



Huron-Superior Catholic

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES ADVOCACY

In *Catholic Trustees: Advocates, Guardians & Stewards of Catholic Education* (2006), the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA) states that Catholic trustees have a responsibility to promote, protect, and advocate for Catholic education. Such advocacy requires trustees to:

- “Understand and defend the constitutional right of the Catholic community to govern, control and manage Catholic schools
- Understand the rights, obligations and authority vested in Catholic school trustees acting as members of a Catholic school board
- Advocate for government policies that are in accordance with Catholic social teaching
- Advocate for government policy, legislation and funding that protects the distinctive nature of Catholic education and supports Ontario’s fully funded Catholic school system
- Take leadership in promoting public understanding of and support for Catholic education
- Promote the value of Catholic education and the significant contribution it has made to Ontario society” (pp. 4 – 5).

The following should guide the board’s communication with the Ontario government:

- Focus on ongoing communication between school boards and government through established mechanisms and channels.
- Avoid basing communications on personal or political bias.
- Maximize resources for student success, wellbeing, and achievement.

On a very limited occasion there may be some issues that are of a local character for which individual boards may need to lobby the government directly. Democratically elected trustees need to retain the ability to approach government directly on those matters.

Examples of suitable advocacy expenditures include:

- Membership dues and fees to appropriate organizations, such as Ontario Catholic School Trustees’ Association.

Examples of inappropriate advocacy expenditures include:

- Placing content intended to advocate for a particular position with report cards and annual reports.
- Using students as vehicles for board or school advocacy to the public, education partners and governments.
- Use of board funds to attend events for specific political parties.