Niagara Catholic District School Board

EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS POLICY

ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

200 – Human Resources **No 201.17**

Adopted Date: November 27, 2012 Latest Reviewed/Revised Date: September 8, 2026

The Employee Code of Conduct and Ethics establishes the standards that govern the way all employees of the Niagara Catholic District School Board are expected to interact with each other, our students, parents, trustees, parish priests, suppliers and the community. Some employee groups also have professional responsibilities to professional associations, self-regulatory organizations or regulators.

Within this framework of standards, employees are expected to exercise good judgment and be accountable for their actions.

1.0 COMPLYING WITH THE LAW

1.1 Employees shall comply with legislation, federal, provincial and municipal laws and any contractual obligations resulting from the employees' duties, responsibilities, assignments, and/or any contractual obligations of the Board.

2.0 PERSONAL INTEGRITY

2.1 *Criminal Offence*

Employees must refer to the Board's Criminal Background Check Policy (302.6.7) and its Administrative Operational Procedures on the annual requirements of an employee.

2.2 *Hospitality, Gifts or Favours*

The Board encourages written letters or notes of appreciation to staff. Gifts that are principally sentimental in nature and of insignificant financial value are acceptable.

Employees must adhere to the following conditions.

As professionals, employees should not use their position for improper gain, nor under any circumstances accept gifts of cash, bonds, securities, and/or personal loans.

An employee may accept hospitality or a gift (other than cash, bonds, securities or loans) from another individual in the course of the professional relationship, if:

i. The employee is not involved in purchasing goods, processing accounts, or is otherwise involved in supply chain management;
ii. The employee believes that the donor is not trying to obligate them, or improperly influence a decision; and
iii. It is a "normal business practice" for the purposes of courtesy and good business relations and acceptance is legal and consistent with generally accepted ethical standards.

In the professional opinion of the employee, if there is uncertainty regarding what is considered an appropriate gift to give or receive, the employee must discuss the gift with their immediate supervisor.

2.3 *Honoraria*

Employees shall not accept honoraria including gift certificates or payments of any kind, while performing instructional or informational duties during the work day. The exception to this may be available if significant preparation time was required and this preparation time was conducted on personal time. All honoraria must be reported to the Chief Human Resource and Communications Officer and/or designate as part of the prior approval process to participate in the event during instructional time.

In the professional opinion of the employee, if there is uncertainty regarding what is considered an appropriate honorarium to give or receive, the employee must discuss the honoraria with their immediate supervisor.

2.4 *Alcohol and Substance Use*

The Board is committed to providing a work and business environment that is free of alcohol and any substance abuse. This will not include accommodations which are provided by the Board for addictions. The following conduct is prohibited, and if violated, will result in immediate discipline:

i. Employees will not consume alcoholic beverages (with the exception of sacramental wine) cannabis, and/or illegal substances during an employee's scheduled working hours;
ii. Employees will not consume, provide or serve alcoholic beverages or cannabis on Board sites, facilities, or at approved events or activities except when the event is approved by the Chief Executive Officer and/or designate through the permit approval process within the Community Use of Facilities Policy (800.2);
iii. Employees will not provide or serve alcoholic beverages on Board sites, facilities or at Board events or activities to individuals who are under the legal drinking age, or who are impaired; and
iv. Employees will not consume, possess, sell, or distribute illegal substances, on Board premises, sites, facilities, or at Board events or activities.

2.5 *Working Relationships*

The conduct and language of employees shall meet acceptable social standards as in any professional business environment. In all working relationships, all employees are to ensure that the principles of human rights, equity, dignity and respect, discrimination, harassment and violence are followed as outlined in Employee Workplace Harassment Policy (201.7) and the Employee Workplace Violence Policy (201.11).

2.6 *Standards of Behaviour*

All Board employees must:

- Respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial, and municipal laws;
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity;
- Respect differences in people, their ideas and their opinions;
- Treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, and especially when there is disagreement;
- Respect and treat others fairly, regardless of, race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability;
- Respect the rights of others;
- Show proper care and regard for school property and the property of others;
- Respect all members of the school community;
- Respect the need of others to work in an environment that is conducive to the learning and teaching.

2.7 *Use of the Internet, Email and Electronic and Social Media*

All employees are prohibited from transmitting, viewing, generating, printing, retrieving, downloading or storing any communication of a discriminatory, defamatory, obscene, damaging, threatening or harassing nature, or any material that is inappropriate for an educational or business environment. Employees must refer to and comply with the Board's Electronic Communications Systems Policy – Employees (201.12) and its Administrative Procedures on the requirements of an employee.

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2.8 *Irregular Conduct*

Employees are not to engage in any irregular conduct which includes, but not limited to, any criminal, fraudulent or illegal conduct, any impropriety, lack of professional responsibility or dishonesty, under any circumstances. Such conduct may be subject to internal disciplinary action, including possible termination of employment, and may also lead to criminal prosecution or a civil suit.

2.9 *Board Property*

Employees must make every reasonable effort to protect Board property and assets from harm, theft, loss or misuse. No employee is permitted to use Board resources for personal gain.

