



YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Policy #660.0, Political Clubs in Secondary Schools

Application

Policy #660.0, Political Clubs in Secondary Schools recognizes the educational value of student participation in the Canadian political process through learning opportunities in schools.

This policy is not intended to sanction or approve of any particular political party or political activity prohibited by law. Political clubs are prohibited from fundraising activities in schools.

Stakeholder Groups with Responsibilities under this Policy

- Board of Trustees
- Director of Education
- Principals
- Staff Advisors
- Students
- Student Councils
- School Councils

Relationship to Board priorities

The Political Clubs in Secondary Schools policy supports student achievement by facilitating positive relationships and engagement among students, staff and community members.

Document History and Previous Versions

Approved 1997
Reviewed 2002
Revised 2008
Working Document July 2013
Revised April 2014

It is the expectation of the York Region District School Board that all employees, students and persons invited to or visiting Board property; or partaking/volunteering in Board or school-sponsored events and activities will respect the policies and procedures of the Board. The term "parents" refers to both biological/adoptive parents and guardians in all Board policies and procedures.



Board Policy #660.0

Political Clubs in Secondary Schools

Document Integration Project Format

Policy Statement

The York Region District School Board recognizes the educational value of student participation in the Canadian political process through learning opportunities in schools. This may include the formation of all-party parliamentary clubs, partisan political clubs, and/or presentations by candidates or elected representatives.

Application of Policy

This policy is not intended to sanction or approve of any particular political party or political activity prohibited by law. Political clubs are prohibited from fundraising activities in schools.

Definitions

All-Candidate Meetings

All-candidate meetings are held during election campaigns. All candidates have equal opportunity to address issues. These meetings may be held in schools or other Board facilities during the school day. All-candidate meetings may be organized by community organizations or school councils after school hours with appropriate permits secured.

Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- reviewing the *Political Clubs in Secondary Schools* policy in accordance with the priorities in the [Trustees' Multi-Year Plan](#) and the approved policy review cycle; and
- understanding and communicating with members of the community about the *Political Clubs in Secondary Schools* policy, as required.

The Director of Education is responsible for:

- implementing and operationalizing the *Political Clubs in Secondary Schools* policy.

Principals are responsible for:

- ensuring that political clubs operate within the framework of the extra-curricular program;
- ensuring that a staff advisor oversees the political club;
- approving all-candidate meetings during the school day; and
- ensuring that partisan advertising such as, but not limited to, political lawn signs and literature, is not posted or distributed on Board property.

Staff Advisors are responsible for:

- overseeing all activities and attending all meetings of political clubs;
- not scheduling political club meetings during instructional time;
- approving and ensuring that all school announcements of meetings, verbally or in print, are restricted to the time and place of meeting;
- ensuring that the cost of operating a partisan political club is funded by its members;

- when organizing all-candidate meetings;
 - ensure that only those approved by the principal be held during the regular school day,
 - ensure that sufficient notice is given to all candidates,
 - make clear to candidates that if they are unable to attend, they may send a designate,
 - request that candidates provide written confirmation of attendance or regrets at least one week before the meeting,
 - if two or more candidates are able to attend the meeting, proceed with the meeting,
 - reschedule or cancel the meeting if only one candidate is able to attend;
- ensuring that the partisan political club does not receive funds from any outside organization, political or otherwise; and
- not using their position to influence the political view of students.

Students are responsible for:

- promoting discussion of issues rather than personalities; and
- sharing meeting agendas in an objective way that is not designed to influence the thinking or political position of students hearing or seeing them.

Student Councils are responsible for:

- considering requests by an all-party parliamentary club for student council funds should they be requested.

School Councils are responsible for:

- adhering to the *Political Clubs in Secondary Schools* policy when organizing an all-candidate meeting;
- obtaining necessary permits in accordance with *Policy #412.0, Community Use of Schools* when organizing an all-candidate meeting; and
- considering the provision of funds as requested to support the activities of political clubs in secondary schools.

Legislative Context

Education Act

Department

Education and Community Services

Policy History

Approved 1997

Reviewed 2002

Revised 2008

Working Document July 2013

Revised April 2014

It is the expectation of the York Region District School Board that all employees, students and persons invited to or visiting Board property; or partaking/volunteering in Board or school-sponsored events and activities will respect the policies and procedures of the Board. The term "parents" refers to both biological/adoptive parents and guardians in all Board policies and procedures.