

BOARD OPERATIONS

The board's ability to discharge its obligations in an efficient and effective manner is dependent upon the development and implementation of a sound organization design. In order to discharge its responsibilities to the electorate of the division, the board shall hold meetings as often as necessary. A quorum, which is a simple majority of the number of trustees, must be present for every duly constituted meeting. The board has adopted policies so the business of the board can be conducted in an orderly and efficient manner.

The board's fundamental obligation is to preserve, if not enhance, the public trust in education, generally, and in the affairs of its operations in particular. Consistent with its objective to encourage the general public to contribute to the educational process, board meetings will be open to the public. Towards this end, the board believes its affairs must be conducted in public to the greatest extent possible.

There are times when public interest is best served by private discussion of specific issues in "in-camera" sessions. The board believes it is necessary to protect individual privacy and the board's own position in negotiating either collective agreements or contracts and therefore expects to go in-camera for issues dealing with individual students, individual employees, land, labour, litigation or negotiation.

Presentations at board meetings by members of the public, students and staff can enhance public interest.

Public forums dealing with specific educational topics and held in various communities with the division can enhance communications and the effectiveness of the board.

1. Elections

1.1 Wards

Within the stipulations of Ministerial Order 113/94 dated September 22, 1994, which resulted in the transfer of the lands of the Fairview School Division No. 50 to the Peace River School Division No. 10, and subsequent Ministerial Order 041/2013, the board has decided to provide for the nomination and election of trustees within the division by wards.

Copies of the Ministerial Orders are available from the Division Office.

1.1.1 Seven (7) wards have been established within the Peace River School Division.

1.1.2 One (1) trustee is to be elected in each ward.

1.1.3 Wards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 are outlined in Bylaw 1-2020 – Schedule A.

1.2 The provisions of the Local Authorities Election Act respecting the election of trustees shall apply to every election in each ward.

1.3 During the three (3) year period immediately following a general election, a by-election need not be held if there is only one (1) vacancy on the board and during the fourth

year following a general election, a by-election need not be held if there are only two (2) vacancies on the board. By-elections may be held as determined by the board.

2. Organizational Meeting

2.1 The Organizational Meeting of a board

2.1.1 Subject to 2.1.2, must be held annually, and

2.1.2 In any year in which a general election takes place, must be held within four (4) weeks following the date the statement of the results of that election is announced or posted, at a time and place to be fixed by the superintendent or designate of the board.

2.1.3 Each trustee will take the oath of office immediately following the call to order of the organizational meeting after a general election. Special provisions will be made for a trustee taking office following a by-election.

2.2 The superintendent or designate of the board must give notice of the organizational meeting to each trustee as if it were a special meeting and preside over the meeting until the election of the Board Chair.

2.3 At the annual organizational meeting, and afterwards at any time as determined by the board, the board must elect one of its members as Chair and another as Vice-Chair to hold office during the pleasure of the board.

2.4 Upon election as chair, the Board Chair shall take the oath of office and preside over the remainder of the organizational meeting.

2.5 The organizational meeting in addition to the election of the Chair and Vice Chair, may include any of the following:

2.5.1 Establish a schedule (date, time, place) for regular meetings and any additional required meetings for the ensuing year.

2.5.2 Create such standing or ad hoc committees of the board, as deemed appropriate, and appoint members.

2.5.3 Appoint board representation on the various boards or committees of organizations or agencies where the board has regular representation, as appropriate.

2.5.4 Review trustee conflict of interest stipulations and determine any disclosure of information requirements; and

2.5.5 Address other organizational items as required.

3. Regular Meetings

Regular board meeting dates and times shall be as established at the organizational meeting each year. The board is not required to give notice of regular meetings once scheduled.

3.1 Meetings will be held at least once monthly, excepting July, and will ordinarily be held in the board room at Central Operations in Grimshaw beginning at 10:00 am.

3.2 Notwithstanding the schedule established at the organizational meeting, the board may, by motion, alter the schedule in such manner as it deems appropriate.

3.3 All trustees shall notify the Board Chair if they are unable to attend a board meeting.

- 3.4 All trustees who will be absent from three (3) consecutive regular meetings shall:
 - 3.4.1 Obtain authorization by motion of the board to do so; or
 - 3.4.2 Provide to the Board Chair evidence of illness in the form of a medical certificate respecting the period of absence.
- 3.5 Failure to attend three (3) consecutive regular meetings without a motion of the Board may result in disqualification.
- 3.5 If both the Board Chair or Vice-Chair through illness or other cause are unable to perform the duties of the office or are absent, the board shall appoint from among its members an acting Board Chair, who on being so appointed has all the powers and shall perform all the duties of the Board Chair during the Board Chair's and Vice-Chair's inability to act or absence.
- 3.6 Regular meetings of the board will not normally be held without the superintendent and/or designate(s) in attendance.
- 3.7 In the event that a quorum is not present in half an hour after the time appointed for the meeting of the board, or within half an hour of the time appointed for the meeting to reconvene after a recess, the superintendent or designate shall record those present and the board shall stand adjourned until the next regular meeting, unless a special meeting is duly called in the meantime.

