

TRUSTEE CODE OF CONDUCT

Section 33(1)(k) of the Alberta Education Act (Act) states that a board shall, “develop and implement a code of conduct that applies to all trustees of the Board, including definitions of breaches and sanctions, in accordance with principles set out by the Minister by order.”

The trustees shall be committed to governing in a faith-filled ethical manner consistent with all Board policies. In addition, trustees are obligated to act in accordance with the Act.

1. The following code of conduct will guide trustees in their actions:

- Trustees will adhere to all tenets of Policy #03, Role of the Trustee Policy.
- When addressing concerns brought forward by a constituent, trustees will remind the constituent that individual trustees do not have the authority to direct administration. Matters related to school administration will be referred to either the principal or the Superintendent of Schools. Trustees will work to actively listen to and communicate with constituents and stakeholders to understand their needs, desires, concerns, and perspectives. In addition, trustees can and should help constituents understand the process to follow to have their concern(s) addressed and provide them with contact information for the Superintendent to address their concern(s) or question.
- Trustees shall endeavour to work with fellow Board members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that may arise during debate.
- Trustees shall model Jesus Christ and commit themselves to dignified, ethical, professional, and lawful conduct.
- Trustees shall reflect the Board’s policies and resolutions when communicating with the public.
- Trustees shall keep confidential any personal, privileged or confidential information obtained in their capacity as a trustee and not disclose the information except when authorized by law or by the Board to do so.
- Trustees must avoid conflict of interest and the appearance of conflict of interest with respect to fiduciary responsibilities. They shall honour their fiduciary responsibility to the Board which supersedes any conflicting loyalty such as that to advocacy or interest groups and membership on other Boards or staffs, or acting as an individual user of the Division’s services.
- Trustees, when speaking to the press, the public, or other entities will support decisions of the Board. They will remember that they do not speak for the Board (the chair is authorized to speak for the Board). They can speak about what the Board has decided and must not act in a manner that undermines the decisions of the Board.
- Trustees shall disclose the nature of any conflict of interest and abstain and absent themselves from discussion or voting on the matter in question.
- Trustees shall not use their influence to advance personal, family or friends’ interests or the interests of any organization with which the trustee is associated.
- Trustees may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the Division or a school except when explicitly set forth in Board policies or Board resolutions.
- Trustees’ primary focus is on the governance of the Division. Trustees’ loyalty is to the interests of the Division.

- Trustees can make recommendations to the Board with respect to the interest of the schools and or communities within the electoral subdivision they represent. This role, however, is superseded by the primary focus on the Division as a whole.
 - Trustees will work to ensure governance policies and Division performance goals are being met;
 - Trustees will regularly attend Board meetings prepared for deliberations and accept Board assignments to committees, various task forces, and other Board duties.
 - To ensure proper Board planning trustees will work to actively listen to and communicate with constituents and stakeholders to understand their needs, desires, concerns, and perspectives. Trustees will bring this information to the Board table during the planning and review processes.
2. Further, as Catholic trustees, Board members:
- Must hold within themselves a deeper understanding of and commitment to the nature of Catholic education.
 - Ensure that the essence of Catholic education, formed through partnership of home, school and parish, is recognized and supported in the political arena.
 - Ensure the support and encouragement of their community's teachers and school staff by supporting opportunities for faith formation.
 - Ensure that their community's educational leaders are able to examine their unique role in shaping the faith life of their school.
 - Ensure that their community's students are seen as individuals and given the chance to study in a learning environment permeated by Gospel values and sacramental life.
 - Are evangelizers of the good news of Christ in all aspects of their lives.
 - Are stewards of their Catholic faith; with care, they tend to it in their own life and they foster it in the lives of all whom they encounter.
3. Trustees will conduct themselves consistent with the Canadian Catholic School Trustees' Association Code of Ethics for Roman Catholic School Trustees which include, but are not limited to the following:
- Acknowledge that Catholic schools are an expression of the teaching mission of the Church.
 - 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.
 - Support the best possible Catholic education according to the programs approved by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and the provincial Minister of Education.
 - Affirm a strong sense of Christian Community.
 - Work to improve personal knowledge of current Catholic educational research and practices.
 - Provide support, encouragement and prayer for the efforts of all persons engaged in the ministry of Catholic Education in Canada.
 - Recognize and defend the democratic and corporate authority of the Board.
 - Respect the confidentiality of the Board.
 - Strictly support all Board policies.
 - Ensure the affairs of the Board are conducted with openness, justice and compassion.
4. Catholic school trusteeship is a unique vocation, which serves the Church and the community. The Catholic school trustee plays an integral part in ensuring that Christ is the heart and soul of every Catholic school. The uniqueness of Catholic education lies in the fact that its purpose and end is holiness.

5. Trustee Code of Conduct Sanctions:

- The Trustee Code of Conduct requires that the Board commit itself and its members to ethical and appropriate conduct. This includes proper use of authority, appropriate decorum and mutual respect when acting as members of the Board.
- Trustees shall conduct themselves in an ethical and prudent manner in compliance with Policy #3, Role of the Trustee, and this policy. The failure by trustees to conduct themselves in compliance with these policies may result in the Board instituting sanctions.
- In particular, the Trustee Code of Conduct requires that trustees shall respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature.
- Failure to comply with the Trustee Code of Conduct constitutes a failure of security. An individual trustee may bring a suspected breach of the Trustee Code of Conduct to the attention of the Board, at a closed meeting of the Board. If the majority of the Board votes that a substantial and willful breach has occurred, some or all of the following procedures shall be invoked:
 - The Board may pass a motion to issue a letter of censure.
 - The Board may request that the Superintendent, or designate, appoint an independent investigator to review the matter, submit a report, and make recommendations to the Board.
 - The Board may present a motion to remove the trustee in question from one, or more, Board appointments, committees, or events.
 - The Board may consider disqualification under Sections 87 and 88 of the Education Act.

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