

**PURPOSE:**

To ensure that all members of the CDSBEO school community remain unbiased, fair and neutral with regard to political action in the community and in regards to federal provincial and municipal elections.

**PROCEDURE:**

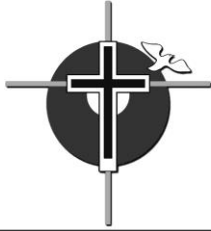
During election campaigns, Board employees must refrain from activities or actions that demonstrate favour for one candidate or party over another, during the course of their work day. Likewise, candidates have an obligation to adhere to Board expectations of conduct in relation to schools during the campaign period.

**1. Political Notices and Material Distribution by Candidates**

Flyers, brochures or other political information may not be distributed through schools or Catholic school councils (e.g. via newsletters, information tables, bulletin boards). This includes information concerning current trustees who are registered candidates for any political office. Non-partisan information regarding the election process may be distributed.

**2. Candidate Visits to Schools**

- a) Members of the Ontario Legislature may visit schools in their own riding at any time during school hours. Municipal or federal politicians may be greeted and welcomed to the school as any other member of the public. Principals should expect the courtesy of advance notice for any visit by an MLA or other political leader.
- b) Neither candidates nor sitting members of a council, legislature or parliament are to be permitted to use video or photographic images of students obtained during a school visit in political or informational materials. Candidates may not invite media to school events.



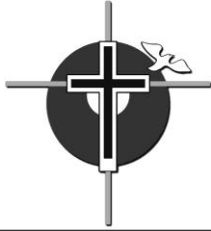
- c) The election may be an ideal time to help students learn more about municipal government. The CDSBEO allows **all-candidate meetings** and other learning activities that are part of the classroom program.
- d) Once they have declared their candidacy, candidates may not make presentations to students, Catholic school councils or staff groups; or take part as official platform guests at any school function.

### **3. Role of Current Trustees**

- a) Current members of the board of trustees who are still serving out the end of their term of office will continue to fulfill their usual roles. It is appropriate for schools to involve their local trustee in events and activities at the school in a way they would have prior to the beginning of the municipal election campaigns. For example, if it is the previous practice of a school to have the local trustee hand out student awards at the monthly assembly, this practice can continue during the election campaign.
- b) Schools are not permitted to send out any campaign material on behalf of the current trustee, if he or she is also a candidate in the municipal election.

### **4. Candidate Attendance at Catholic School Council Meetings**

- a) As with any other member of the public, political candidates may attend Catholic school council meetings as observers. Candidates may not campaign or conduct themselves in any way that may be perceived as campaigning by those in attendance.
- b) Catholic school councils are not permitted to endorse a specific trustee candidate or to campaign on behalf of a specific candidate. The above includes parents or Catholic school council members who may be candidates.
- c) Current trustees may continue to attend and participate in Catholic school council meetings and forums, but may not campaign or conduct themselves in any way that may be perceived as campaigning.
- d) The Catholic school council is permitted to host an all-candidates meeting for their



geographic area to assist parents in learning more about the candidates in that district or township.

#### **5. Candidate Signage and Promotional Items**

- a) Political lawn signs and partisan literature are not to be posted on Board property, including bulletin boards.
- b) Candidates may not distribute flyers on vehicles parked on school or Board property.
- c) Board employees may not wear clothing, buttons, caps, etc. that support political parties or candidates. While at work, employees should avoid becoming involved in partisan political discussions with parents, co-workers or visitors.
- d) Board employees working in support of a particular candidate may not use Board property (phone, fax, photocopier, computer) for partisan political activity.

#### **6. Privacy of Information**

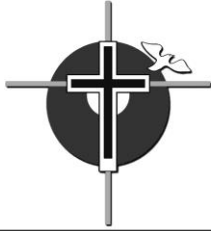
Consistent with Ontario's privacy laws, personal information (name, address, phone number, e-mail) of students, parents or employees may not be given to any candidates or their staff. Any information that is normally in the public domain should be readily provided by Board staff to candidates who request it.

#### **7. Student Community Hours**

Secondary school students working on political campaigns during an election period may count their service towards their 40 hours of community service if it takes place outside the school day.

#### **8. Polling Stations in Schools**

Should national, provincial, or municipal elections require school facilities to be used as polling stations; the Board will make the necessary arrangements and inform schools that will be used for this purpose. The returning officer in each community will liaise with



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**CATHOLIC DISTRICT**  
SCHOOL BOARD OF  
**EASTERN ONTARIO**  
[www.cdsbeo.on.ca](http://www.cdsbeo.on.ca)

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

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principals of affected schools. Returning officers may request principals' assistance to identify responsible individuals (including senior students or school council members to provide any hallway monitoring during the polling period.