

DATE: January 31, 2017

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Trustee Ken Gibson, Policy Review Committee
Trustee Cheryl Johner, Policy Review Committee
Trustee Bridget Stirling, Chair, Policy Review Committee

SUBJECT: First Reading of Policy IJA.BP Electioneering and Politically Motivated Communications

ORIGINATOR: Karen Mills, Director Board and Superintendent Relations

RESOURCE STAFF: Marnie Beaudoin, Nancy Petersen

REFERENCE: [IJA.BP Electioneering and Politically Motivated Communications Trustees' Handbook](#) Section 6.1 – Caucus Committee
Board Policy CH.BP – Framework for Policy Development and Review

ISSUE

The Policy Review Committee is presenting policy IJA.BP Electioneering and Politically Motivated Communications for first and second reading by the Board of Trustees at the January 31, 2017 public Board meeting.

BACKGROUND

The Policy Review Committee reviewed policy IJA.BP Electioneering and Politically Motivated Communications to ensure it is current and ready for the municipal election in fall 2017.

RELATED FACTS

- Revisions to policy IJA.BP Electioneering and Politically Motivated Communications include:
 - additions of three sections: Purpose, Definitions and Accountability
 - adjusting language to ensure consistency with current Board policies and the *School Act*
 - ensuring clarity and eliminating repetition
- The *Municipal Government Act* and the *School Act* were referenced during the revision process.
- District General Counsel has reviewed IJA.BP Electioneering and Politically Motivated Communications.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Board policy IJA.BP Electioneering and Politically Motivated Communications be introduced.
2. That Board policy IJA.BP Electioneering and Politically Motivated Communications be read for the first time and approved for posting on the District website for stakeholder input.

OPTIONS

Based on the information provided in this report, the following options are considered most appropriate:

1. Approve the first reading of policy IJA.BP Electioneering and Politically Motivated Communications at the January 31, 2017 Board meeting.
2. Decline to approve the policy IJA.BP Electioneering and Politically Motivated Communications and provide feedback and/or request changes.

CONSIDERATIONS and ANALYSIS

- The current policy IJA.BP Electioneering and Politically Motivated Communications requires revisions to ensure the District is ready for the municipal election in fall 2017.
- The designated review year for IJA.BP was 2014.

NEXT STEPS

1. February 28, 2017 – A recommendation report requesting the second reading and the third and final reading of policy IJA.BP Electioneering and Politically Motivated Communications.
2. Once approved, policy IJA.BP Electioneering and Politically Motivated Communications will be communicated through the District’s communication channels.

ATTACHMENTS and APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I Policy IJA.BP Electioneering and Politically Motivated Communications

MB:mb

CODE: IJA.BP**EFFECTIVE DATE:** (11-09-2007)**TOPIC:** Electioneering and Politically Motivated
Communications**ISSUE DATE:** (12-09-2007)**REVIEW YEAR:** (2014)

PURPOSE

To clarify the Board of Trustees' (the Board) responsibility to ensure the appropriate use of District resources during elections and political campaigns.

To ensure a learning and working environment that is free of political bias, disturbances and interruptions that may arise due to campaign activities.

DEFINITIONS

A **campaign** is an attempt by an individual or group to create action by students, staff, or others for a political objective, including achieving election to public office.

POLICY

The Board of Trustees believes that a locally elected school board is integral to public education and therefore, the District, under the direction of the Superintendent of Schools, shall play an active role in disseminating information to the electorate about school board elections.

The Board believes District resources should only be used for administrative and instructional purposes. District staff, students and resources shall not be used for distribution of politically motivated communications or campaign materials with the exception of Board authorized advocacy communications and as outlined in this policy.

- A. The Board of Trustees prohibits campaigning in or through Edmonton Public Schools by individual candidates or parties for school board, municipal, provincial or federal elections, with the following exceptions:
 - a. schools may organize all-candidate forums for educational purposes; and
 - b. school space may be rented after school hours by a candidate or party on a commercial use basis.
- B. The Board of Trustees prohibits the posting or distribution of campaign materials associated with school board, municipal, provincial and federal elections on lands, within buildings, or through communication vehicles owned by the Edmonton Public School Board except that campaign materials may be:
 - a. posted and distributed in that portion of a school rented for a campaign meeting or being used for an all-candidate forum; however, all political materials must be removed from school premises at the end of any such meeting;
 - b. used as classroom teaching aids on condition that support for an individual candidate or political party is not solicited; and
 - c. posted and distributed when specific to school board elections, as directed by the Superintendent of Schools and in accordance with this policy.

- d. posted or distributed regarding candidates for school board elections on condition that all candidates are treated equally and may not solicit or imply support for any individual candidate or slate of candidates.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Superintendent shall report any violation of IJA.BP *Electioneering and Politically Motivated Communications* to the Board, with information regarding resolution of the situation.

REFERENCES

School Act Section 27

School Act Section 45.1(1)