



## GOVERNANCE POLICY – FOUNDATIONS

Legal References:	<i>Education Act</i>
Related References:	<i>Administrative Procedure 4360 - Principles of Business Conduct</i> <i>Board Strategic Plan</i>
Effective Date:	<i>April 2006</i>
Revisions:	<i>April 17, 2017, June 12, 2017</i>
Reviewed:	

### 1. Preamble

- 1.1 The following policy outlines definitions pertaining to governance policies, and the purpose, values and principles governing the organization and actions of the Board of Trustees.

### 2. Policy Connections

- 2.1 The Board of Trustees of the Waterloo Region District School Board will govern in conformity with:
- 2.1.1 The Education Act of the Province of Ontario and relevant Ministry Policy Directives;
  - 2.1.2 Relevant statutory and regulatory requirements as they apply to the Board;
  - 2.1.3 The Board's By-laws.

### 3. Definitions

- 3.1 The following definitions are utilized in applying the practice of governance policies:
- 3.1.1 Governance – the primary role and responsibility of a Board of Trustees acting on behalf of the public school communities served. Governance is the act of establishing and assessing the effectiveness of the policies, directions and priorities of the Board.
  - 3.1.2 Governance Policy – represents the collective processes, procedures and practices that the Board of Trustees utilizes to govern the Board, in conformity with the Education Act, Ministry directives and relevant regulatory requirements.
  - 3.1.3 Board Policy - a statement by the Board of Trustees, that directs the Director of Education as to the Board of Trustees' intents; and the outcomes and monitoring that the Board of Trustees wishes implemented and achieved on a specific topic, theme, issue or opportunity. Policies provide the framework for governing the administration and operations of the Board.
  - 3.1.4 District – refers to the Waterloo Region District School Board as a system or in its entirety.
  - 3.1.5 Board or Board of Trustees – refers to the Board of Trustees as the governance body of the Waterloo Region District School Board-as a corporate body.
  - 3.1.6 Individual Trustee/Trustee - refers to a Trustee acting as an individual member of the Board of Trustees.

- 3.1.7 Director of Education – refers to the senior staff leadership position as defined by the Education Act, acting as the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Education Officer of the Waterloo Region District School Board.
- 3.1.8 Administrative/Operational – represents the collective plans, strategies and actions of the staff, through the Director of Education, that implements the Board of Trustees approved policies, directions and priorities, as well as reporting to the Board of Trustees on the results achieved as per individual policy requirements or as directed by the Board of Trustees.

#### 4. Strategic Plan

4.1 The Board of Trustees of the Waterloo Region District School Board will govern the organization in support of the purpose, strategic priorities and outcomes, and the commitments of the Strategic Plan.

4.2 Purpose statement: Innovating tomorrow by educating today

4.3 Strategic Priorities and outcomes:

- 4.3.1 Our students are first – each and every one
  - 4.3.1.1 Our students experience a sense of belonging in a caring learning environment that addresses their well-being.
  - 4.3.1.2 Our students pursue individual learning pathways that reflect their interests, develop skills for the future and inspire global citizenship.
  - 4.3.1.3 Our students succeed in reaching their potential and graduating from WRDSB schools and programs.
- 4.3.2 Our staff, families and caregivers are partners in every student's learning journey
  - 4.3.2.1 Our families and caregivers are supported in creating the best possible outcomes for our students.
  - 4.3.2.2 Our staff is equipped with the skills and resources to support every child in their learning journey.
  - 4.3.2.3 Our staff is supported in their wellness as they promote and model wellness for our students.
- 4.3.3 Our culture of innovation builds students' confidence and success as they face the future
  - 4.3.3.1 Our learning environments include all students and their diverse perspectives and ideas.
  - 4.3.3.2 Our students, staff and community are supported by creative and collaborative problem-solving.
  - 4.3.3.3 Our school communities are encouraged to learn by exploring new and innovative projects, ideas and approaches.

4.4 Commitments: we, as individuals who serve public education in Waterloo Region, are committed to:

- 4.4.1 **Service** by embracing an attitude of care and support. We seek to understand and meet the needs of those we serve.
- 4.4.2 **Integrity** by matching our actions to our words. We conduct ourselves in an open and transparent manner that inspires trust.
- 4.4.3 **Respect** by honouring all stakeholders. We create an environment where people feel included, valued and treated with dignity.
- 4.4.4 **Innovation** in a culture where new ideas are welcomed and considered. We build our capacity to think critically and problem-solve creatively.
- 4.4.5 **Collaboration** through reaching out and listening to our stakeholders. We build collaborative relationships to achieve common goals and resolve differences.

## 5. Principles

- 5.1 The following principles direct the governance approach of the Waterloo Region District School Board. In addition to the principles below, the board of trustees also adheres to the Principles of Business Conduct contained in Administrative Procedure 4360.
- 5.2 The board of trustees strives to:
  - 5.2.1 take part with senior staff in assessing community values and interests and incorporate them into the strategic plan for all stakeholders;
  - 5.2.2 help create a climate which engages teachers, administrators, parents/caregivers and the wider community in developing and supporting the strategic plan;
  - 5.2.3 help create a climate of excellence that makes achieving the strategic plan possible;
  - 5.2.4 use the strategic plan commitments and values for student learning and well-being as the foundation for strategic planning and ongoing evaluation;
  - 5.2.5 focus most policy-making on the improvement of student learning and well-being consistent with the strategic plan;
  - 5.2.6 develop policies and support staff decisions aimed at offering rich curricula and engaging forms of instruction for all students and dropping those that do not;
  - 5.2.7 contribute to the development of productive relationships with and among senior staff, schools, community stakeholders and provincial education officials;
  - 5.2.8 provide systematic orientation opportunities for new trustees and ongoing training for existing trustees;
  - 5.2.9 develop and sustain productive working relationships among members of the elected board;
  - 5.2.10 respect the role of director and senior team in their responsibilities for school district administration;
  - 5.2.11 hold the director accountable for improving teaching and learning in the school system;
  - 5.2.12 hold its individual trustees accountable for supporting decisions of the Board, as a whole, once those decisions have been made.