

Trustee Code of Conduct

Board Policy

Adopted: (NEW) M16-0143 October 5, 2016

Revised: April 2019, March 2023

Next Review Date: March 2027

1. POLICY

The Trustees of the Halton District School Board (HDSB) occupy positions of public trust. They are expected to carry out their duties and responsibilities in a professional and impartial manner. The Trustees shall uphold the letter and spirit of this Trustee Code of Conduct.

Trustees have clearly defined duties and powers which are outlined in Sections 169 through 171 of the Education Act. Trustees are elected to represent students, parents and stakeholders. This relationship with the electorate is governed by the Municipal Elections Act and the Education Act.

This Code of Conduct is a covenant among the Trustees of the HDSB. It is intended to instruct and guide Trustees through the challenges of public office as they undertake their individual and joint responsibilities. It is meant to provide clarity regarding Trustees' conduct and the management of their relationships with the Board of Trustees (the Board), staff, students, parents and stakeholders in public education. A Code of Conduct fosters a sense of confidence in the integrity and transparency of the role that Trustees have in the HDSB and broader community.

The HDSB Trustee Code of Conduct is made pursuant to the Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2, O. Reg. 264/18 "Members of School Boards - Codes of Conduct".¹

2. APPLICATION

This Code of Conduct Policy and the Trustee Code of Conduct Governance Procedure apply to all Trustees of the Board.

This Policy does not apply to Student Trustees; however it should be used as a guide.

3. DEFINITIONS

The definitions appended to the [Policy and Procedure Framework Policy](#) will be used.

¹ Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2, O. Reg. 246/18: MEMBERS OF SCHOOL BOARDS - CODE OF CONDUCT

4. RESPECT FOR CONFIDENTIALITY

A Trustee shall:

1. Keep confidential any information disclosed or discussed at a meeting of the Board
or committee of the Board, or part of a meeting of the Board that was closed to the public (private session), and keep confidential the substance of deliberations of a meeting closed to the public (private session), unless required to divulge such information by law or authorized by the Board to do so;
2. Not use confidential information for either personal gain or to the detriment of the HDSB, Trustee(s), staff, a student or a student's family, community members or partners;
3. Not divulge confidential information, including personal information about an identifiable individual or information subject to solicitor-client privilege that a Trustee becomes aware of because of their position, except when required by law or authorized by the Board to do so;
4. Accept that the duty of confidentiality with respect to private and confidential financial information, business and/or commercial information, personnel information, student information, and legal matters and opinions survives their term as Trustee.

5. COMPLIANCE WITH LEGISLATION

A Trustee shall:

1. Fulfill their duties in accordance with the Education Act and any regulations, directives or guidelines thereunder, and any other relevant legislation, HDSB policies and procedures;
2. Respect and understand the roles and duties of the individual Trustee, the Board, the Director and the Chair;
3. Accept the Chair as spokesperson to the public on behalf of the Board, unless otherwise determined by the Board. No other Trustee shall speak on behalf of the Board unless expressly authorized by the Chair or the Board to do so. When individual Trustees express their opinions in public, they must make it clear that they are not speaking on behalf of

the Board;

4. Entrust the day to day management of the HDSB to its staff through the Director.

6. INTEGRITY and DIGNITY OF OFFICE and CIVIL BEHAVIOUR

A Trustee shall:

1. Fulfill their duties loyally, faithfully, impartially and in a manner that will inspire public confidence in the abilities and integrity of the HDSB;
2. Recognize that the expenditure of school board funds is a public trust, and endeavour to ensure that the funds are expended efficiently, in the best interests of the students;
3. Be bound by the spirit of the HDSB's [Code of Ethics](#);
4. Respect the differing points of view of other Trustees, staff, students and the public when expressing individual views;
5. At all times act with decorum and shall be respectful of other Trustees, staff, students and the public;
6. Express individual opinions on issues under consideration, refraining from personal, demeaning or disparaging comments;
7. Participate in Trustee development opportunities to enhance their ability to fulfill their obligations as a Trustee;
8. Not advance allegations of misconduct and/or a breach of this Code of Conduct that are trivial, frivolous, vexatious, made in bad faith, or vindictive in nature against another Trustee;
9. Endeavour to work with other Trustees and staff in a spirit of respect, openness, courtesy, and co-operation.

7. UPHOLDING DECISIONS

Trustees shall:

1. Be bound by the decisions of the Board;
2. Uphold the implementation of any Board resolution after it is passed by the Board;

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3. Be prepared to explain the rationale for any decision passed by the Board. A Trustee may respectfully state their position on a resolution provided it does not in any way undermine the implementation of the resolution;
4. Monitor the decisions and direction of the Board in accordance with the Education Act and applicable law;
5. Accept that authority rests with the Board, and that a Trustee has no individual authority other than that delegated by the Board.

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Trustees shall:

1. Comply with the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, R.S.O., 1990, c. M-50 provisions, which requires a Trustee to declare and disclose the general nature of the interest for all direct, indirect, and deemed pecuniary conflicts of interest and abstain from discussions and voting. Declarations must be given to the Director of Education in writing by completing the [online form](#);
2. Be responsible and accountable for exercising good judgement and avoiding situations that might present a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest. Where a conflict of interest might exist, each Trustee has an affirmative duty to disclose such conflict when it becomes apparent;
3. Not use their office to advance the Trustee's interests or the interests of any family member or person or organization with whom or with which the Trustee is related or associated;
4. Not accept a gift from any person or entity that has dealings with the HDSB if a reasonable person might conclude that the gift could influence the Trustee when performing their duties;
5. Not use their office to obtain employment with the HDSB for the Trustee or any family member.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND UNDERTAKING

As Trustee of the Board I shall uphold this Code of Conduct.

I confirm that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the HDSB's Trustee Code of Conduct Policy, Trustee Code of Conduct Governance Procedure, and Board Governance By-law.

TRUSTEE SIGNATURE: _____

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

WITNESS SIGNATURE: _____

NAME: _____

DATE: _____