



Board Policy 4

TRUSTEE CODE OF CONDUCT

Trustees shall uphold the highest ethical standards by modelling integrity and a welcoming, respectful environment that recognizes diversity in our communities and affirms the dignity, inclusion and worth of all, exercising proper authority and decorum to foster trust and public confidence.

Recognizing that a key responsibility of the Board is to establish the policies by which the system is to be administered, the administration of the educational program and management of school business shall be left to the Superintendent and Division staff.

The Black Gold School Division (BGSD) Board believes the individual trustee must adhere to a Trustee Code of Conduct whereby the trustee is obligated to represent all the citizens of the Division and is responsible to the electorate through the democratic process. The Board further believes that trustees are children's advocates whose first and greatest concern should be the best interests of the students in the Division.

This Code supplements trustees' legal obligations under the Education Act and other applicable legislation and is to be interpreted broadly to uphold integrity, accountability, transparency, and public trust.

Specifically

1. Trustees shall devote time, thought and study to carry out their responsibilities as detailed in Policy 3 – Role of the Trustee so they may render credible and effective service.
2. Trustees shall endeavour to work with fellow Board members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion which may arise during debate.
3. Trustees shall commit themselves to dignified, ethical, professional and lawful conduct.
4. While trustees have the same rights afforded to all individuals, trustees are required at all times to maintain the integrity of public office and conduct themselves in a manner that enhances public confidence and trust, and positively affects the public's perception of their ability to do their job in an impartial and professional manner.
5. Trustees shall consider information received from all sources and base personal decisions upon all available facts in every case; unswayed by partisan bias of any kind, and thereafter, abide by and uphold the final majority decision of the Board.
6. Trustees shall support the Board's policies and resolutions when communicating with the public.
7. Trustees shall ensure that their use of social media reflects the dignity of public office and supports the decisions, policies, and direction of the Board. Trustees shall not post, share,

or endorse content on social media that contravenes Board policy, undermines Board decisions, or diminishes public confidence in the Board. As public officials, trustees' personal and professional online presence must uphold the integrity and reputation of the Board.

8. Trustees shall keep confidential any personal, privileged or confidential information obtained in their capacity as a trustee and not disclose the information except when authorized by law or by the Board to do so.
9. While elected from specific wards, trustees shall represent the best interests of the entire Division.
10. Trustees shall honor their fiduciary responsibility to the Board which 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 Division's services.
11. Trustees shall disclose the nature of any conflict of interest, and abstain and absent themselves from discussion or voting on the matter in question.
 - 11.1 Trustees are expected to avoid any perceived or potential and actual conflicts of interest, and to be alert to situations that have the appearance of a conflict of interest.
 - 11.2 Trustees must disclose any change in circumstances affecting their conflict of interest as per the Education Act.
 - 11.3 In determining whether an actual or perceived conflict of interest exists, the Trustees shall be guided by the following question: Would a reasonable person, being informed of all of the circumstances, be more likely than not to regard the interest of the trustee as likely to influence that trustee's action and decision on the question?
12. Trustees shall not use their influence to advance personal, family or friends' interests or the interests of any organization with which the trustee is associated.
 - 12.1 This accountability also supersedes the personal interest of any trustee acting as a consumer of the organization's services.
 - 12.2 Trustees shall be accountable to represent loyalty without conflict to the interests of the Division.
 - 12.3 Pecuniary Interest - if administration was to engage in a contract with a company where a trustee has a pecuniary interest, administration should bring that contract to the board level, the affected trustee would be excused, and the remaining board would determine whether to proceed with the contract or not. A trustee's abstention and pecuniary interest must be recorded in the minutes in detail.
 - 12.3.1 A trustee who contravenes the pecuniary interest is disqualified from remaining a trustee.

13. Trustees shall ensure the use of electronic devices is for the purposes of the meeting and refrain from engaging in private communications while at Board meetings.
14. A trustee shall not advance allegations of misconduct and / or a breach of the code of conduct that are vexatious against another trustee.
15. Consequences for the failure of individual trustees to adhere to the Trustee Code of Conduct are specified in Policy 4 Appendix – Trustee Code of Conduct Sanctions.
16. Trustees recognize that the Board Chair is the official spokesperson of the Board.
17. Trustees shall not attempt to exercise individual authority over the Superintendent of Schools or any member of the staff.
18. Trustees will follow the agreed upon processes for obtaining operational information from administration.

Legal Reference: Section 33, 34, 51, 52, 53, 64, 67, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96 Education Act