



Christ the Teacher Catholic Schools **Board Policy**

Policy Title: Board Member Code of Conduct

Code: BP 4

*"This is what the Lord asks of you:
only this, to act justly, to love tenderly;
and to walk humbly with your God."*

Micah 6:8

Each Board Member, representing all Catholic school supporters of the community and responsible to this electorate through the democratic process, recognizes:

- ♦ That Board Members are accountable to the Magisterium of the Church, and that, according to the Code of Canon Law, a Catholic school is an instrument of the Church and is one in which Catholic education is established, directed, recognized or converted to, by the local bishop, who is competent to issue prescriptions dealing with the general regulation of Catholic schools.
- ♦ That, legally, the authority of the Board is derived from the province, through the Constitution Act, which ultimately controls the organization and operation of the Division, and which determines the degree of discretionary power left with the Board and the people of this community for the exercise of local autonomy.
- ♦ That fellow citizens have entrusted them, through the electoral process, with the educational development of the children and youth of the community.
- ♦ That Board Members are the children's advocates and their first and greatest concern is the best interest of each and every one of these children without distinction as to who they are or what their background may be.
- ♦ That Board Members are educational leaders who realize that the future welfare of the community, of the province, and of Canada depends in the largest measure upon the quality of education provided in schools to fit the needs of every learner.
- ♦ That Board Members must never neglect their personal obligation to the community and their legal obligation to the province, nor surrender these responsibilities to any other person, group, or organization but that, beyond these, Board Members have a moral and civic obligation to the nation which can remain strong and free only so long as schools in Canada are kept free and strong.

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The commitment to high ethical standards of each Board Member is required to ensure that the Board can responsibly fulfill its obligation and discharge its duties.

Every member of the Board shall adhere to the following:

1. All personal interactions and relationships shall be characterized by respect, acknowledging the dignity and affirming the worth of each person.
2. A Board member shall represent fidelity to the interests of the Christ the Teacher Catholic School Division. This accountability supersedes any conflicting loyalty such as that to advocacy or interest groups and membership on other Boards or staffs or acting as an individual consumer of the school division's services.
3. Board members must complete the *Annual Declaration of Potentially Conflicting Interests* Form (Appendix D).
4. A Board member shall avoid conflict of interest with respect to their Trustee fiduciary responsibilities. Conflict of interest is defined as competing interests or loyalties, which may affect a Trustee's decision; lack of impartiality; or a situation in which a Trustee may be seen as deriving a personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity.
 - 4.1 When a Board member has a conflict of interest, they shall excuse themselves from not only the vote, but also the deliberation.
5. A Board member shall not make donations on behalf of the school division.
6. A Board member shall not conduct personal business or services with the Board except as procedurally controlled to assure openness and competitive opportunity.
7. A Board member shall not use their position to obtain employment in the school division for family members or close associates. Should a Board member seek employment with the Board they must resign from the Board prior to applying.
8. A Board member shall respect the confidentiality required regarding issues dealt within an In- camera session.
9. A Board member will not use their position for personal advantage or to the advantage of any other individual apart from the total interest of the school division and shall resist outside pressure to use their position.
10. A Board member shall act with integrity and do everything possible to maintain the dignity of the office of a school division Board member.
11. A Board member shall work with other Board members in a spirit of respect, openness, cooperation, and proper decorum, despite differences of opinion that

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arise during debate.

12. A Board member shall accept that authority rests with the Board and that they have no individual authority outside the Board and shall abide by the majority decisions of the Board once they are made.
13. A Board member shall express any contrary opinion respectfully, honestly, and without making disparaging remarks.
14. A Board member shall not divulge confidential information obtained in their capacity as a Board member and will not discuss those matters outside the meetings of the Board or the Board's committees.
15. Whereas the aim of Catholic Education is the development of each student towards personal fulfillment and responsible citizenship motivated by the Spirit of the Gospel and modeled on the example of Jesus Christ, the Catholic School Trustee shall, within the duties prescribed in *Acts* and *Regulations* and reflecting a ministry within the Church:
 - 15.1 Acknowledge that, Catholic Schools are an expression of the teaching mission of the Church.
 - 15.2 Provide an example to the Catholic Community by active participation in the communal life of a parish, and by a personal lifestyle that reflects the teachings of the Church.
 - 15.3 Provide the best possible Catholic education according to the programs approved by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and the provincial Ministry of Education.
 - 15.4 Affirm a strong sense of Catholic Community.
 - 15.5 Recognize and defend the democratic authority of the Board.
 - 15.6 Respect the confidentiality of the Board.
 - 15.7 Strictly support all Board policies and ministerial directives.
 - 15.8 Ensure the affairs of the Board are conducted with openness, justice, and compassion.
 - 15.9 Work to improve personal knowledge of current Catholic educational research and practices.
 - 15.10 Provide support, encouragement, and prayer for the efforts of all persons engaged in the ministry of Catholic Education in Canada.
16. The *Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* [LA FOIP] applies to the Board as follows.
 - 16.1 LA FOIP requires that any records containing personal information obtained, in the possession, or under the control of the Board must be kept confidential. Personal information is defined in section 23 of LA

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FOIP and includes any information about a person's education and employment history.

16.2 The unauthorized disclosure of the personal information of an individual by a Board member could result in a complaint to the Office of the Saskatchewan Information and Privacy Commissioner or civil proceedings being initiated against the board member or the Board for damages. In the event of such a privacy breach, any records (containing personal information) stored on a Board member's personal devices would have to be disclosed and produced.

16.3 Types of information that may be exempt from disclosure under LA FOIP include:

- information subject to solicitor-client privilege;
- trade secrets, financial, and confidential information of third parties;
- information that might interfere with an investigation;
- drafts of resolutions or bylaws;
- advice, recommendations, analysis, options etc. developed by or for the Board; and
- proposed plans, procedures, or positions developed for negotiations.

16.4 While LA FOIP applies only to records of information in any form, similar principles will apply to verbal information. A Board member who speaks in public about the private and/or personal issues of an employee or student is in breach of the confidentiality section of this policy.

16.5 A person whose information is improperly disclosed may have a cause of action against the Board member, and against the Board itself. The Board member may be sued for libel and/or slander if the information disclosed is defamatory.

Consequences for the failure of individual Board Members to adhere to the Board Member Code of Conduct are specified in *Appendix B – Board Member Code of Conduct Sanctions*.

The Board Chair is responsible for implementing and enforcing this policy, with the support and assistance of the Vice-Chair.

Supporting Documents:

Appendix A: Board Member Code of Ethics

Appendix B: Board Member Code of Conduct Sanctions

Appendix C: Conflict of Interest Protocol

Appendix D: Annual Declaration of Potentially Conflicting Interests

Appendix E: Online Presence and Social Media Guidelines

Reference: Sections 68, 69, 70 Education Act

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