



School Guidelines for Elections

The following guidelines are designed to assist school administrators and teachers during municipal, provincial and federal election campaigns.

School Visits by Candidates

Schools may invite candidates to attend an event such as a Student Vote information session to discuss their platforms but only if all registered candidates for that seat/ward/riding have been invited. The event may proceed without all candidates present as long as an invitation was offered to them all.

In secondary schools especially, an election can be an ideal time to enhance students' knowledge of government and politics. A school, or an agent of the school (i.e. School Council) may organize an all-candidates meeting to be held at the school. This may be open to the general public or for the school community only.

Candidates may also be invited to speak to a class in which the campaign is relevant to the curriculum (i.e. Civics) but the same rule applies: all candidates must be invited, though not all need to accept for the class to proceed.

It is not appropriate for candidates to request or receive exclusive visits to schools during an election campaign. This would include any informal visits to classrooms, student assemblies, staff meetings and school council meetings.

Distribution of Material by Candidates

The GECSB Administrative Procedure AD-AP-01: "Distribution of Materials by Outside Agencies" does not allow for any political information to be distributed directly to students or to their families through schools. This restriction includes the distribution of any material about or for a current Trustee who is also a candidate.

Please note that schools have no control over what occurs off the school property. If a candidate, or their agent(s) is in a public area near the school distributing campaign material, the school can take no action to restrict this activity.

Election Material

It is permissible and encouraged for schools to accept and distribute information pertaining to the election itself from the municipality or the electoral officer or participate in Student Vote.

Requests for Information

The GECDsB is committed to public accountability and customer service in response to requests for information. If a candidate or their agent(s) contacts the school office to obtain general demographic information about the school, staff are encouraged to fulfill the request promptly and accurately.

Personal information about students or staff (i.e. home addresses) is confidential. Any request for information that cannot be readily provided by the school should be referred to the Director's Office (519-255-3200 ext. 10259).

Endorsement of Candidates

No employee or agent of the Board (i.e. School Council) may use their position to advocate for or endorse a particular candidate in an election.

The GECDsB encourages individuals, as private citizens, to be active participants in the democratic process, and they are in no way restricted from political activities outside the workplace.

Trustees of the Board

Trustees of the GECDsB are to be accorded the same privileges and opportunities during an election campaign as they would during any other time in their elected mandate.

For instance, if it is the school's practice to invite the area Trustee to a monthly school assembly to present student awards, this practice should continue regardless of whether the Trustee is a candidate for office.

This is applicable during municipal elections when Trustees may be campaigning to retain their current office or different elected position. It also applies during provincial and federal election campaigns when a serving Trustee may be running for a seat in the provincial or federal parliament.

More Information

If there are questions not answered by these guidelines please contact one of the following individuals:

Melissa LeBoeuf – Executive Assistant to the Director of Education 519-255-3200 ext. 10259

Scott Scantlebury – Public Relations Officer 519-255-3200 ext. 10224.