

Title: Political Activities Policy

Adopted: April 21, 2026

Effective: April 22, 2026

Amended/Reviewed: N/A

1.0 RATIONALE

The Durham District School Board (DDSB) is committed to maintaining safe, inclusive, and politically neutral learning and working environments while respecting democratic participation and freedom of expression.

DDSB schools and workplaces serve students, families, staff, and communities with diverse political beliefs. Clear governance-level direction is required to ensure that political activities do not compromise student learning, Indigenous rights and human rights, operational integrity, or public trust in public education.

This policy establishes overarching expectations for political activities in DDSB environments and provides the foundation for operational procedures governing political activities in accordance with applicable legislation, collective agreements, and established labour relations practices.

For clarity, this policy is not intended to regulate curriculum content, Indigenous learning, identity-based learning, or student engagement with social issues where those activities are curriculum-aligned and non-partisan. The purpose of this policy is to provide governance-level direction on political activities, and the use of Board resources, as they intersect with Municipal, Provincial, and Federal politics.

2.0 OBJECTIVE

This policy aims to:

- Support student learning about municipal, provincial, and federal processes, including elections and public decision-making, in non-partisan ways that prioritize fairness, objectivity, and curriculum alignment.
- Protect students, staff, and families from undue political influence.
- Clarify appropriate and inappropriate political activities on DDSB property and platforms.
- Uphold Indigenous rights, human rights, accessibility, and dignity.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

- a. **Political Activities** – Activities intended to influence, support, or oppose a political party, candidate, or electoral outcome at the municipal, provincial, or federal level, including partisan campaigning.

- b. **Non-Partisan Educational Activity** – Instructional activities, including recognized programs such as *Student Vote* designed to support learning about public governance systems, elections, and political activities at the municipal, provincial, or federal level, without the intent to influence, support or oppose any political party, candidate, or electoral outcome, and without endorsing any political actor.
- c. **Candidate** – An individual running for municipal, provincial or federal office and candidates for Indigenous governance and/or organizational elections.
- d. **Board Resources** – Any DDSB-issued resources, including staff time, duties, and responsibilities, facilities, equipment, supplies, vehicles, IT systems, Board email, phone, websites, social media accounts, logos, branding, and Board-funded services.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITY

The **Board of Trustees** approves this policy.

The **Director of Education** is responsible for its implementation and communication and for issuing procedures to support it.

All individuals to whom this policy applies are responsible for complying with its requirements, within their respective roles.

5.0 APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This policy establishes expectations for political activities when they intersect with DDSB property, platforms, programs, events, or operations, applies at all times including during election and non-election periods, and governs municipal, provincial, and federal political activities involving individuals or groups engaging with DDSB spaces or resources.

6.0 POLICY STATEMENT

6.1 Political activities are not permitted on DDSB property, platforms, or events.

6.2 Non-partisan educational activities aligned with curriculum and Board priorities are permitted.

7.0 POLICY DIRECTIVES

- Political activities are not permitted on DDSB property, platforms, or events.
- Non-partisan educational activities aligned with curriculum and Board priorities are permitted.
- DDSB resources shall not be used for political campaigning at any time.
- Political neutrality must be maintained in DDSB communications.
- Indigenous rights and human rights considerations must inform all decisions.
- This policy shall be reviewed every five years or earlier, as required by legislative change, governance reform, or significant changes to Board practices that may affect its application.

7.1 Trustee Political Activities and Elections

Trustee responsibilities with respect to political activities and elections are governed by the Board's Bylaws and Trustee Code of Conduct.

7.2 Staff Political Activities

Operational expectations related to staff conduct and political activities are set out in the Political Activities Procedure, subject to the following policy directives:

- DDSB employees are expected to carry out their duties in a non-partisan manner that protects public trust in public education and ensures the appropriate use of Board authority, resources, and platforms.
- Staff have a right to engage in political activities in their personal capacity, provided such activities do not interfere with their professional responsibilities, instructional integrity, or the non-partisan operation of DDSB schools and workplaces.

8.0 EVALUATION

This policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis and formally reviewed every five years.

9.0 COMMUNICATION

This policy will be published on the DDSB website in accessible formats and communicated to Trustees, staff, and school communities through established Board channels.

10. REFERENCES

- DDSB Indigenous Education Policy
- DDSB Human Rights, Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy
- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)
- Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)
- Canada Elections Act
- Election Act (Ontario)
- Education Act (Ontario)
- Municipal Elections Act, 1996
- DDSB Political Activities Procedure