

POLICY 3

ROLE OF THE TRUSTEE

The role of the Trustee is to contribute to the work of the Board as it carries out its mandate to govern and achieve its vision, mission, beliefs and values and principles. The oath of office taken by each Trustee when s/he assumes office binds that person to work diligently and faithfully in the cause of public education.

The Board of Trustees is a corporation. The decisions of the Board in a properly constituted meeting are those of the corporation. A Trustee who is given corporate authority 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 and cannot direct the staff of the Division to undertake any direct action.

1. Specific Responsibilities of Individual Trustees

- 1.1. Model the values and requirements of a practicing Catholic and participate in parish and church activities.
- 1.2. At the time of assuming office, take and subscribe to the official oath and deposit it with the Secretary Treasurer.
- 1.3. At the time of assuming office, pledge to, and sign, the Trustee Code of Conduct.
- 1.4. Become familiar with Division policies and procedures, meeting agendas and reports in order to participate fully in Board business.
- 1.5. In alignment with Board engagement efforts, provide for the engagement of parents, students and the community, including municipalities and local businesses, in matters related to education.
 - 1.5.1. Recognize the key role of parents as partners in education with the Division to bring about student success and character as responsible citizens.
 - 1.5.2. Respectfully bring forward and advocate for local issues and concerns prior to a Board decision.
 - 1.5.3. Interpret the needs of the community to the Board and the Board's actions to those we serve.
 - 1.5.4. Liaise with designated School Council(s).
- 1.6. Refer administrative matters to the Superintendent. The Trustee, upon receiving a complaint from a parent, staff member or community member about operations, will refer the parent, staff member or community member back to the teacher, Principal or department with whom they have the issue and work through the chain of command and will inform the Superintendent of this action.

- 1.7. Keep the Board Chair and Superintendent informed in a timely manner of all matters coming to his/her attention that might affect the Division. Personnel matters are to be brought to the Board Chair and Superintendent only.
- 1.8. Assist the Superintendent with counsel and advice, providing the benefit of the Trustee's judgment, experience and familiarity with the community.
- 1.9. Refer queries or issues and problems not covered by Board Policy or Administrative Procedure, to the Board for corporate discussion and decision.
- 1.10. Attend meetings of the Board; participate in, and contribute to, the decision of the Board in order to provide the best solutions possible for education within the Division.
- 1.11. Support the decisions of the Board and refrain from making any statements that may give the impression that such a statement reflects the corporate opinion of the Board when it does not.
- 1.12. When delegated responsibility by the Board, will exercise such authority within the defined limits in a responsible and effective way.
- 1.13. Participate in Board/Trustee development sessions in order to ensure the appropriate skills, knowledge and understandings are acquired.
- 1.14. Stay current with respect to provincial, national and international educational issues and trends.
- 1.15. Share the materials and ideas gained with fellow Trustees following a Trustee development activity or meetings in a timely manner.
- 1.16. Contribute to a positive and respectful learning and working culture both within the Board and the Division.
- 1.17. Attend Division or school functions when possible.
- 1.18. Report any violation of the Trustee Code of Conduct to the individual Trustee and, where not resolved, to the Board Chair, or where applicable, to the Vice-Chair.
- 1.19. Act as an advocate and ambassador for Catholic education and the Division as the Division of choice.

2. Board Orientation

As a result of elections, the Board may experience changes in membership. To ensure continuity and facilitate 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. All Trustees are expected to attend all aspects of the orientation program.

- 2.1. In the year of an election, the Division will host a preliminary orientation session for all elected candidates prior to the Organizational Meeting, which will include a review of and an expression of interest in Board assignments and committees.
- 2.2. The Division will offer an orientation program for all Trustees that provide information on:
 - 2.2.1. Role of the Trustee and the Board;
 - 2.2.2. Organizational structures and procedures of the Division;
 - 2.2.3. Board policy, agendas and minutes;
 - 2.2.4. Existing Division initiatives, annual reports, budgets, financial statements and long-range plans;
 - 2.2.5. Division programs and services;
 - 2.2.6. Board's function as an appeal body,
 - 2.2.7. Statutory and regulatory requirements, including responsibilities with regard to conflict of interest, and
 - 2.2.8. Trustee remuneration and expenses.
- 2.3. The orientation program may also include:
 - 2.3.1. A tour of the offices and the opportunity to meet Division office staff.
 - 2.3.2. A tour of the schools and the opportunity to meet principals and staff.
- 2.4. The Division will provide financial support within the Board governance budget for Trustees attending provincial Association sponsored seminars and orientation events.
 - 2.4.1. The Division will provide financial support for Trustees to attend Alberta Education sponsored Trustee workshops or information sessions.
- 2.5. The Board Chair and Superintendent are responsible for developing and implementing the Division's orientation program for Trustees.
 - 2.5.1. The Superintendent shall provide each Trustee with access to the references listed in Policy 3 Appendix – Services, Materials and Equipment Provided To Trustees at the organizational meeting following a general election or at the first regular meeting of the Board following a by-election.
 - 2.5.2. The Board Policy Handbook and the Administrative Procedures Manual are available on the Division website for Trustees.
- 2.6. Incumbent Trustees are encouraged to help newly elected Trustees become informed about the history, functions, policies, procedures and issues.

Legal Reference: Section 33, 34, 51, 52, 53, 64, 67, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 222 Education Act
Section 16 The Notaries and Commissioners Act