

Toronto District School Board

Policy P075

Title: **CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS FOR TRUSTEES**

Adopted: September 21, 2005

Revised: November 26, 2008, **September 23, 2009**

Reviewed: November 2012

1.0 OBJECTIVE

To outline the self-imposed standards of behaviour for the Board's trustees

2.0 RESPONSIBILITY

Trustees

3.0 POLICY

3.1. Background

Trustees of the Toronto District School Board:

- (a) recognize that they represent the members of their communities, and are responsible to the electorate through the democratic process;
- (b) recognize that through the electoral process, their community members have entrusted them with the educational development of students;
- (c) understand that their first and greatest concern is the best interest of all students;
- (d) recognize that trustees are community leaders and that the future welfare of the community, of the Province, and of Canada depends in the largest measure upon the quality of education provided in public schools.

3.2. Commitments

Trustees of the Toronto District School Board are committed to:

- (a) serving the Board to the best of their ability to meet the educational needs of all students;
- (b) accepting that authority rests with the Board and that they have no individual authority outside the Board;
- (c) declaring any possible conflicts of interest;

Archived Version: September 23, 2009 to June 17, 2014

- (d) accepting the public trust for the expenditure of school funds and endeavouring to ensure that the funds are expended efficiently and in the best interests of students;
- (e) acting with integrity, and doing everything possible to maintain the dignity of the Board and office of a school board member.
- (f) carrying out their duties objectively and considering all information and opinions presented to the Board when making my decisions;
- (g) working with other Board members in a spirit of respect, openness, courtesy, co-operation and respecting and abiding by the Trustee Meeting Norms (see below) in spite of differences of opinion that might arise during debate;
- (h) abiding by the Board's procedural rules and by majority decisions of the Board while maintaining their right to state their personal opinions;
- (i) expressing any differing opinion in a respectful and honest manner without making disparaging remarks or references about other board members or their opinions;
- (j) accepting the right of every board member to formulate and express their personal opinion;
- (k) communicating and conducting relationships with staff, the community, other school boards members and the media in a manner that is respectful, truthful and factual;
- (l) keeping confidential information that is obtained in their capacity as a board member private and not discussing those matters outside of the meetings of the board or standing committees;
- (m) conducting themselves in a professional manner which enhances public education and refraining from behaviour that could be detrimental to the TDSB or public education;
- (n) respecting the role of staff in managing and operationalizing the policies and directions that have been established and evaluated by the Board;
- (o) supporting appropriate actions if this Code of Conduct and Ethics is breached;
- (p) acknowledging that staff shall be given the opportunity to give their best professional advice on a matter before the Board makes a decision.

3.3. Confidentiality

- (a) If a trustee is participating in a conversation with anyone and becomes aware the other person has such information that could only have been obtained as a result of a breach of confidentiality, the trustee shall immediately end the conversation regarding the confidential matter;
- (b) Trustees shall inform the Chair of the Board and the Director immediately on becoming aware that a possible breach of confidentiality has taken place;

- (c) After the Board deals with personnel issues, trustees shall not contact the individuals involved without first discussing the anticipated contact with superintendent of education or equivalent supervisory staff.

4.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

The Director is authorized to issue operational procedures to implement this policy.

5.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Policy

P016, Trustee Expenses

Operational Procedure

PR611, Governance, Conduct and Ethics Review Committee (Role and Operating Procedure)

Archived Version: September 23, 2009 to June 17, 2014