



Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board

Policy Statement

Policy Name: Trustee Code of Conduct
Section: Board and Community

Policy Code: B-1.2

Established: April 16, 1998

Revised or

Reviewed: October 27, 2005; May 27, 2010; October 23, 2014; April 25, 2019;
September 24, 2024

1. Policy Statement

As elected officials, the trustees of the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board (KPR) shall conduct themselves in a manner that contributes to confidence in public education and promotes respect for the integrity of trustees in the community.

2. Objective

This policy represents the commitment of the Board of Trustees to meeting high standards of conduct and is designed to provide the trustees with principles and standards for expected ethical behaviour in accordance with the Board's Mission, Vision, Values and Priorities outlined in KPR's Strategic Plan.

A Trustee Code of Conduct (Code) policy contributes to confidence in public education and respect for the integrity of trustees in the community. It deals with acceptable and respectful behaviours.

The Board shall ensure that fairness, non-discrimination, anti-oppression, anti-racism, equity, acceptance and inclusion are integrated into Board and Committee practices.

In recognizing the importance of its legal obligations and alignment to its values, the Board is:

- a) adhering to legal compliance under the Human Rights Code, including ensuring fairness in addressing complaints toward securing a culture that is free of discrimination and harassment; and,
- b) committing to equity, diversity and inclusion by elevating principles of non-discrimination and anti-racism that are fully integrated into Board and Committee practices guided by and through an anti-oppression framework.

3. Definitions

Anti-Oppression

Anti-oppression entails the use strategies, theories, actions, and practices that actively challenge systems of oppression on an ongoing basis in one's daily life and in social justice/change work.

Anti-Racism

Anti-racism is the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably.

Board

For the purposes of this policy, Board refers to the Board of Trustees.

Board of Trustees

The elected governance branch of the Board.

Designate

A person authorized to carry out certain and specific tasks on behalf of the Chairperson, Vice-chairperson or Director, as appropriate.

Human Rights Code

The Human Rights Code is an Ontario law that gives everyone in Ontario equal rights and opportunities by preventing discrimination and harassment in five protected social areas and seventeen protected grounds. The Code has supremacy over other provincial laws, and other Ontario laws must agree with it.

Integrity Commissioner

A third-party independent investigator who is contracted to conduct formal investigations of allegations of a breach of the Trustee Code of Conduct.

Immediate Family Member

Includes, but is not limited to, spouse, parent, child, sibling, grandparent/grandchild, and/or in-law, foster, step, or family of choice equivalent as appropriate.

Non-discrimination

Non-discrimination is principle that involves instituting actions processes and practices that ensure no one is denied their rights based on the protected grounds identified in the Human Rights Code. This may require treating people differently, at times as differences between people may involve support for them to enjoy their rights.

Policy

A statement of intent, governing principle or end result, adopted by the Board of Trustees in open public session; it is intended to articulate what must be done, the rationale for it and a framework for the system.

Procedural Breach

A breach that results in failure to follow a policy or procedure.

Secretary of the Board

The Director of Education serves as Secretary of the Board.

Substantive Breach

A breach that is in violation of actual rights and duties defined by law (e.g., conduct that is harassment as defined under the Human Rights Code).

Trustee

A person elected, acclaimed or appointed to the office of trustee of the Board pursuant to the provisions of the Education Act and the Municipal Elections Act, and a member of the Board of Trustees. For the purpose of this policy, trustee includes the Board of Trustees and student trustees.

4. Application

This Code of Conduct and the Enforcement Procedures apply to all trustees of the Board, including the Chairperson of the Board.

5. Responsibility

The primary responsibility for this policy rests with the Board of Trustees and the Director of Education.

This policy is enacted and administered by the Board of Trustees with support of the Director of Education.

6. Policy

6.1 Integrity and Dignity of Office

6.1.1 Trustees of the Board shall discharge their duties loyally, faithfully, impartially and in a manner that shall inspire public confidence in the abilities and integrity of the Board.

6.1.2 When acting or holding themselves out as a trustee, the trustee shall treat persons equally without discrimination based on a person's race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status or disability.

- 6.1.3 Trustees of the Board shall recognize that the expenditure of school board funds is a public trust and endeavour to see that the funds are expended efficiently, in the best interests of the students.
- 6.1.4 Trustees, as leaders of the Board, must uphold the dignity of the office and conduct themselves in a professional manner, especially when attending Board events, or while on Board property.
- 6.1.5 Trustees shall ensure that their comments are issue-based and not personal, demeaning or disparaging with regard to Board staff or fellow Board members.
- 6.1.6 Trustees shall endeavour to participate in trustee development opportunities to enhance their ability to fulfill their obligations.

6.2 Avoidance of Personal Advantage and Conflict of Interest

- 6.2.1 No trustee shall accept a gift from any person or entity that has dealings with the Board if a reasonable person might conclude that the gift could influence the trustee when performing their duties to the Board, unless:
 - a) the gift is of nominal value,
 - b) the gift is given as an expression of courtesy or hospitality, and
 - c) accepting the gift is reasonable in the circumstances.
- 6.2.2 A trustee shall not use their office to advance the trustee's interests or the interests of any family member or person or organization with whom or with which the trustee is related or associated.
- 6.2.3 No trustee shall use their office to obtain employment with the Board for the trustee or a family member.
- 6.2.4 No trustee shall use or permit the use of Board resources for any purposes other than the business of the Board.

