

## **POLICY 130 TRUSTEE CODE OF CONDUCT**

Democratically elected boards of education enable local influence and accountability in public education. Boards have the unique role of providing strategic direction and oversight within their local context to enhance confidence in the work of the District. By adopting and adhering to a Trustee Code of Conduct, the board strives to ensure it remains focused on a high-functioning public education system that supports the well-being of students as they become educated citizens.

The Board recognizes that as representatives of a diverse community, trustees and members of the School District community may hold different views on matters related to the Board's business. The Code of Conduct aims to promote the respectful and lawful expression of such points of view when done in a manner consistent with this Code of Conduct.

The Board and individual trustees commit to upholding this Code of Conduct and championing a district culture focused on student achievement. This culture prioritizes well-being and actively works to diminish systemic racism and oppression, while striving for equity.

As a Trustee, I make the commitment to:

1. acknowledge the significance of the traditional territories in which our schools operate, uphold the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, adopt a distinctions-based approach for Reconciliation, and respect and uphold the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Rights Holders.
2. advocate for high-quality public education and contribute to governance that supports public schools to meet the individual social, emotional, and learning needs of a diverse student body.
3. exercise and discharge the duties and responsibilities of a Trustee honestly and in good faith to maintain the integrity, confidence, and dignity of the corporate Board and the School District.
4. work with fellow Trustees in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration.
5. observe proper decorum and behavior.
6. support the Board in fostering a safe, inclusive, and healthy working and learning environment.
7. participate in the Trustee onboarding process and ongoing Trustee training.
8. attend all Board meetings unless I am unable to attend due to illness or other urgent circumstances.
9. review all meeting agendas and materials provided in advance of meetings.

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Related Legislation: School Act [RSBC 1996, Part 6, Division 1, Section 65 (2)]

Related Contract Article:

Adopted: January 13, 1988

Amended: April 26, 1994; January 15, 2008; February 10, 2009; October 12, 2010; February 26, 2013; June 17, 2014; February 3, 2015; November 17, 2015; November 8, 2016; October 3, 2017; June 18, 2019; March 8, 2022; April 16, 2024

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10. stay informed about the District's strategic plan, Board policies, presentations, and reports.
11. enhance my knowledge of trustee roles and responsibilities and stay current on educational topics and trends by attending, as reasonably possible, educational conferences, workshops and learning sessions.
12. participate in our professional organization, the British Columbia School Trustees Association, including attending the Annual General Meeting.
13. maintain the confidentiality of Board discussions, deliberations and other information placed in confidence with Trustees, including but not limited to in-camera discussions, topics protected by solicitor-client privilege, or information identifying individuals.
14. uphold the Conflict-of-Interest rules as outlined in Policy No. 131 Trustee Conflict of Interest Guidelines.
15. acknowledge that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and privilege and commit to remedying inequity.
16. present myself and my partisan views in a manner that does not undermine the governing role of the Board under the *School Act*.
17. consider all available facts in each situation, make decisions unswayed by prejudice or partisanship, and endeavour to provide the best possible direction to the District.
18. recognize that, once elected, my responsibility is to the District as a whole, and that responsibility supersedes commitments to my voters.
19. encourage full and open discussions in all matters with fellow Trustees and, treat them with respect and consideration not withholding or concealing from them any pertinent information that might affect the position of the Board.
20. support and uphold confidence in staff and support operational and management activities.
21. conduct conversations with staff, employee organizations, partner groups and Rights Holders, school community and the media, with the understanding that communication, operations and the daily administration of the educational programs, school business, and personnel matters are the responsibility of the Superintendent of Schools and School District staff and not the Board or individual Trustees.
22. support the Chair in representing the Board in all Board communications.

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23. ensure that my own opinions and positions are understood to be my own and not that of the Board.
24. conduct conversations with staff, employee organizations, partner groups and Rights Holders, school community and media, with the understanding that authority and power are vested in the Board and not as individual Trustees.
25. support and uphold the position of the Board regardless of my personal opinion.
26. ensure that discussions and debates regarding Board action only happen in properly constituted Board meetings in accordance with legislation and the BC Ombudsman's Open Meetings: Best Practices Guide for Local Governments.
27. abide by the policies of the Board, and/or all applicable legislation and regulations, including but not limited to the Criminal Code, *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, Human Rights Code, *School Act*, and *Workers' Compensation Act*.
28. uphold all sections of the Code of Conduct when posting to social media or engaging in public communication.

Upon being elected to the Chilliwack Board of Education, and as part of the inaugural meeting, Trustees will formally commit to this Code of Conduct. This commitment will be renewed annually and reported on at a Regular Public Meeting.

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