

SWAN VALLEY SCHOOL DIVISION

6. Trustee Practices

Mission Statement

The Swan Valley School Division will work with communities to: provide innovative learning opportunities; challenge students to reach their potential as engaged citizens of the world; value, accept, and nurture students.

As we work toward making this core mission a reality we reflect upon the principles that guide our interactions with various people in our work as trustees:

- While charged with the ultimate responsibility for the operation of the School Division we work in equal partnership with the Superintendent/CEO;
- While we value diverse points of view we honour the collective voice of the Board;
- While elected to represent our respective wards it is our duty to consider the needs of the whole Division in every decision.

In striving for alignment with our mission, these guiding principles and our actions, we agree on the following norms for how individual Trustees conduct their working relationships with people throughout the School Division as Trustee Practices:

In relating to the Board, we, as individual Trustees:

- Support the majority decisions of the Board by providing to those who ask the rationale for such decisions;
- Retain the right to a dissenting opinion and to seek changes to decisions of the Board through ethical and constructive channels;
- Keep in confidence any personal or confidential information obtained in his or her capacity as a Trustee and do not disclose the information except when required by law or authorized by the School Board to do so.

In relating to the Superintendent and members of the Senior Administration Team, we, as individual Trustees:

- Offer information, ideas or suggestions, without expressing specific expectations for action;
- Have the right to ask reasonable questions for information from existing reports and about policies, programs and services;
- If information outside of normal reports is needed by individual Trustees, that request for information from the Superintendent/CEO will come through the whole Board;
- Provide information about repeated commentary from the community regarding employee performance without becoming involved in the process of supervision;
- Recognize that most direction to Superintendent/CEO will come through collective Board decisions;
- Observe telephone and email protocol (see attached).

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It is understood that the Chair of the Board and the Chairs of individual Committees of the Board may make requests of or provide suggestions to the Superintendent/CEO, where reasonable, to advance the work of the Board as a whole or its committees.

In relating to School Administration and members of school staff, we, as individual Trustees:

- Generally relate information, ideas or suggestions through the Superintendent/CEO members, never contacting staff directly;
- Exercise caution in discussions with staff to avoid presenting individual ideas or requests as expectations for action;
- Direct complaints through proper channels: Teacher, Principal, Superintendent/CEO, and Board, recognizing that it is not the role of an individual Trustee to solve a complaint but to provide information and to make sure the individual knows the process;
- Avoid discussing negotiation issues when away from the negotiations table, except during meetings of Negotiations Committee and Committee of the Whole.

In relating to Parent Councils, Parents, and the Community, we, as individual Trustees:

- Agree that the Chair of the Board and/or the Superintendent is (are) the official spokesperson(s) for the Board on divisional issues, especially to the media. As individuals we can respond to straightforward questions on matters related to policies, programs, and services;
- Direct complaints through proper channels, as listed above;
- Ensure that written communication from an individual Trustee that may be of a public nature (e.g. contributions to community publications) is vetted by the Board or Board Chair;
- Direct Parent Advisory Councils (PAC) to provide a written invitation to the whole Board requesting a Trustee to attend a PAC meeting. The Board will assign a Board Representative to attend the meeting.