

POLICY 3: ROLE OF THE TRUSTEE

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The role of the Trustee is to contribute to the Board as it carries out its mandate in order to achieve its mission and goals. The oath of office taken by each Trustee when they assume office binds that person to work diligently and faithfully in the cause of education.

The Board of Trustees is a corporation. The decisions of the Board in a properly constituted meeting are those of the corporation. A Trustee who is given corporate authority to act on behalf of the Board may carry out duties individually, but only as an agent 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.

Trustees have a fiduciary duty to protect the interests of the Division, place the interests of the corporate board above their own, maintain confidentiality and avoid conflicts of interests.

Specific Responsibilities of Individual Trustees:

1. Become familiar with Division policies and procedures, meeting agendas, and reports in order to participate in Board business.
2. In alignment with Board engagement efforts, provide for the engagement of parents, students and the community in matters related to education.
 - a. Respectfully bring forward and advocate for local issues and concerns prior to a Board decision.
 - b. Interpret the needs of the community to the Board and the Board's actions to those
3. Refer queries, or issues and problems not covered by Board policy, to the Board for corporate discussion and decision.
4. Refer administrative matters to the Superintendent. the Trustee, upon receiving a concern, complaint or information regarding a sensitive or confidential matter from a parent, staff member, community member or other stakeholder, about school operations, must forthwith refer this individual to the school principal and will also inform the Superintendent of this action. If the individual attempts subsequent communication with the Trustee, the Trustee will respond that the concern has been forwarded to the Superintendent and will not engage in further conversation with the individual. AP 155 Public Complaints/Dispute Resolution addresses specific public complaints.
5. Participate in, and contribute to, the decisions of the Board in order to provide the best solutions possible for the education of children within the Division.
6. Support the decisions of the Board and refrain from making any statements that may give the impression that such a statement reflects the corporate opinion of the Board when it does not.

7. Participate in a number of seminars, conferences and conventions so they can enhance the quality of leadership and service they offer the Division.
8. Share the materials and ideas gained with fellow Trustees at the Board meeting immediately following a professional development activity.
9. Strive to develop a positive and respectful learning and working culture both within the Board and the Division.
10. Attend significant jurisdiction or school events.
11. Attend school council meetings throughout the Division, as available.

12. Board Orientation

As a result of elections, the Board may experience changes in membership. To ensure continuity and facilitate smooth transition from one Board to the next following an election, Trustees must be adequately briefed concerning existing Board policy and practice, statutory requirements, initiatives and long-range plans.

- a. The Board believes an orientation program is necessary for effective Trusteeship. All Trustees are expected to attend all aspects of the orientation program.
- b. The Division will offer an orientation program for all Trustees that provide information on:
 - Role of the Trustee and the Board;
 - Organizational structures and procedures of the Division;
 - Board policy, agendas and minutes;
 - Existing Division initiatives, annual reports, budgets, financial statements and long-range plans;
 - Division programs and services;
 - Board's function as an appeal body, and
 - Statutory and regulatory requirements, including responsibilities with regard to conflict of interest.
- c. The Board Chair and Superintendent are responsible for ensuring a Division orientation program for Trustees.
- d. The Superintendent shall provide each Trustee with access to the references listed in Policy 3 Appendix – Services, Materials and Equipment Provided To Trustees at the organizational meeting following a general election or at the first regular meeting of the Board following a by-election.
- e. The Board Policy Handbook and the Administrative Procedures are available on the Division website for Trustees.
- f. Incumbent Trustees are encouraged to help newly elected Trustees become informed about the history, functions, policies, procedures and issues

Legal Reference:

Section 33, 34, 51, 52 53, 64, 67, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96 Education Act
Section 6 Commissioner of Oaths Act

History

Prepared:	September 2003
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