaction with the Superintendent or with staff shall recognize the lack of authority vested in individuals except when explicitly authorized by the Board;
 - 15.2 Trustees' interaction with public, media, or other entities shall recognize the same limitation and the inability of any member of the Board, except for the Chair, to speak for the Board. Trustees may speak about what the Board has decided.
 - 15.3 Trustees must adhere to appropriate processes and policies which address evaluation mechanisms and shall not give undue weight to an individual's judgment of the performance of the Superintendent or of staff.

- 15.4 Trustees shall have the Superintendent of Schools (CEO) present at regular meetings of the Board.
- 15.5 Trustees shall refuse to act on matters relating to the employment, discipline, or dismissal of staff. Trustees shall refer all matters of this nature to the appropriate administrative officer.
16. 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.
17. Trustees absent from the division for an extended period shall, for emergency contact purposes, ensure that the office of the Superintendent is made aware of their whereabouts.
18. Consequences for the failure of individual trustees to adhere to the Trustee Code of Conduct are specified in Policy 4 – Appendix C.

Legal Reference: Sections 33, 34, 51, 52, 53, 64, 67,85, 86, 87, 88, 89 *Education Act*