2.10 *Board Trademark*

As a public institution, the Niagara Catholic District School Board has an officially registered logo. The Board logo is a trademark and must be appropriately placed on all official Board literature; including materials, such as letterhead, memorandum, agendas, brochures, educational materials, Board generated publications on all newly purchased student co-curricular uniforms, spirit wear or athletic uniforms. Where appropriate, all materials that are created or prepared by a Board employee in the course of their duties must receive authorization by their immediate supervisor through the Communications Department and must properly use the Board logo either with or without its brandmark.

2.11 *Media Relations*

In accordance with Board policy, the Chair of the Board and the Chief Executive Officer or designate are the official spokespersons for the Board.

2.12 *Workplace Health and Safety*

All employees must refer to and work in compliance with the Board's Occupational Health and Safety Policy (210.6), its Administrative Procedures, and the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its Regulations.

3.0 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

3.1 Employees shall not use their position, authority or influence for personal, financial or material gain or personal business purposes or for the personal, financial or material gain or business purposes of a relative and/or business associate.

3.2 Employees must not engage in or promote any outside employment, business or commercial undertaking (paid or volunteer) that interferes with the performance of his or her duties as an employee of the Board, from which an economic, financial or commercial advantage may be

derived by the employee, a relative and/or business associate of the employee as a result of business, financial or commercial information gained by the employee from employment with the Board.

3.3 Employees shall not use their position, authority or influence to give any person or organization special treatment that might or might be perceived to advance the interests of the employee, or the interests of a relative and/or business associate of the employee. This includes providing preferential treatment or publicly endorsing suppliers or products.

3.4 Employees will not participate in any decision or recommendation in which they, or a relative or business associate may have a pecuniary financial, commercial or business interest.

3.5 Employees may make personal political contributions and charitable donations, at their discretion, subject to satisfying themselves that there is no regulatory prohibition or restriction on such contributions. An employee will not commit the Board to a political or charitable contribution without prior approval from the Board. If an employee holds a position in a political organization which may influence the financial needs of that organization, or if an employee is asked to conduct financial transactions or fundraising on that organization's behalf, senior administration may review this relationship to ensure that there is no perception of influence. An employee will not engage in any political activity in the workplace unless authorized by senior administration as provided in the municipal, provincial and federal election administrative procedures.

4.0 SUPPLY CHAIN POLICY

Employees involved in any aspect of purchasing or other supply chain related activities must comply with the Purchasing/Supply Chain Management Policy (600.1).

5.0 CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION

5.1 Employees shall keep confidential and will not use, directly or indirectly, for their benefit or for the benefit of any person, organization, firm or other entity, the Board's proprietary or confidential information disclosed or entrusted to that employee or developed or generated by the employee during the performance of his or her duties with the Board or otherwise made known to that employee.

5.2 Except as required by law, and in accordance with the Education Act, and Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, an employee shall not use or disclose the personal and/or educational information of students and/or other employees and their families in the Board's possession, or which may come to the attention of such employee during the course of their duties with the Board.

Additional details are available in the Board's Privacy Policy (300.6) and its corresponding Administrative Operational Procedures.

6.0 USE OF BOARD TECHNOLOGY

6.1 Employees, when using Board technology devices and systems and accessing Board information, must be identified at all times. In addition, access to passwords must be strictly controlled. It is an employee's responsibility to take the necessary steps to protect their password, digital signature any or other means used to identify oneself on the Board computer network.

6.2 Communication conducted over the Board's internal network or any external network is not considered private. Communication conducted over external networks must be protected from unauthorized access (for example, with encryption). When communicating via the Board's internal network, employees should consider the sensitivity and confidentiality of the information.

All computer hardware, software, email, voicemail and internet accounts provided to employees are the property of the Board and may be monitored and accessed by authorized Board representatives in accordance with the Board's Electronic Communications Systems Policy (201.12) and applicable legislation. In addition, all information stored, processed or transmitted on any Board system or network used by the Board to conduct business, is considered the property of the Board and may be accessed at any time.

6.3 Employees must adhere to the Board's Electronic Communications Systems Policy – Employees (201.12) and its Administrative Operational Procedures on the use of the Board's computer systems and technology.

7.0 PROFESSIONALISM IN THE WORKPLACE

The Niagara Catholic District School Board is a public organization and as such, requires all employees to dress and present themselves in a professional, and respectful manner. Employees dressed in a manner considered by their immediate supervisor as unprofessional for the worksite will be required to change their dress.

All employees represent the Board to parents, students and the community with whom they come in direct contact. Employees must be courteous, professional and respectful in all dealings with the public, other employees and in all other business relationships.

8.0 COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS

8.1 It is the responsibility of all employees to safeguard the assets, property and reputation of Niagara Catholic District School Board.

8.2 The principal of each school and the administrators of each Board department will review the contents of this policy and Administrative Operational Procedures with all employees who report to them on an annual basis.

8.3 Human Resources Services will track all employees as they are informed of and/or have received the contents of this policy and Administrative Operational Procedures.

Adopted Date:	**November 27, 2012**
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