

ROLE OF THE TRUSTEE

Background

The role of the trustee is to contribute to the Board of Trustees as it carries out its mandate. The oath of office taken, or affirmation made, by each trustee when they assume office binds that person to work diligently to promote and advocate for public education.

The Board of Trustees is a corporation. The decisions of the Board in a properly constituted meeting are those of the corporation. Individual trustees exercise an effective decision-making role in the context of corporate action. A trustee who is given authority by Board motion to act on behalf of the Board may carry out duties individually but only as an agent of the Board. In such cases, the actions of the trustee are those of the Board, which is then responsible for them. A trustee acting individually has only the authority and status of any other citizen of the Division. Individual trustees do not have the authority to direct the Division's administration and staff.

Guidelines

1. Specific responsibilities of individual trustees

- 1.1. Become familiar with Board policies and Division administrative procedures, meeting agendas and reports to participate in Board business.
- 1.2. Promote positive community engagement.
- 1.3. Refer queries, issues and problems not covered by Board policy, to the Board for corporate discussion and decision.
- 1.4. Refer administrative matters to the Superintendent.
- 1.5. The trustee, upon receiving a complaint or an inquiry from a parent, guardian or community member about operations, may refer the parent, guardian or community member back to the school or department and shall inform the Superintendent of this action.
- 1.6. Keep the Superintendent and the Board informed in a timely manner of all matters coming to their attention that might affect the Division.
- 1.7. Attend Board meetings prepared to participate in, and contribute to, the decisions of the Board to provide the best possible outcomes for education within the Division.
- 1.8. Attend business meetings, Board caucus meetings and other public duties of the Board.
- 1.9. Respectfully bring forward and advocate for local issues.
- 1.10. Recognize their fiduciary responsibility to the Division and act in the best interests of the Division.
- 1.11. When delegated responsibility, shall exercise such authority within the defined limits in a responsible and effective way.

- 1.12. Participate in Board and trustee professional development sessions to enhance leadership and service in the Division.
- 1.13. Stay current with respect to provincial, national and international educational issues and trends.
- 1.14. Share materials and ideas with fellow trustees following professional development activities.
- 1.15. Contribute to a positive and respectful learning and working culture within the Board and the Division.
- 1.16. Attend stakeholder meetings as assigned.
- 1.17. Attend, when possible, Division or school community functions.
- 1.18. Participate, when possible, in community initiatives and activities.
- 1.19. Attend, when possible, functions of provincial associations of which the Board is a member.
- 1.20. Become familiar with, and adhere to, [Policy 4: Trustee Code of Conduct](#).
- 1.21. Report any violation of the Trustee Code of Conduct, as per [Policy 4](#).

2. Orientation

As a result of elections, the Board may experience changes in membership. To ensure continuity and facilitate a smooth transition from one Board to the next following an election, trustees must be adequately briefed concerning existing Board policy and practice, statutory requirements, initiatives and long-range plans.

The Board believes an orientation program is necessary for effective trusteeship.

- 2.1. Trustees are expected to attend orientation programs.
- 2.2. The Board Chair, Superintendent and Secretary-Treasurer are responsible for ensuring the development and implementation of the Division's orientation program for trustees.
- 2.3. The Division shall provide support within the Board governance budget for trustees attending provincial association-sponsored orientation seminars.
- 2.4. Incumbent trustees are encouraged to help newly elected trustees become informed about history, functions, policies, procedures and issues.

References

Sections 33, 34, 51, 52, 53, 64, 67, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96 *Education Act*

Last reviewed:	Last updated:
May 25, 2015	May 25, 2015
Oct. 24, 2016	Nov. 24, 2016
Dec. 4, 2017	Jan. 25, 2018
Aug. 30, 2018	Aug. 30, 2018
Oct. 29, 2018	Dec. 20, 2018

Oct. 15, 2019	Nov. 21, 2019
Oct. 13, 2020	Nov. 26, 2020
Dec. 16, 2021	
Jan. 11, 2022	Feb. 17, 2022
	March 1, 2022
Jan. 10, 2023	Feb. 16, 2023
Oct. 31, 2023	Nov. 30, 2023