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POLICY 112: SCHOOL TRUSTEE CODE OF CONDUCT (P)

Trustees must uphold and abide by District Values, Mission, Vision, and Board decisions, and commit to a Trustee Code of Conduct which reflects the Board of Education's ("the Board") recognition and respect of the public's trust in the Board as elected representatives. The Board of Education believes individual trustees must adhere to the highest ethical standards in their dealings with fellow Trustees, school communities, rightsholders, and citizens.

The rights, powers, duties, and liabilities of the Board rest only with the legally constituted Board as a whole, and Trustees exercise their powers and responsibilities only when the Board is officially in session. It is expected that Trustees work in a spirit of harmony, respect, and co-operation, where all personal interactions and relationships acknowledge the dignity and affirm the worth of each person.

This Code of Conduct serves to ensure values that guide ethical behaviour and norms for Trustee relationships, promote awareness regarding Trustee roles and responsibilities, and encourages respect for divergent views so that Boards can focus on student achievement, equity, and well-being.

In carrying out the role of Trustee, members must:

- 1.0** Establish a District-wide culture which will foster student achievement, equity, and well-being and which will provide an atmosphere where all students can reach their full potential. Advocate for students by always making fair and inclusive decisions that are in their best interests, resulting in the improvement of student achievement throughout the District.
- 1.1** Provide effective and credible service through the devotion of appropriate time, thought and study to the duties, roles, and responsibilities of a Board member in order to ensure the District is well governed, well maintained, fiscally secure, and operating in the best interests of those they serve.
- 1.2** Conduct business in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, Policies and Administrative Procedures of the District, and all applicable provincial and federal legislation and regulations in B.C., including but not limited to the *School Act*, *Criminal Code*, *Freedom of Information and Privacy Act*, *Human Rights Code*, and the *Worker's Compensation Act*.
- 1.3** Observe proper decorum and behavior as well as encourage full and open discussion in all matters with their fellow trustees.
- 1.4** Represent the best interests of the entire district. This accountability supersedes any conflicting loyalty such as that to advocacy or interest groups and membership on other boards or staffs.



- 1.5** Speak only about what the Board has decided, and individuals may state the reason for their vote. However, trustee interaction with the public, media or other entities shall recognize the same limitation as the inability of any member of the Board, except for the chair, to speak for the Board.
- 1.6** Resist every temptation and outside pressure to use the Trustee position for personal advantage or the advantage of friends or any other individual or agency apart from the total interest of the District.
- 1.7** Keep in confidence any personal or confidential information obtained in their capacity as a Trustee and do not disclose the information except when required by law or authorized by the Board to do so.
- 1.8** Consider information received from all sources and base individual decisions upon all available facts while maintaining confidentiality of privileged information and remaining committed to responsible digital citizenship and to minimizing the risks associated with the use of electronic communications systems and access to social media.
- 1.9** Do everything possible to maintain the integrity, confidence, and dignity of the office of School Trustee.
- 1.10** Declare any Conflict of Interest as stated in the School Act, being sure not to use their role as Trustee for their own personal advantage or for the advantage of their friends, supporters, or business. If a Trustee becomes aware that they are in a position that creates a conflict of interest (direct, indirect; statutory or common law), they must declare the nature and extent of the conflict at a meeting of the Board of Education and abstain from deliberating or voting on the issue giving rise to the conflict.
- 1.11** Not withhold or conceal information that may have a material impact on the deliberations of the Board or Administration of the District.
- 1.12** Interact with the Superintendent or with staff recognizing the lack of authority vested in individuals except when explicitly authorized by the Board, attending to the governance role of the Board while avoiding involvement in District operations.
- 1.13** Work with fellow Board members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation and be respectful of differences of opinion, refraining from making discrediting comments about others, engaging in unwarranted criticism, or taking private action that could compromise the integrity or authority of the Board.
- 1.14** Promote respectful workplaces and relationships with others, placing emphasis on anti-racism, reconciliation, and relations with local First Nations, including respecting differing views, being prepared for Board meetings and Committee work, and representing the Board in all Board-related matters with proper decorum and respect for others. This commitment includes exercising appropriate decorum in individual and group behaviour, as well as fair and respectful treatment of students, parents, staff, members of the community and other Board members.



- 1.15** Endeavor to remain informed concerning Provincial and National developments in education.
- 1.16** Recognize that their responsibility is to ensure that decisions are made in the best interests of the District as a whole, representing and advocating for the best interests of learners in the community, including Indigenous communities and First Nations on whose traditional territories our schools operate.
- 1.17** Endeavour to, in addition to existing On-Boarding training, take advantage of educational conferences, workshops, and training sessions made available by local or provincial affiliations, thus enhancing their knowledge of Trustee roles and responsibilities, and becoming acquainted with current educational topics and trends.

The Board shall establish and maintain an Administrative Procedure outlining the processes for dealing with **Breaches and Sanctions, Public Accountability and Conflict Resolution**. This Administrative Procedure will also outline the steps required to restore relationships after the occurrence of a breach.

The Board shall review this Code of Conduct Policy and the related Administrative Procedure within six months of the Inaugural Board Meeting.

Resources:

Deputy Minister's Bulletin: School Trustees Code of Conduct – Provincial Criteria Guidelines in conjunction with BCSTA's Principles/Standards for Codes of Conduct
School District No. 44 (North Vancouver)