

Policy 4 - Role of the Trustee

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| Initial Approval: | September 4, 2018 | | |
| References: | The Education Act, 1995, Sections 71, 85, 87; The Local Government Election Act, 2015 | | |
| Date Revised: | | Motion: | 13381 |

Trustees are elected in accordance with the *Local Government Election Act*.

The role of the Trustee is to contribute to the Board as it carries out its role in order to achieve the school division's mission, vision, values and goals. The Board believes that its ability to fulfill its obligations is enhanced when leadership and guidance are forthcoming from within its membership.

The Board is a corporation. The decisions of the Board in a properly constituted meeting are those of the corporation. A Trustee who is given Board 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.

1. Specific Responsibilities of Individual Trustees

The Trustee shall:

- 1.1. Become familiar with Division policies and procedures, meeting agendas, and reports in order to participate in Board business.
- 1.2. Prepare for and attend meetings of the Board; participate in, and contribute to, the decisions of the Board in order to provide the best solutions possible for the education of students within the Division.
- 1.3. Respectfully bring forward and advocate for local issues and concerns. Keep the Board and the Director informed, in a timely manner, of all matters coming to their attention that might affect the Division.
- 1.4. Provide the Director with counsel and advice, giving the benefit of the Trustee's judgment, experience and familiarity with the community.
- 1.5. Accurately communicate the decisions of the Board and refrain from making any statements that may give the impression that such a statement reflects the majority decision of the Board when it does not.
- 1.6. When delegated responsibility, such as "Trustee on Rotation" for meetings or functions, shall exercise such authority within the defined limits in a responsible and effective way.
- 1.7. Refer governance queries, issues and problems not covered by Board policy to the Board for discussion and decision.

- 1.8. Refer administrative matters to the Director. The Trustee, upon receiving a complaint from a parent or community member about school operations, will refer the parent or community member back to the school and will inform the Director of this action.
- 1.9. Participate in Board/Trustee professional development sessions so that the quality of leadership and service in the Division can be enhanced.
- 1.10. Share materials and ideas gained from a Trustee development activity with fellow Trustees at the next available opportunity.
- 1.11. Strive to develop a positive learning and working culture both within the Board and the Division.
- 1.12. Attend significant Division or school functions when invited.
- 1.13. Become familiar with, and adhere to, the Trustee Code of Conduct.
- 1.14. Report any violation of the Trustee Code of Conduct to the Board during a closed session following the prescribed process for adding items to the agenda.

2. Board Activity Reports

Trustees file with the Chief Financial Officer, a regular report on events or activities in which their attendance is expected and/or requested by virtue of their status as Board members.

- Events include, but are not limited to school visits, graduations, dinners, Catholic School Community Council meeting, special school functions and other Board related activities.
- Activities include, but are not limited to, meetings and communication with educational stakeholders, the media and other entities.

3. New Trustee Orientation

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.

- 3.1 The Division will offer an orientation program for all newly elected Trustees that provides information on:
 - a) Board Governance;
 - b) Role of the Trustee, the Board, and the Director;
 - c) Delegation of authority to the Director and related accountability mechanisms including Director evaluation process criteria and timelines;
 - d) Organizational structures and procedures of the Division, and governance tools used by the Board;
 - e) The Board Policy Handbook, agendas and minutes;
 - f) Existing Division strategic plan, initiatives, annual reports, budgets, financial statements and long-range plans;
 - g) Division programs and services;
 - h) Board's function as an appeal body;

- i) Statutory and regulatory requirements, including responsibilities with regard to conflict of interest; and
 - j) Confidentiality in matters dealt within closed session.
 - 3.2 The Deputy Chair in consultation with the Director will ensure the development and implementation of the Division's orientation program for newly elected Trustees.
 - 3.3 New Trustees are required to attend the orientation session(s).
 - 3.4 Incumbent Trustees are encouraged to help newly elected Trustees become informed about the history, functions, policies, procedures and issues.
 - 3.5 The Division will provide financial support for Trustees to attend Saskatchewan Catholic School Boards Association and Saskatchewan School Boards Association sponsored orientation seminars.
- 4. On-going Professional Development**
- 4.1 Trustees shall have ongoing opportunity for continued training and education to enhance their governance capabilities. The Board will set their professional development budget annually. (see Appendix B Policy 8 – Board Operations)
 - 4.2 Trustees are encouraged to attend the SCSBA Convention and AGM, SCSBA Spring Assembly, SSBA Fall General Assembly, SSBA Spring Assembly, and any other forums organized for the discussion and resolution of continuing issues arising in the field of education.
- 5. Student Trustees**
- 5.1 STRIVE (Student Trustee Representative Initiative for Voice and Engagement) will work alongside the Board of Trustees and within the high school communities to promote student engagement in local governance, and to provide student voice that will inform decision making regarding quality Catholic education, academic opportunity and excellence, the celebration of diversity, and the development of informed, responsible citizens.

Appendix A
SERVICES, MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT
PROVIDED TO TRUSTEES

Trustees shall be provided with the following services, materials and equipment while in office:

1. Access to the following:

- 1.1. *The Education Act, 1995, The Education Regulations, 2015* and related documents
- 1.2. Board Policy Handbook and Administrative Applications
- 1.3. All Collective Agreements
- 1.4. Current Division reports and resources (e.g. ESSP and most recent Accountability Report)
- 1.5. School year and meeting calendars
- 1.6. List of Catholic School Community Council officials
- 1.7. Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA) Saskatchewan Catholic School Board Association, and Canadian School Board Association membership services

2. Communications/Public Relations

- 2.1. Notification of significant media events, reminders of special meetings
- 2.2. Online copies of school newsletters through the Division website
- 2.3. Speaker's notes/talking points as required or when requested
- 2.4. Individual and Board photographs
- 2.5. SSBA Trustee's date book

3. Administrative Services

- 3.1. Conference registration, travel and accommodation arrangements provided through the Senior Executive Assistant to the Director/Board of Trustees.
- 3.2. Information Technology service support shall be provided by the Technology Department.

4. Equipment

- 4.1. Trustees will be provided with either a cellphone and/or expenses related to cell phone use for the Division. The equipment shall be returned to the Technology Department or ownership transferred upon completion of the term in office.
- 4.2. Trustees will be provided with a Division device (laptop or tablet) to be used to conduct Board related business. Technology support for the devices will be provided by the Technology Department. The device shall be returned to the Technology Department upon completion of the term in office.