

ELECTION PROTOCOLS

BACKGROUND

The political process in municipal, provincial and federal government elections normally occurs every four to five (4 to 5) years. Schools are sometimes subject to solicitations from politicians and aspiring politicians. The Westmount charter board, the superintendent, and school administration are supportive of involvement in democracy and the election process. Active participation in becoming informed and engaged in the election process is important and sets a positive example for our students. This protocol offers guidance to ensure consistent and appropriate management of invitations to or requests from political candidates to speak to staff and students at the school.

PROCEDURES

1. General

- 1.1 Westmount is non-partisan and politically neutral. Our role as a public school is to support student success, not to advance or deter individual political campaigns or political party agendas;
- 1.2 Schools may organize all-candidate forums or assemblies for educational purposes, provided the attendance by individuals is by invitation and voluntary and all parties are given equal opportunity;
- 1.3 The posting or distribution of campaign materials associated with elections within our buildings or on our property is prohibited, except as materials used as classroom teaching resources on the condition that support for an individual candidate or political party is not solicited;
- 1.4 Westmount Charter School (WCS) employees are urged to carefully consider their social media use during an election period. School classrooms, and other official WCS accounts should not post, "like" or share support for any individual candidates, parties or campaigns;
- 1.5 WCS employees should use sound judgement and careful discretion during an election period when using personal social media that identify themselves as WCS staff members; and
- 1.6 There are two types of political forums that are permitted to take place in our school:
 - 1.6.1 A public forum where the school council is responsible for organizing or sponsoring a forum, and the school building is primarily serving as the "venue." Students must not be allowed to participate in these forums; and
 - 1.6.2 A forum that is organized by or sponsored by the school where the forum provides an integral component of the Alberta Education Program of Studies.

2. Principals' Responsibilities

- 2.1 The Principal may approve the attendance of a representative of a political party where the educational program of the school would be enhanced. The principal will try to ensure that all individual representatives shall have similar opportunities.

3. Superintendents' Responsibility

- 3.1 The Superintendent may be requested to rule on extraordinary requests within the parameters of this administrative procedure.

Legal Reference:	<i>Education Act</i>
Cross Reference:	Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act FOIP
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