



POLICY SECTION: TRUSTEES
SUB-SECTION:
POLICY NAME: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
POLICY NO: T. 7

Date Approved: December 13, 2012- Board	Date of Next Review: June 2022	Dates of Amendments: June 15, 2017
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Cross References:

S.S. 04, Access to School Premises
H.M. 24, Catholic Equity and Inclusive Education
S. 09, School Accommodation Review
S. 10, Catholic School Advisory Councils
S.S. 09, Code of Conduct

S.P. 02- Elementary French Programming

Ministry of Education:

O. Reg. 612/00 School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees

[Parents in Partnership - A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools, 2010](#)

Appendix A – Community Engagement Handbook, revised September 2012

Purpose:

This policy affirms and promotes the need to engage community members in decision-making processes that foster student achievement and well-being, identify new and emerging issues, support the implementation of Toronto Catholic District School Board plans and strategies, and provide direction about policy decisions.

Scope and Responsibility:

The policy extends to all activities designed to bring about ongoing stakeholder engagement by building and strengthening the relationship between the TCDSB and its communities. Guidelines about suitable methods of engagement and facilitating input and feedback from community members and the general public on the



POLICY SECTION: TRUSTEES
SUB-SECTION:
POLICY NAME: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
POLICY NO: T. 7

TCDSB's activities will be provided. All who advocate for the TCDSB are responsible to adhere to this policy.

Alignment with MYSP:

- Living Our Catholic values
- Strengthening Public Confidence
- Fostering Student Achievement and Well-Being
- Excellence in Governance

Financial Impact:

~~The implementation of a comprehensive Community Engagement policy requires leadership, resourcing, data management, communication and reporting systems. Building the capacity of Staff within the TCDSB is also required.~~

Legal Impact:

~~Liability insurance is required for all locations where engagements are conducted on an in-person basis.~~

Policy:

The Board of Trustees, embracing its governance mandate, strives to engage Catholic and community stakeholders, ratepayers, and all involved in Toronto Catholic schools to contribute their input to the ongoing development and strategic direction of the Toronto Catholic District School Board.

The TCDSB will commit to ensuring that meaningful input from our community members is considered to ensure initiatives, policies and practices reflect our mission and meet the needs and expectations of the communities served by the TCDSB.



POLICY SECTION: TRUSTEES

SUB-SECTION:

POLICY NAME: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

POLICY NO: T. 7

Regulations:

1. Community members have both the right and the responsibility to be involved in decisions.
2. The TCDSB will provide community engagement opportunities that are open, honest, transparent and accessible to all, and that value the input obtained in its decision making.
3. The authority to implement community engagement is as follows:
 - (i) Internal TCDSB staff – Director of Education;
 - (ii) Board wide engagement – Board of Trustees;
 - (iii) Ward level engagement – Director of Education and the Ward Trustee.
4. The TCDSB shall engage community members and the general public in meaningful ways on matters in the purview of the Board to allow deeper conversations about values, beliefs and concerns, to emphasize the desired future, appreciate the positives and build on past successes and create effective networks.
5. The Board of Trustees will take into consideration the views of all community members in making policy decisions by facilitating ongoing exchange of information and feedback among the TCDSB, its communities and the public.
6. The following principles form the foundation of effective engagements: commitment, evaluation, timing, inclusiveness, accessibility, location, clarity, respect, accountability and transparency.



POLICY SECTION: TRUSTEES

SUB-SECTION:

POLICY NAME: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

POLICY NO: T. 7

7. The Board of Trustees, TCDSB Staff, Catholic communities and the general public will use the Community Engagement Handbook to support this policy. The TCDSB Staff will develop procedures and a community engagement strategy to ensure ongoing and effective implementation of this policy.
8. The Continuum of Engagement comprises six different levels of engagement that could be sought with community members: Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, Consensus and Empower.
9. In preparing for a community engagement process, the Board or designated leader will select one or more of these levels of engagement to ensure that the community is appropriately engaged **and identify the stakeholders it wishes to engage.**
10. At the completion of each community engagement process, stakeholders will be informed by TCDSB staff of the outcome.
11. Stakeholders involved in each engagement process will be solicited for their feedback consistent with the level of engagement used in the process.



POLICY SECTION: TRUSTEES
SUB-SECTION:
POLICY NAME: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
POLICY NO: T. 7

Definitions:

Continuum of Engagement

The continuum comprises the six different levels of engagement that could be sought with community members: Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, Consensus, and Empower.

Inform

To provide community members and the general public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding issues, the alternatives, opportunities and solutions.

Consult

To obtain input from community members and the general public on proposed Board directions and decisions.

Involve

To work directly with the community members throughout the process to ensure that their concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered in decision-making processes.

Collaborate

To partner with the community members in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

Consensus

To work together with community members until the decision is reached through appropriate consensus.



POLICY SECTION: TRUSTEES

SUB-SECTION:

POLICY NAME: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

POLICY NO: T.7

Empower

To provide elements of the final decision or implementation in the hands of the community.

Toronto Catholic District School Board or The Board (abbreviated TCDSB)

Refers to the complete corporate entity and includes the Board of Trustees and all Staff and students.

The Board of Trustees

The twelve elected officials charged with governing the TCDSB.

Community Engagement

An active, intentional, purposeful and ethical relationship between the Catholic communities, the general public and the TCDSB.

Catholic Communities

Include students, parents, Catholic ratepayers, Staff, Trustees, and the Catholic Church.

General Public

Includes residents within the TCDSB boundaries, and levels of government in Ontario.



POLICY SECTION: TRUSTEES

SUB-SECTION:

POLICY NAME: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

POLICY NO: T. 7

Evaluation and Metrics:

The effectiveness of the policy will be determined by measuring the following:

1. Catholic schools and the TCDSB are accessible and welcoming to parents and other community members;
2. Community members and the general public have open access to information and a growing understanding of educational policies, programs and services;
3. Predefined and Board approved metrics for each community engagement and feedback solicited from stakeholders on the process and participation.
4. A report of community engagement process as reported by staff to be reviewed by the Board annually.

Details on the process by which planning for, and implementation of, community engagement may be carried out at the Board can be found in the Community Engagement Handbook, revised September 2012.