6.3 Compliance with Legislation

- 6.3.1 A trustee of the Board shall discharge their duties in accordance with the Education Act and any regulations, directives or guidelines thereunder and comply with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and any other relevant legislation.

- 6.3.2 Every trustee of the Board shall comply with this Code and uphold the spirit of the Code.
- 6.3.3 Every trustee shall respect and understand the roles and duties of the individual trustees, Board of Trustees, the Director of Education and the Chairperson of the Board.

6.4 Civil Behaviour

- 6.4.1 No trustee shall engage in conduct during meetings of the Board or committees of the Board, and at all other times that would discredit or compromise the integrity of the Board.
- 6.4.2 When expressing individual views, trustees shall respect the differing points of view of other trustees on the Board, staff, students and the public.
- 6.4.3 Trustees shall at all times act with decorum and shall be respectful of other trustees of the Board, staff, students and the public.
- 6.4.4 All trustees of the Board shall endeavour to work with other trustees of the Board and staff of the Board in a spirit of respect, openness, courtesy, and co-operation.

6.5 Respect for Confidentiality

- 6.5.1 Every trustee shall keep confidential information obtained or made available to them in their role as a trustee except as authorized by law or the Board. Confidential information includes personal information about an identifiable individual or information subject to solicitor-client privilege.
- 6.5.2 Trustees shall keep confidential any information disclosed or discussed at a meeting of the Board or committee of the Board, or part of a meeting of the Board or committee of the Board, that was closed to the public, and keep confidential the substance of deliberations of a meeting closed to the public, unless required to divulge such information by law or authorized by the Board to do so.
- 6.5.3 No trustee shall use confidential information, obtained by them or made available to them in their role as a trustee for the purpose of personal gain or for the gain of the trustee's immediate family member and shall not use such confidential information in a manner that would be detrimental to the interests of the Board.

6.6 Upholding Decisions

- 6.6.1 All trustees of the Board shall accept that authority rests with the Board, and that a trustee has no individual authority other than that delegated by the Board.
- 6.6.2 Each trustee shall uphold the implementation of any Board resolution after it is passed by the Board. A proper motion for reconsideration or rescission, if permitted by the Board's Rules of Order, can be brought by a trustee.
- 6.6.3 A trustee should be able to explain the rationale for a resolution passed by the Board. A trustee may respectfully state their position on a resolution provided it does not in any way undermine the implementation of the resolution.
- 6.6.4 Each Trustee shall comply with Board policies, procedures, By-laws, and Rules of Order.
- 6.6.5 The Chairperson of the Board is the spokesperson to the public on behalf of the Board, unless otherwise determined by the Board. No other trustee shall speak on behalf of the Board unless expressly authorized by the Chairperson of the Board or Board to do so. When individual trustees express their opinions in public, they must make it clear that they are not speaking on behalf of the Board.

6.7 Investigation

- 6.7.1 An external Integrity Commissioner will be assigned to investigate Code breaches.
- 6.7.2 Assignment of any external Integrity Commissioner would be made following a discussion by the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and the Director of Education.
- 6.7.3 In circumstances where a Code breach pertains to conduct attributed to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, assignment of an external Integrity Commissioner would be made following a discussion between the Vice-chairperson of the Board of Trustees and the Director of Education.

6.8 Identifying and Reporting a Breach of the Code

- 6.8.1 A trustee who has reasonable grounds to believe that a trustee of the Board has breached the Code may bring the alleged breach to the attention of the Chairperson of the Board.

- 6.8.2 In circumstances where a Code breach pertains to conduct attributed to the Chairperson of the Board the alleged breach would be reported to the Vice-chairperson of the Board.
- 6.8.3 Any allegation of a breach of the Code must be brought to the attention of the Chairperson of the Board no later than six weeks after the breach comes to the knowledge of the trustee reporting the breach. Only in circumstances where there is a breach deemed egregious in nature, would an inquiry into breach of the Code be undertaken beyond the six-week period.
- 6.8.4 A breach of the Code of Conduct can be identified as procedural or substantive in nature.
- 6.8.5 A substantive breach must be referred to an external investigator during the interim period as outlined.
- 6.8.6 A procedural breach may be addressed through an informal process (e.g., conversation, coaching, mediation) led by the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and the Director of Education, where appropriate.
- 6.8.7 No trustee shall give notice of an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct if the allegation is frivolous or vexatious or the notice is given in bad faith.
- 6.8.8 No trustee shall engage in reprisal or the threat of reprisal against,
 - a) a trustee who gave notice of an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct, or
 - b) any person who provides information about the alleged breach to the Integrity Commissioner.

7. Related Policies, Administrative Regulations or Procedural Documents

Board Policies:

[B-2.1, Board and Committee Meetings](#)

[B-2.2, Annual Meetings and Committees of the Board](#)

[B-3.2, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#)

[B-3.3, Human Rights: Code-Based Discrimination and Harassment](#)

Other:

[KPR Mission, Vision and Values](#)

[KPR Strategic Plan](#)

8. Reference Documents

Legislation:

[Criminal Code of Canada](#)

[Education Act](#)

[Human Rights Code](#)

[Municipal Conflict of Interest Act](#)

[Municipal Elections Act](#)

[Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)

[Occupational Health and Safety Act](#)

[Ontario Regulation 312/24 Members of School Boards – Code of Conduct](#)

Other:

[Calls for Justice for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#)

[Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 94 Calls to Action](#)

[United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\)](#)