



YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

BOARD POLICY	
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TRUSTEE CODE OF CONDUCT

1. PURPOSE

The York Catholic District School Board confirms that the role of Trustee is one where public trust and confidence is essential because Trustees are elected to represent all stakeholders in the Board. The York Catholic District School Board believes that personal commitment to high ethical standards is required by all individuals elected to the role of Trustee. This will ensure that the Board can responsibly fulfill its obligations and discharge its duties in a manner motivated by the spirit of the Gospel and modeled on the examples of Jesus Christ. Trustees of the York Catholic District School Board are expected to fulfill their duties and responsibilities consistent with Gospel Values, the teachings of the Catholic Church, the Board's By-Laws and the *Education Act*.

2. OBJECTIVE

This policy has been established to ensure that the Board of Trustees at all times conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Mission, Vision and Values of the York Catholic District School Board. Furthermore, Trustees commit themselves to ethical, professional, respectful and lawful conduct in the promotion of Gospel values and the provision of quality faith-based Catholic education for its students.

3. PARAMETERS

3.1 Trustees shall support a shared commitment to excellence in Catholic education that promotes the integration of our Catholic faith as well as the continuous improvement of student achievement and well-being through the delivery of effective and appropriate education programs, services and effective stewardship of the Board's resources and engagement of our communities.

3.1.1 Trustees shall demonstrate a public commitment to the York Catholic District School Board's Trustee Code of Ethics at each Inaugural Meeting of the Board.

3.2 CATHOLIC FAITH, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

Trustees acknowledge that Catholic schools are an expression of the teaching mission of the Church and shall, within the duties prescribed in the *Education Act* and its Regulations:

- 3.2.1 Provide an example to the Catholic Community that reflects the teaching of the Church;
- 3.2.2 Ensure the Board provides the best possible Catholic education according to the programs approved by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Provincial Minister of Education;
- 3.2.3 Recognize and rigorously defend the constitutional right of Catholic education and the democratic and corporate authority of the Board;
- 3.2.4 Respect the confidentiality of the Board;
- 3.2.5 Ensure the affairs of the Board are conducted with openness, justice and compassion;
- 3.2.6 Work to improve personal knowledge of current Catholic educational research and practices;
- 3.2.7 Affirm a strong sense of Christian Catholic Community; and,
- 3.2.8 Provide support, encouragement and prayer for the efforts of all persons engaged in the ministry of Catholic Education.

3.3 RESPECT, CIVILITY AND COMMUNICATION

Trustees share in the responsibility of creating a positive working and learning environment that is safe, harmonious, comfortable, inclusive and respectful. Trustees shall:

- 3.3.1 Respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial and municipal laws;
- 3.3.2 Uphold and abide by all Board policies, procedures, protocols and the York Catholic District School Board Trustee Code of Ethics (Appendix "A");
- 3.3.3 Demonstrate honesty and integrity;
- 3.3.4 Treat others fairly and with dignity and respect at all times, especially when there is disagreement;
- 3.3.5 Employ appropriate language and professionalism in performing their duties as Trustees, and in all matters of communication (oral and written) including email, social media, telephone and in person meetings with staff, parents, other stakeholders and members of the community at large.

3.4 COMPLYING WITH LEGISLATION

Trustees shall comply with all Federal and Provincial legislation and any contractual obligations of the Board in conducting the business of the Board. Trustees shall:

- 3.4.1 Familiarize themselves and comply with the duties of Board members as set out in Section 218.1 of the *Education Act* including any applicable regulations.
- 3.4.2 Familiarize themselves with duties and/or requirements applicable to them in the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, and YCDSB by-laws and policies.

3.5 CONFIDENTIALITY

Trustees acknowledge that as part of their duties they may be privy to private, confidential and/or legally privileged financial, business and/or commercial information. Such information may include, but is not limited to, information relating to the Board's organizational structure, operations, business plans, technical projects, business costs, research data, inventions, trade secrets or other work produced,

developed by or for the Board, confidential student and personnel information, legal matters and opinions.

- 3.5.1 Except as required by law, all Trustees and former Trustees agree not to use, directly or indirectly, for the Trustee's benefit or the benefit of any person, organization, form, or other entity, the Board's proprietary or confidential information disclosed or entrusted to that Trustee. Trustees recognize that such inappropriate use of confidential information for their benefit may constitute a breach of trust contrary to Section 122 of the *Criminal Code*.
- 3.5.2 The confidentiality of personal information received in the course of duties shall be respected and protected. Trustees shall keep all information received, including but not limited to, in-camera discussions and actions in complete confidence. Information received shall not be discussed in public where another person not privy to the information could accidentally overhear or read such information.
- 3.5.3 A Trustee's duty of confidentiality survives their term of office.

