



POLICY SECTION: ADMINISTRATION
SUB-SECTION:
POLICY NAME: POLITICAL ACTIVITIES AND CAMPAIGNING POLICY
POLICY NO: A. 40

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| Date Approved: May 16, 2019 | Date of Next Review: May 2024 | Dates of Amendments: |
| <p>Cross References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A.03, Advertising Policy • A.29, Electronic Communication System- Acceptable Use Policy • A. 37, Communications Policy • H.M.25, Employee Involvement in Municipal, Provincial and Federal Elections • S.02, School Events Communications and Invitee Protocols • S.S.04, Access to Students in Schools • S. 10 Catholic School Parent Councils Policy • T.04, Trustees Code of Conduct • T.7, Community Engagement Policy • T.15, Provision Of Requested Information To An Individual Trustee • T.16, Logo Use • <i>Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act</i> • <i>Education Act</i> | | |
| Appendix | | |

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish the rules that govern and regulate **political** and election activities on TCDSB properties.

Scope and Responsibility:

This policy extends to election activities by Trustees, candidates and individuals seeking nominations for candidacy. TCDSB staff, volunteers, students and school councils also have certain responsibilities under this policy. The Director of Education, supported by the Chief of Communications & Government Relations is



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responsible for this policy. This policy operates as supplemental to the existing statutes governing the conduct of members of the Board in all their roles and candidates for public office including but not limited to the Education Act, Municipal Elections Act, Elections Act and Federal Elections Act.

Alignment with MYSP:

Fostering Student Achievement and Well-Being
Providing Stewardship of Resources
Enhancing Public Confidence
Achieving Excellence in Governance

Policy:

The TCDSB believes that all Trustees, candidates for any elected position and staff shall act in a manner that appropriately uses Board resources at all times during election campaign periods. This supports accountable stewardship of Board resources and contributes to confidence in public education.

Regulations:

A. Use of Board Resources, Properties and Communications

- 1) The use of Board resources for political activities or to campaign for any position of political office is not permitted on Board property.
 - a) Political and election activities not permitted includes distribution of election or candidate signs, political pamphlets, buttons or paraphernalia, and the use



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of school resources, Board or school communication tools. Election signs are prohibited on Board properties or premises.

- b) Use of Board logo by any candidate during an election period on written, printed or electronic formats, websites and social media platforms is strictly prohibited.
- c) During an election period, no candidate or political party will be permitted to make public announcements or have access to TCDSB school sites for political or election activity purposes other than to participate in all candidates meetings.
- d) Trustees will not distribute political materials during any election period for individuals seeking candidacy or candidates using Board resources and/or information technology including Board email, Board issued devices, Board networks and employee distribution lists.
- e) Trustees will not use Board resources or funds to print and disseminate political information promoting either themselves as candidates or any other candidate. Distribution of information pertaining to all candidates meetings is permitted if approved and held on Board property.
- f) Staff, in their capacity as an employee of the Board, shall not be seen as endorsing a particular candidate or political party including on social media, photographs or in printed materials.



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- g) Candidates or individuals seeking candidacy (including their staff and campaign volunteers) are prohibited from using photographs, videos or audio of TCDSB staff, students and properties for any election activity.
- h) TCDSB websites including school pages and social media accounts will not include any political or election activity materials.

B. Staff Responsibilities

- 1) Staff shall be governed by H.M.25, Employee Involvement in Municipal, Provincial and Federal Elections Policy, when responding to requests for support for political or election activities. Staff must not use their role or affiliation with the Board to support any political or election activities.
- 2) Superintendents shall advise the Principal of the policy if a request is made for school visitation during an election period by a candidate or public office holder.
 - a. Ensure the Communications Department is aware of the request and consult with the Chief of Communications & Government Relations as necessary.
- 3) Principals shall notify their Superintendent and the Communications Department if a request for a school visit is received during an election period by a candidate or public office holder.



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C. Restrictions for Students, School Councils and Community Advisory Committees

- 1) While the Board supports student awareness of the electoral process, students shall not participate in political election activities during school hours and on Board properties.
- 2) Distribution of political and candidate materials during school hours and on school premises is prohibited.
- 3) School councils and community advisory committees shall not endorse a specific candidate or campaign when acting in their official capacity on behalf of the council or committee.

D. School Visits by Candidates, Individuals Seeking Candidacy and Other Public Office Holders

- 1) School visits by candidates, individuals seeking candidacy or other elected officials will not be permitted for political or election activity purposes. Access will only be granted for an all candidates meeting.
- 2) Trustees holding office will be permitted to partake in school visits related to fulfilling official duties including graduation or awards ceremonies but shall not campaign or conduct themselves in any manner that may be perceived as political in nature.



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- 3) The Board's Community Use of Schools department will not grant access to premises for political or election activities unless access is being requested for an all candidates meeting. Political materials and signage will not be permitted during the all candidates meeting.

E. Potential Consequences for Violations of the Regulations

That the Board may take appropriate action, if necessary, depending on circumstances; and that discipline may be enforced by the Director.

Definitions:

Board: The Toronto Catholic District School Board is also referred to as "TCDSB".

Board Property: Sites owned, operated and leased by the Board; and sites that are occupied by others in a lease or other agreement.

Board Resources: Facilities, equipment, supplies, services, staff, funds, branding (logo), Board vehicles or other resources owned and operated by the Board.

Political Activity: Political activity is activity directed toward the success or failure of a political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group.

Candidate: Person seeking nomination for a position of elected office at the school board, municipal council, provincial or federal parliament.



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Election and By-Election: Regular municipal, provincial or federal election or by-election.

Election Activity: Activities related to campaigning for school board, municipal council, provincial or federal parliament, and/ or seeking nomination as a candidate.

Election Period: Commencement of the official campaign period of an election.

- For a school board and municipal council election, the election period commences on May 1 of an election year and ends on voting day.
- For a provincial or federal election, the election period commences the day the writ for the election is issued and ends on voting day.
- For a by-election at the school board, municipal council, provincial or federal parliament, the period commences when the by-election is called and ends on voting day.

Evaluation and Metrics:

The effectiveness of this policy will be evaluated on an as needed basis.