



TRUSTEE CODE OF CONDUCT

It is the board's expectation that each trustee will adhere to high ethical standards in their dealings with other trustees, district staff and the community. In carrying out their role the board expects trustees to:

1. Conduct business in accordance with the rules of order, district procedures, and the laws, rules and regulations governing education in British Columbia;
2. Earnestly attempt to understand the needs and aspirations of the entire district;
3. Advocate for students by always making fair and inclusive decisions that are in their best interests;
4. Work cooperatively with the board treating other trustees with respect and consideration;
5. Devote time, thought and study to the duties of trusteeship in order to ensure the district is well governed and to provide credible service;
6. Consider all information and opinions presented to the board in making decisions without bias, and abide by and uphold the district vision and values, and decisions of the board;
7. Keep in confidence any personal or confidential information obtained in their capacity as a trustee and not disclose the information except when required by law or authorized by the board to do so;
8. Not withhold or conceal information that may have a material impact on the deliberations of the board or administration of the district;
9. Declare any conflict of interest as stated in the School Act and not participate in, vote on, or exert influence on, any decision in which the trustee has any interest;
10. Resist every temptation and outside pressure to use the trustee position to benefit either oneself or any other individual or agency apart from the total interest of the district;
11. Conduct relationships with district staff, the community and media in recognition of the fact that trustees have no legal authority outside the meetings of the board;
12. Trustees are expected to conduct their business in a manner consistent with the expectations for the prevention of fraud as stated in Operational Procedure 520 (Fraud Prevention & Investigation);
13. Attend to the governance role of the board avoiding involvement in district operations; and
14. Act as a trustee of the district and work carefully to ensure that it is well maintained, fiscally secure, and operating in the best interests of the students the district serves.

The board may establish procedures to provide for the resolution of conflicts among trustees and to enforce the code of conduct and, where necessary, impose sanctions on trustees who violate the code of conduct.

Enforcement of the Trustee Code of Conduct

The board expects each board member to adhere to the code of conduct in carrying out the role of trustee. The board recognizes that code of conduct infractions vary in their intent and severity and has established both informal and formal enforcement procedures.

A board member or the superintendent or, in the case of an infraction of confidentiality the secretary-treasurer, shall in confidence bring an alleged infraction of the code to the attention of the board by notifying the chair or, in the absence of the chair or if the alleged infraction has been made by or about the chair, the vice-chair who in such instances shall undertake the responsibilities of the chair.

Notification of the chair shall be made in writing and within seven days of the board member or superintendent first becoming aware that the alleged infraction has occurred. The notification shall include: the name of the board member who is alleged to have breached the code; the alleged infraction or infractions of the code; information as to when the infraction came to the individual's attention; the grounds for the belief of the individual that an infraction of the code has occurred; the names and contact information of any witnesses to the infraction or any other persons who have relevant information regarding the alleged infraction; and, the signature of the individual alleging the infraction of the code.

Procedures

1. Informal

- 1.1 The chair, on their own initiative, or at the request of the board member, superintendent or secretary-treasurer, who alleges an infraction of the code has occurred, may meet confidentially and informally with the board member who is alleged to have breached the code, to discuss the infraction. The chair shall bring the allegation of the infraction to the attention of the board member and discuss sanctions to address the infraction as an infraction and/or measures to correct the offending behaviour.
- 1.2 The sanctions or measures to address the alleged infraction as an infraction may include a warning, an apology, or an agreed-upon consequence which may include that the board member engage in professional development.
- 1.3 In circumstances where the chair believes that the alleged infraction occurred, and the board member concurs, the agreement of the board member that the infraction of the code occurred and with the sanctions or measures imposed shall be reported to a confidential meeting or confidential session of the board and no further action in respect to the infraction shall be taken.
- 1.4 In circumstances where the chair believes that the alleged infraction occurred, and the board member does not agree that the infraction occurred or with the suggested sanctions or measures, the allegation of an infraction of the code may be elevated by the chair or the board to the formal code of conduct enforcement procedures.
- 1.5 In circumstances where the chair does not believe that the alleged infraction occurred, the chair shall dismiss the allegation and report the alleged infraction and chair's findings to a confidential meeting or confidential session of the board and no further action in respect to the infraction shall be taken and the matter shall be closed.

2. Formal

- 2.1 In the absence of informal resolution of the alleged infraction and within 14 days of receiving the notification of the alleged infraction, the chair shall compile the information obtained in the originating notification of the alleged infraction and any actions the chair may have taken to address the allegation, and make a confidential report to the board in a confidential meeting or confidential session. The chair's report to the board shall include the chair's recommendation in respect to the merits of the board conducting an investigation into the alleged infraction of the code.
- 2.2 The board in confidential meeting, by motion, shall within 14 days of receiving the report of the chair, confirm or reject the recommendation of the chair to conduct an investigation of the alleged infraction of the code.
- 2.3 Where the board determines that an investigation should be made into the alleged infraction of the code, within 28 days of receiving notification from the chair of the alleged infraction, the board shall by any appropriate means, including engagement of an independent investigator by the secretary-treasurer, make inquiries into the alleged infraction. On the basis of the results of the inquiry, the board in confidential meeting, by motion, shall decide whether the board member has breached the code and impose sanctions appropriate to the severity of the infraction.
- 2.4 The board member alleged to have breached the code shall not vote in respect to a motion to undertake an investigation of the alleged infraction nor vote in respect to a motion to confirm the alleged infraction or impose sanctions.

3. Sanctions for Infraction

Where the board determines that a board member has breached the code, the board may censure the board member or, where the infraction includes the failure to maintain the necessary confidentiality of information, bar the board member from attending all or part of a meeting of the board or a committee of the board and the board member shall not receive any materials that relate to that meeting that are not available to the public. These sanctions are not intended to limit any other response, action or remedy that the board may decide to take or pursue.

- 3.1 Upon the board determining that a board member has breached the code and any sanctions to be imposed:
 - The board shall give the board member written notice of the determination and sanctions;
 - Provide the board member with 14 days to make written submissions to the board regarding the determination and/or sanctions;
 - After considering the submissions, the board shall confirm or revoke a determination within 14 days of receiving the submissions;
 - If the determination is revoked, the sanctions are revoked; and
 - If the determination is confirmed, the board shall confirm, vary or revoke the sanctions.

- 3.2. Where an infraction of Sections 1 to 13 inclusive of the code has occurred, sanction of a board member shall be undertaken by the chair writing a letter of censure marked "personal and confidential" to the board member in question. This action shall be reported at the next regular board meeting.
- 3.3. For a second occurrence, a motion of censure shall be presented against the board member in question, at a regular board meeting, unless to do so would require a disclosure of confidential information other than a previous letter of censure.
- 3.4. For a third and subsequent occurrence, a motion to remove the board member in question from one, or more, or all board appointments shall be presented at a regular board meeting.
- 3.5. Where there has been a failure to maintain the confidentiality of information and an infraction of section 7 of the code has occurred, in addition to the above sanctions, the board may bar a board member from attending all or part of a meeting of the board or a committee of the board. When a sanction has been imposed that bars a board member from attendance at a meeting of the board it is considered to be an absence authorized by the board.

Legal References:	<i>School Act Secs. 33, 55-65, 85</i>
Monitoring Method:	<i>Board Governance Policy Committee</i>
Monitoring Frequency:	<i>Annual</i>
Adopted:	<i>June 25, 2013</i>
Last Revised:	<i>June 20, 2017</i> <i>October 2017</i>