

SCHOOL DISTRICT 54
(Bulkley Valley)

TRUSTEE CODE OF CONDUCT

1.180

POLICY

School District 54 Board of Education recognizes its primary mandate to determine policy for the effective and efficient operation of its schools. The Board is committed to providing high quality education for all public-school students within a supportive, accessible, and enriching learning environment. Trustees advocate for students first and promote the core values, goals, and initiatives of the School District.

As elected members of the Board, Trustees fully acknowledge the critical trust invested in the Board by the electorate and are dedicated to providing governance over the affairs and business of the Bulkley Valley School District in a fair, respectful, and professional manner that recognizes and affirms the rights and dignity of students. Trustees represent the broad needs of the entire School District and the community, allocating resources efficiently, inclusively, and responsibly in the best interest of all students.

Trustees shall, at all times, abide by the following code of ethics:

1. Decorum

By Trustees working collaboratively and creatively with administrators, teachers, parents, and community leaders, Trustees model and contribute to a positive and receptive learning and working culture both within the Board and the School District. In exercising their duties of governance, Trustees understand the importance of mutual respect, transparency, and impartiality. Committed to ethical practice and principles, Trustees shall act with integrity and be accountable for their actions and decisions.

2. Participation

To fulfill the responsibilities of public office effectively, Trustees are expected to attend all scheduled meetings of the Board. In the event of an unavoidable absence, Trustees shall inform the Board Chair with reasonable notice prior to meeting. By notifying the Board Chair, Trustees are respectful of the quorum process and other trustees time. Trustees may participate in meetings electronically given the approval of the Board Chair.

3. Decision Making

Trustees should base decisions primarily on the needs and success for all students. Trustees shall consider information received from all sources, base their decisions upon all available facts, and vote impartially in every situation. To facilitate effective decision making, Trustees must be knowledgeable about the School Act; statutory requirements; and existing Board policies and practices, initiatives, long-range plans and current educational issues, both local and provincial. It is expected Trustees shall be diligent in familiarizing themselves with supporting documents, in advance of meetings, in order to make informed and credible decisions. Trustees shall ensure that public funds are expended in a prudent and responsible manner with the focus on students.

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4. Scope of Delegated Responsibility

Trustees shall respect the authority vested in the role of the Superintendent of Schools and his/her senior staff and shall give the responsibility to manage and operationalize policies and directions, which have been established and evaluated by the Board, to its executive officers-

5. Working Relationships

Trustees shall work with fellow board members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation and be respectful of differences of opinion. Trustees shall refrain from making discrediting comments about others, engaging in unwarranted criticism, or taking private action that could compromise the integrity or authority of the Board. Trustees shall observe proper decorum and encourage full, open, and courteous discussions in all matters with other Trustees. Information that may be of potential concern should not be concealed or withheld.

6. Legal Authority of Individual Trustees

Trustees recognize that, as a Corporate Board, the authority to make decisions must only be made within an official meeting of the Board. Individual Trustees or committees of Trustees may not exercise the rights, duties, and powers of the Board. The Chair is the official spokesperson for the Board; other Trustees shall not speak on behalf of the Board unless authorized to act in such a capacity.

7. Support for Board Decisions

Trustees shall devote time, thought and study to the exercise of their responsibilities and present their views through the process of Board debate. Regardless of holding a minority position in debate or casting an opposition vote, Trustees shall accept and endorse the majority decisions of the Board and be supportive of any proposed action or implementation that will ensure decisions have the intended outcome. Trustees also recognize and uphold the integrity and merits of their predecessors' work and achievements.

8. Public Relations

Trustees welcome constructive engagement and participation from the broad school community to ensure public input and foster sound consultative practices in establishing and interpreting policy on school operations, goals, and directions. Trustees will endeavour to share and incorporate the opinions and views of others in the deliberations and decisions of the Board. Timely reporting out of information will be provided to those who are impacted by Board decisions.

9. Confidentiality

Trustees shall preserve the confidentiality of information discussed at closed school board or committee meetings and shall not release privileged information in any format to the public until the Board has done so in an official capacity.

10. Conflict of Interest

It is the ethical and legal duty of each trustee to avoid conflict of interest in all trusteeship responsibilities. Trustees shall not use the schools or the School District's programs for any perceived, potential or actual personal advantage or for the advantage of family and friends. When a trustee becomes aware that he or she is in a position that creates a conflict of interest or a perceived conflict of interest, he or she will declare the nature and extent of the conflict at a public board meeting and abstain from deliberating or voting on the issue giving rise to the conflict.

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11. Social Media Use

The Board of Education recognizes the open nature of social media which trustees may often use for both personal and professional purposes. However, professionalism remains of utmost importance. It may not always be clear when one is speaking on behalf of the District, sharing information or sharing personal/professional opinions. It is important to remember that Trustees are subject to the same laws, policies, and expectations when interacting online and should be held to a high professional standard as an elected official and representative of the School District 54. Trustees should be aware that there is not an expectation of privacy in social media use and electronic communications. Social media and electronic communications are subject to review by the Board of Education as reasonably required, including to investigate complaints of inappropriate use. Breach of this Policy and Regulations may result in disciplinary action or sanctions against the Trustee as outlined in the Complaints article of this policy.

12. Trustee Professional Development

Trustees will endeavour to take advantage of educational conferences, workshops, and training sessions made available by local or provincial affiliations. Through participating in professional development opportunities, Trustees can enhance their knowledge of Trustee roles and responsibilities and become acquainted with current educational topics and trends.

13. Complaints

Trustees will uphold the commitments articulated in the Trustee Code of Ethics and address any violation(s) or breach of conduct through the process outlined in the Administrative Procedures 1.180 – Trustee Code of Ethics- Complaints. Public complaints regarding a trustee's conduct can be referred to the Secretary Treasurer

VALUES

This policy and the trustee conduct reflected in the statements above are predicated on the Board-adopted values of Honesty, Fairness, Respect, Responsibility and Compassion.

Amended: April 27, 2021
Adopted: January 20, 2008