3.6 ENFORCEMENT

- 3.6.1 Trustees will at all times conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Code of Conduct outlined in this policy.
- 3.6.2 Only a Trustee can allege that the Board's Code of Conduct has been breached by another Trustee.
- 3.6.3 A Trustee who has reasonable grounds to believe that a member of the Board has breached the Board's Code of Conduct may notify the following person(s) in writing of the alleged breach:
 - (i) The Director of Education, if the notice relates to the conduct of the Board's Chair or Vice-Chair,
 - (ii) In all other situations, the Board's Chair.
- 3.6.4 Trustees may, in some circumstances, want to respond to inappropriate statements or behavior at a meeting at which the inappropriate conduct takes place. Roberts Rules of Order may assist as Trustees can call for a point of order. The Chair of the Meeting may also call a recess, or caution a Trustee or Trustees about conduct which is contrary to the expectations outlined in the Trustee Code of Conduct.
- 3.6.5 If a Trustee also, or instead, wishes to preserve their right to subsequently make a complaint in accordance with the Procedures, it may be appropriate to ask the Secretary of the Board to note a particular comment or action in the minutes, or to give the Trustee notice at the meeting that a formal complaint will be forthcoming, noting the conduct and/or comments which are believed to be a breach of the Trustee Code of Conduct.
- 3.6.6 A complaint of Trustee conduct that is contrary to this policy shall be addressed in a timely manner according to the Procedure: *Alleged Breach of the Trustee Code of Conduct*, an addendum to this Policy.
- 3.6.7 If the complaint, including any supporting documentation, is not, on its face, a contravention of the Board's Code of Conduct, or more applicable to other legislation, then the complainant shall be informed in writing. The following

matters shall not be dealt with through the Procedure: *Alleged Breach of the Trustee Code of Conduct*:

3.6.7.1 Criminal matters

3.6.7.2 *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA): the complainant will be referred to the Board's Privacy Manager if appropriate.

3.6.7.3 *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.

3.6.8 The Board of Trustees does not have the authority to impose sanction(s) other than those specifically defined by the *Education Act*.

3.6.9 In accordance with the *Human Rights Code* and the *Trustee Code of Ethics*, every Trustee of the York Catholic District School Board in discharging their duties to the Board shall ensure the right to equal treatment of every person including but not limited to, fellow Trustees, members of the public and staff without discrimination and harassment.

3.6.9.1 Provision 3.6.8 applies to all forms of written and oral communication, including via social media platforms.

3.7 INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

3.7.1 A Trustee shall not obtain counsel directly from the Integrity Commissioner.

3.7.1.1 A Trustee who is alleged to have breached the Board's Code of Conduct shall not vote on obtaining counsel from the Integrity Commissioner.

3.7.1.2 If a Trustee obtains counsel directly from the Integrity Commissioner the Trustee shall be responsible for all expenses incurred for obtaining counsel.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Board of Trustees

4.1.1 To oversee the compliance with the Trustee Code of Conduct Policy.

4.2 Trustee

4.2.1 To make the declaration and oath of office prior to commencing as Trustee.

5. DEFINITIONS

5.1 Conflict of Interest

All Trustees must abide by the rules and regulations defined within the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*. It is solely the personal responsibility of the individual Trustee to make any declaration of a conflict.

5.2 Trustee

A person elected or acclaimed to the office of trustee of the Board pursuant to the provisions of the *Municipal Elections Act* or appointed to the office of trustee pursuant to the provisions of the *Education Act*.

6. CROSS REFERENCES

YCDSB Policies

[YCDSB Policy 423 Conflict of Interest for Employees](#)

[YCDSB Procedure Alleged Breach of Trustee Code of Conduct](#)

Legislation

[*Education Act*](#)

[*Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*](#)

[*Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*](#)

[*Ontario Regulation 7/07 Student Trustee*](#)

TRUSTEE CODE OF ETHICS

Preamble:

The Trustees of the York Catholic District School Board believe that personal commitment to high ethical standards is required to ensure that the board can responsibly fulfill its obligations and discharge its duties in a manner motivated by the spirit of the Gospel and modeled on the examples of Jesus Christ. Board members recognize that Trustees occupy positions of public trust and confidence and are dedicated to serving the community in a professional, impartial and Catholic manner.

Accordingly, as a Catholic School Trustee:

- I will strive to serve my local electorate while maintaining a system-wide perspective that upholds the principles of equity and fairness.
- I will accept that authority rests with the board and that I have no individual authority outside of the board. I will abide by the majority decisions of the board once they are made, but shall be free to explain the position that I upheld when the decision was made provided it does not undermine the authority of the board.
- I will strive to develop and implement Board policies that are equitable and consistent with the YCDSB Mission, Vision and Core Values.
- I will act with integrity and work to ensure that all business of the board is conducted with openness, fiscal accountability and compassion.
- I will accept my obligation to attend and prepare for all board and assigned committee meetings. I will work with other board members and staff in a spirit of respect, collaboration and proper decorum in spite of any differences of opinion that arise during debate.
- I will respect and nurture the human and divine nature of each individual without judgment or reproach and will strive to reflect Gospel values in all that I say and do.
- I will not discuss confidential information obtained in my capacity as a board member. I will not discuss those matters outside the meetings of the board or the board's committees. I will not use privileged information for either personal gain or to the detriment of the board.
- I will report to the Board alleged breaches, frauds, improprieties and/or conflicts which come to my attention.
- I will accept my responsibility for understanding legislation pertaining to the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*. I will not use my position for personal advantage or to the advantage of any other party not representing the total interest of the YCDSB. I will resist outside pressure to make such use of my position.
- I will endeavour to participate in professional development opportunities which enrich my faith life and/or enhance my ability to serve our Catholic school communities.
- I will treat fellow Trustees, members of the public, and staff with dignity and respect to ensure a safe and equitable work environment free from abuse, bullying, intimidation, discrimination and harassment.