

### **ROLE OF A TRUSTEE**

The role of the trustee is to contribute to the Board as it carries out its mandate in order to achieve its vision, core purpose and goals. The oath of office taken by each trustee when s/he assumes office binds that person to work diligently and faithfully in the cause of public education. The Board of Trustees is a corporation. The decisions of the Board in a properly constituted meeting are those of the corporation. Individual trustees exercise an effective decision-making role in the context of corporate action.

A trustee only has authority when so delegated by a motion 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. Individual trustees do not have the authority to direct the Division's administration and staff. Trustees shall also carry out their responsibilities as detailed in Policy 4 Trustee Code of Conduct with diligence.

### **SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF INDIVIDUAL TRUSTEES**

1. Recognize his/her fiduciary responsibility to the Division to act in the best interests of all students of the Division, understanding that Division needs are paramount.
2. Recognize and model the leadership role of a trustee including areas such as knowledge of governance, education promising practices; use of technology and independence.
3. When attending to business matters outside of the Division, represent the Division's best interests.
4. Become familiar with Division policies and procedures, meeting agendas and reports in order to participate in Board business and effectively interact with individuals.
5. Ensure opportunities are provided for the engagement of parents, students and the community in matters related to education.
6. Respectfully bring forward and advocate for school community issues and concerns.
7. Refer matters not covered by Board policy, but requiring a corporate decision, to the Board for discussion.
8. Refer concerns about individuals and administrative matters to the Superintendent or Area Associate Superintendent only.
9. Deal with complaints or inquiries as per Policy 3 Appendix B Trustee Working Relationships Guidelines.

10. Keep the Superintendent/Area Associate Superintendent and the Board informed in a timely manner of all matters coming to his/her attention that might affect the Division.
  - 10.1 Personnel matters are to be brought to the attention of the Superintendent or Area Associate Superintendent only.
  - 10.2 Inform the Chair of sensitive issues in a timely manner so they can ensure the information gets into the proper process(s) so that all trustees, the superintendent and others are informed as needed.
11. See also Policy 2 Appendix D Board and Superintendent Communication Guidelines.
12. Attend Board meetings, and committee meetings as assigned, having read all materials and prepared to participate in, and contribute to the decisions of the Board in order to help ensure the best decisions possible for education within the Division.
13. Inform the Chair and Executive Secretary to the Board and Corporate Services if unable to attend a meeting so an alternate can be arranged and briefed.
14. When delegated responsibility, will exercise such authority within the defined terms of reference in a responsible and effective way.
15. All trustees are expected to attend all aspects of the orientation program.
16. Participate in Board/trustee development sessions.
17. Be cognizant of provincial, national and international educational issues and trends.
18. Share the materials and ideas gained with fellow trustees at a Board meeting following a trustee development activity.
19. Strive to develop a positive and respectful learning and working culture within the Board and with school councils.
20. Be mindful of costs and help ensure the Board stays within its own budget.
21. Ward responsibilities include:
  - 21.1 Develop and nurture effective two-way communication with school councils and school community(s). See also Policy 3 Appendix B Trustee Working Relationships Guidelines.
  - 21.2 Attend school council meetings as possible, when invited.
  - 21.3 Attend Ward Council meetings.
  - 21.4 Attend school activities, including graduations as realistically possible.

- 21.5 Maintain good relationships with other organizations in your ward toward the goal of enhancing the success of students
22. Attend Division functions/events as regularly as possible.
23. Become familiar with, and adhere to, the School Act and Trustee Code of Conduct.
24. Report any violation of the Trustee Code of Conduct to the Board Chair, or where applicable, to the Vice-Chair.
25. Incumbent trustees are encouraged to help newly elected trustees become informed about history, functions, policies, procedures and issues.
26. Ensure have a good knowledge and understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives experiences and contributions throughout history; treaties, and the history and legacy of residential schools.
27. Develop and increase technology skills and knowledge to enhance communication, cost efficiencies, environmental stewardship and leadership skills.

Legal Reference: Section 60, 61, 68, 72, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 246 School Act  
Section 6 Commissioner of Oaths Act