



2022

Ontario Municipal & School Board Elections



TRUSTEE ACTIVITIES AND ACTIONS DURING THE MUNICIPAL CAMPAIGN PERIOD

The campaign period is from the day nominations are open (May 1, 2022) until the municipal and school board elections (October 24, 2022). The 2018-2022 Term of Office begins on November 15, 2022, and ends on November 14, 2026.

Trustees that are seeking re-election need to ensure that their actions and communications while performing their trustee duties during the campaign period do not conflict with their **Board rules and procedures as established under the *Education Act and Municipal Elections Act***.

Trustees who are currently members of school boards are expected to remain fully committed to their role and responsibilities up until the end of their term on November 14, 2022.

The following reflects a 'best practices' approach based on the existing policies and procedures of several member boards. Trustees should consult their board policies/procedures on election activity and follow up with appropriate board staff for clarification/direction. These practices **do not preclude a trustee from carrying out their official duties**.

School Visits and Events

Many trustees will be asked to participate and attend school events (graduations, end-of-year celebrations) in the upcoming months and may do so as this is part of the regular duties of a trustee. Trustees should follow their existing board protocols regarding school visits.

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 be perceived as campaigning.**

School Visits – by any Trustee Candidates:

- Requests for visits by candidates, for the purposes of campaigning, are not appropriate. *All Candidates Meetings* are encouraged and may occur on school property. These are sometimes arranged by school councils and community groups and usually held at night during non-school hours. A minimum of two confirmed candidates are required before proceeding with the meeting.

School-Related Events:

- Candidates are also not permitted to campaign at off-site school-related events intended for the students and parents/guardians of that school, such as track & field, football games, field trips etc. Current trustees may continue to attend and participate in school-related activities as per their board procedures and policies, but shall not campaign or conduct themselves in any way that may be perceived as campaigning.

Board Resources and Board Staff

- Trustees/trustee candidates are not to use any board resources for any campaign-related purposes. This includes such things as photocopying election materials, as well as displaying election-related materials in board offices, at board meetings, at board events, or at school-related events.
- Trustees/trustee candidates are not to distribute or use the board logo or board telephone number or other contact information, including any board branding in any campaign-related material.
- Trustees/trustee candidates are not to use the board's email system to distribute election-related electronic messages and/or the board's voicemail system to record election-related messages.
- Trustee websites and newsletters that are funded by the board are not to include campaign-related material.
- Trustees/trustee candidates are not to distribute (print, electronic or other method) any election-related materials via students, parents/guardians or staff. (i.e. Trustees/trustee candidates may not send home material with students even if the material was paid for by the candidate.)
- Trustees are not to use the services of board staff to assist or advise in the preparation, distribution or communication of any election-related material.

- Trustees/trustee candidates who are privy to private/in-camera documents and discussions must continue to adhere to confidentiality requirements

Social Media:

Social media is commonly used both personally and professionally. There are however some cautions for any elected official/public figure with regard to the use of social media, in that they are a trustee 24/7 and therefore commentary and opinions expressed on personal accounts can still reflect on the person in their role as a trustee.

The rules regarding use of board resources apply here as everywhere else, and therefore board accounts for Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc., cannot be used for campaign purposes. Personal accounts may be used, however using accounts specifically for the campaign are recommended as a best practice.

Summary:

- Trustees are expected to fulfil their full roles throughout the campaign period.
- No one may use board resources to support a political campaign.
- Everyone should review their Board policies and procedures on political campaigning.
- When in doubt, ask the appropriate board staff.