

POLICY 3 - BOARD MEMBER CODE OF ETHICS

A code of ethics is a helpful guide to corporate behaviour. When each board member commits to high ethical standards, it is easier for the board to fulfill its obligation and discharge its duties. The following Code of Ethics has been adopted by the board.

Code of Ethics

As a school board member:

1. I will be motivated by an earnest desire to serve the school division to the best of my ability to meet the educational needs of all students.
2. I will recognize that the expenditure of school funds is a public trust, and I will endeavour to see that the funds are expended efficiently in the best interests of students.
3. I will not use my position for personal advantage or to the advantage of any other individual apart from the total interest of the school division, and I will resist outside pressure to so use my position.
4. I will act with integrity and do everything possible to maintain the dignity of the office of a school board member.
5. I will carry out my duties objectively, and I will consider all information and opinions presented to the board in making my decisions, without bias.
6. I will work with other board members in a spirit of respect, openness, cooperation and proper decorum, in spite of differences of opinion that may arise during debate.
7. I will accept that authority rests with the board corporate and that I have no individual authority outside the board. I will abide by the majority decisions of the board once they are made, but I shall be free to repeat the opinion that I held when the decision was made.
8. I will express my contrary opinion respectfully and honestly, and without making disparaging remarks, in or outside board meetings, about other board members or their opinions.
9. I will communicate, and conduct my relationship with staff, the community, other school boards and the media in a manner that focuses on facts.
10. I will not divulge confidential information, which I obtain in my capacity as a board member, and I will not discuss those matters outside the meetings of the board or the board's committees.
11. I will endeavour to participate in trustee development opportunities to enhance my ability to fulfill my obligations as a school board member.
12. I will not conduct myself in a manner, that is intended to criticize another school board.
13. I will support the value of public education, and will endeavour to participate, and encourage my board to participate, in activities that support or promote public education in Saskatchewan.
14. Each board member will review and execute the Annual Declaration of potentially conflicting interests (Appendix A) to declare in writing the existence of any confirmed or potential conflicts

of interest. If a board member becomes aware of a potential or confirmed conflict after this annual declaration, that board member is required to update their annual declaration at the next regular board meeting.

15. If a board member is thought to have violated any provisions of this policy, procedures outlined in Appendix B will apply.

Legal Reference: *The School Division Administration Regulations, Sections 10, 11, 12, 13*
Date Last Revised: February 13, 2024

APPENDIX A

Annual Declaration of Potentially Conflicting Interests

Annually, each member of the board shall confirm in writing that he or she has read and understood Policy 3: Board Member Code of Ethics. Board members shall disclose any outside interests or activities that may pose a conflict of interest.

I am currently a Board of Education of the Saskatoon School Division No 13 (Saskatoon Public Schools) board member, board member, member, committee member, officer, substantial shareholder/owner/investor, or an employee of the following organizations or community groups:

I am not now nor have been in the past 12 months been involved directly or indirectly in any arrangement, agreement, investment, or other activity with any vendor, supplier, or other party doing business with Saskatoon Public Schools that could result in personal benefit to me, my family, or a personal or business associate.

I am not now, nor have not at any time in the past 12 months, been a recipient, directly or indirectly, of any salary payments or loans or gifts of any kind or any free service or discounts or other fees from or on behalf of any person or organization engaged in any transaction with Saskatoon Public Schools.

Any exceptions to the above are stated below with a full description of the transactions and of the interest, whether direct or indirect, which I have in the persons or organizations having transactions with Saskatoon Public Schools.

I _____ have read, understood and will comply with the Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Protocol as set out by the Saskatoon Public Schools. I will act in the best interest of the Saskatoon Public Schools and avoid any situations that could result in real or perceived conflict of interest.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Printed name: _____

APPENDIX B

CODE OF CONDUCT SANCTIONS

1. Policy 3: Board Member Code of Ethics requires that the trustees of Saskatoon Public Schools collectively and as individual members, always commit to ethical and appropriate conduct. Failure by a board member to operate in compliance with Policy 3: Board Member Code of Ethics may result in Board-initiated sanctions.

2. Confidentiality Regarding Issues of a Sensitive Nature

This policy requires that board members respect confidentiality relating to issues of a sensitive nature. Failure to comply with this requirement constitutes a security breach. An individual board member may bring a suspected security breach to the attention of the board in a closed meeting. If the board agrees that a security breach has occurred, this shall be recorded.

