



USE OF SCHOOL BOARD RESOURCES DURING THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Legal References: [Municipal Elections Act](#)
[Education Act](#)

Related References: [Board Policy G100 – Governance Policy - Foundations](#)
[Board Policy G201 – Trustee Code of Conduct](#)
[Board Policy 2009 – Board Advocacy](#)
[Board Policy 3010 – Political Candidate Visits During Federal Provincial & Municipal Elections](#)

Effective Date: *April 30, 2018*

Revisions: *May 25, 2018, February 8, 2021*

Reviewed: *April 11, 2022*

1. Objective

- 1.1 To establish instructions for the use of school board resources by trustees and candidates during the Municipal and School Board Election campaign period. Nothing in this policy prevents current elected trustees from performing their role and duties during their term of office. It also provides guidelines for activities involving trustees and candidates during the campaign.

2. Background Information

water

- 2.1 Trustees play an important role as they are the only publicly elected official with the direct responsibility for the education of our children. The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) actively promotes and supports the role of the local democratically elected trustee.
- 2.2 Municipal and School Board Elections are held every four years and the Municipal Elections Act is reviewed after every election. Legislative changes following the last review were identified in both Bill 181, Municipal Elections Modernization Act and Bill 68, Modernizing Ontario's Municipal Legislation Act. The Municipal Elections Modernization Act received Royal Assent on June 9, 2016. In accordance with that Act,

“Before May 1 in the year of a regular election, municipalities and local boards shall establish rules and procedures with respect to the use of municipal or board resources, as the case may be, during the election campaign period.”

3. Definition of School Board Resources

- 3.1 School Board resources may include: staff time, computer, fax, telephone, cellphone, laptop, tablet, website, newsletter, email, wireless internet, board or school social media accounts. This list is to include any board-issued resource and any other information technology devices given to a trustee for their work use as a trustee of the board.

4. School Board Resources

- 4.1 Trustees will not use their Board office or school board-issued resources for any campaign-related purposes. This includes displaying election-related materials in Board offices, board meetings, board events or school-related events.

- 4.2 Trustees will not distribute or use the WRDSB logo or WRDSB telephone number or other contact information, including any WRDSB branding in any campaign-related material.
- 4.3 Trustees must ensure that all campaign-related material is funded by the trustee in their capacity as a candidate.
- 4.4 Trustees will not use the WRDSB's email system to distribute election-related electronic messages and will not use the WRDSB's voicemail system to record election-related messages.
- 4.5 Trustee websites and newsletters that are funded by the WRDSB, are not to include campaign-related material.
- 4.6 Trustees will use their personal information technology resources to create and use social media accounts created for campaign purposes. These are to be separate and distinct from any accounts used by the candidate in their position as a trustee.
- 4.7 Trustees will not use school board resources to distribute any election related materials (print, electronic or other method) to students, parents/guardians and/or caregivers.
- 4.8 Trustees will not use the services of WRDSB staff to assist or advise in the preparation, distribution or communication of any election-related material.

5. Other Activities during the Campaign Period

5.1 School Visits – by Trustees

Trustees who are seeking re-election may continue to perform their duties which may include their continued participation in local events held in schools while they serve their term of office. Trustees should not participate in activities at school events that could reasonably be perceived as campaigning.

5.2 School Visits – by Candidates

Requests for visits by candidates, for the purposes of campaigning, are not considered appropriate. All Candidates Meetings are encouraged and may occur on school property. All Candidates Meetings must follow the requirements outlined in Board Policy 3010 - Political Candidate Visits During Federal Provincial & Municipal Elections.

5.3 School-Related Events

Candidates are not permitted to campaign at school-related events intended for the students and parents/guardians of that school. Current trustees may continue to attend and participate in school-related activities but shall not campaign or conduct themselves in any way that may reasonably be perceived as campaigning.

5.4 Campaign Involvement – Student

Students are encouraged to participate in curriculum-based activities (Civics) and democratic awareness programs such as Student Vote. Secondary students may choose to earn their Community Involvement Hours by participating in an election campaign. It is strongly recommended that students not volunteer for a candidate seeking election for their local school board. Any campaign or election activities must be done outside of school hours and not on school property.