3. Procedure for Dealing with Breaches of Confidentiality

Where the board determines that a breach of confidentiality has occurred, the following procedures shall apply:

a. Following the board's approval in the form of a motion, the Board Chair [Vice-Chair or Designate in the case of a breach involving the Board or Vice Chair] shall request that the Director of Education/CEO or designate (as the "head" of the local authority pursuant to the *Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*), appoint an independent investigator to review the matter.

b. The independent investigator shall conduct an investigation and submit a report of findings and recommendations to the Board Chair [Vice-Chair or Designate in the case of a breach involving the Board or Vice Chair] and Director of Education/CEO.

c. The Board Chair [Vice-Chair or Designate in the case of a breach involving the Board or Vice Chair] shall present the report of the independent investigator at a closed meeting.

d. The board member in question shall have the opportunity to present any additional information of relevance at this time.

e. If the Board determines that a wilful violation of security has occurred:

i. First Occurrence

1. A motion to write a letter of censure marked "Personal and Confidential" shall be discussed and agreed upon by a majority of board members present at a closed meeting of the board.

2. If the motion passes, the decision will require immediate approval by a majority vote of the board members at a public board meeting.

ii. Subsequent Occurrences

For subsequent occurrences, a motion of censure against the board member in question may be brought directly to a public Board meeting. This motion requires approval by a majority vote of the board members present at the meeting.

4. Other Violations of the Code of Conduct

A board member who believes that a fellow board member has violated any sections of the policy, excluding the confidentiality section, may seek a resolution of the matter through appropriate conciliatory measures prior to proceeding through the official measures outlined below in section 5.

5. Procedures for Dealing with Other Violations of the Code of Conduct

In the steps that follow, the Board Chair and the Vice-Chair will receive the complaint and manage the steps of the process. In the event that the complaint is against the Board Chair, the Vice-Chair solely will receive the complaint and manage the steps outlined herein. In the event that the complaint is against the Vice-Chair, the Board Chair solely will receive the complaint and manage the steps outlined herein.

- a. A board member who wishes to commence an official complaint, under the Code of Conduct, shall file a letter of complaint with the Board Chair and Vice-Chair within thirty (30) days of the alleged event occurring and indicate the nature of the complaint and the section or sections of the conduct policy that are alleged to have been violated by the board member.
- b. The board member who is alleged to have violated the conduct policy, and all other board members, shall be forwarded a copy of the letter of complaint by the Board Chair and Vice-Chair within five (5) days of receipt by the Board Chair and Vice-Chair of the letter of complaint. The filing, notification, content, and nature of the letter of complaint shall be deemed to be strictly confidential, the public disclosure of which shall be deemed to be a gross violation of the conduct policy. Public disclosure of the complaint and any resulting decision taken by the board may be disclosed by the Board Chair only at the direction of the Board, following the disposition of the complaint by the Board at a hearing.
- c. To ensure that the complaint has merit to be considered and reviewed, at least one (1) other board member must provide a letter indicating support for having the complaint heard at a hearing. This letter of support must be provided to the Board Chair and Vice-Chair within three (3) days of the notice in writing of the letter of complaint having been forwarded to the board members. Any board member that provides such a letter of support shall not be disqualified from attending a hearing convened to hear the matter or from deliberating upon the complaint at the hearing solely for having provided such a letter.
- d. Where no letter supporting a hearing is forthcoming, the complaint shall not be heard. The Board Chair and Vice-Chair shall notify the board members in writing that no further action of the board shall occur.

- e. Where a letter supporting a hearing is forthcoming, the Board Chair and Vice-Chair shall add the item to a meeting of the Board as soon as is reasonable.
- f. Upon conclusion of a hearing held pursuant to this section, a violation of conduct policy shall result in the following sanction(s):
 - i. The Board Chair [Vice-Chair in the case of a breach involving the Board Chair] shall write a letter of censure marked “Personal and Confidential” to the violating board member in question. This occurs only after having such action discussed and agreed upon by a majority vote of Board members present at a closed meeting of the board. A majority of board members at a public meeting of the board shall immediately approve this decision.
 - ii. For a subsequent occurrence, a motion of censure shall be presented against the violating board member in question at a public meeting of the board.
 - iii. For a further subsequent occurrence, a motion to remove the board member in question from one or more board appointments may be presented at a public meeting of the board.