4. Special Meetings

- 4.1 Occasionally, unanticipated or emergent issues require immediate board attention and/or action.
- 4.2 A special meeting of a board may be called by the Chair of the board, a majority of the trustees, or the Minister, after notice has been given to each trustee in accordance with this section.
- 4.3 A notice of a special meeting must state the date, time and place of the special meeting, and the nature of the business to be transacted at the special meeting.
- 4.4 The notice of a special meeting must be sent at least two (2) days before the special meeting to designated divisional email addresses.
- 4.5 A special meeting may be held without notice being given under this section if every trustee agrees to waive the requirements of subsection 4.4.
- 4.6 Unless all of the trustees are present at the special meeting, no business other than that stated in the notice of the special meeting can be conducted at the special meeting. Items can be added to the agenda only by the unanimous consent of the entire board.
- 4.7 Special meetings of the board shall be open to the public recognizing that specific agenda matters may be held in-camera
- 4.8 Special meetings of the board will not normally be held without the superintendent and/or designate(s) in attendance.

5. Meetings by Electronic Means

- 5.1 It is the preference of the board to meet at a common location to conduct division business with trustees and the superintendent or designate in physical attendance.

- 5.2 Notwithstanding 5.1, a board meeting or committee meeting may be conducted by electronic means.
- 5.3 All participants in a meeting held by electronic means are deemed to be present at the meeting unless they fail to respond for more than 5 minutes.
- 5.4 The electronic means must enable all participants to hear each other and view each other.
- 5.5 The electronic means must enable the public to listen to the meeting, and if possible, enable the public to view the meeting and participants.
- 5.6 One (1) facility will be determined by the superintendent or designate to be the central and public-accessible site and this site will be communicated to the public with the board agenda.
- 5.7 The Superintendent or designate will be responsible for the organization of the electronic communications with participants and will inform trustees at the meeting if the identity of a participant is in question.
- 5.8 A trustee may participate from a location to which the public does not have access.
- 5.9 A trustee must ensure the means and location used to participate in the meeting will allow moving in-camera and will meet all requirements of an in-camera session including the receipt of confidential information.
- 5.10 Through a board motion, trustees may determine that a future meeting will be exempt from electronic means.

6. In-Camera Sessions

The *Education Act* uses the term “private” for non-public meetings. Robert’s Rules of Order uses the term “executive session” for the same distinction. The term “in-camera” is most commonly used and is synonymous with the other two terms.

The preservation and enhancement of the public’s trust in the educational system is an important priority of the board. The board believes that public trust is preserved by conducting open board meetings. Notwithstanding this belief, occasionally matters of unusual sensitivity must be discussed in private and require the board to hold an in-camera meeting excluding the public.

- 6.1 The board may, by motion, hold a meeting or part of a meeting in private. Such motions shall be recorded in the minutes of the board and shall specify those individuals eligible to attend in addition to trustees and the superintendent.
- 6.2 The board may convene in-camera only to discuss matters including:
 - 6.2.1 Security of property,
 - 6.2.2 Personal information,
 - 6.2.2.1 Students,
 - 6.2.2.2 Employees,
 - 6.2.3 Matters relating to negotiations,
 - 6.2.4 Acquisition/disposal of real property,
 - 6.2.5 Litigation brought by or against the board,

- 6.2.6 Other topics that a majority of the trustees' present are of the opinion that it is in the public interest to be held in private.
- 6.3 When the board passes a motion to move the meeting in-camera it shall be private. The board shall only discuss the matter(s) that gave rise to the motion to move the meeting in-camera. Board members and other persons attending the session shall maintain confidentiality and shall not disclose the details of the discussion at such sessions.
- 6.4 The board shall, during the in-camera session, adopt only such motion as is required to re-convene the board in an open, public meeting.

7. Agenda for Regular Meetings

The Board Chair is responsible for preparing an agenda for board meetings as per Policy 5 Role of the Board Chair.

- 7.1 The order of business at a regular meeting shall generally be as follows:
 - 7.1.1 **Call to Order**
 - 7.1.2 **Approval of Consent Agenda** (*consent agenda includes procedural and fiduciary items that are presented for information. Should any trustee require clarification on an item, they would move to have item removed from consent agenda and placed on regular agenda.*)
 - 7.1.3 **Procedural Items** (*Review and Adoption of the Regular Agenda;*)
 - 7.1.4 **Strategic Items** (*items which require action or a board motion to be taken but do not need significant discussion. Trustee may request additional information and have strategic item moved to a Generative Item at a future meeting.*)
 - 7.1.5 **Generative Items** (*items which require significant discussion before a motion or action be made. Also includes presentations and delegations.*)
 - 7.1.6 **Fiduciary Items** (*Substantive Motions; In-Camera discussions, Financial Reports, Committee and Trustee School Reports, Trustee Calendar and Workplan, Staffing and Executive Reports, Policy and Correspondence. Unless discussion/action/clarification is required, these items would be dealt with in the Consent Agenda.*)
 - 7.1.7 **Items Removed from the Consent Agenda**
 - 7.1.8 **Adjournment**

Items scheduled for a specific time shall be clearly identified on the agenda.

Items on the agenda shall generally be arranged in an order that will provide efficiency in the consideration of issues.
- 7.2 The agenda will be supported electronically by copies of letters, reports, contracts and other materials as are pertinent to the business that will come before the board and will be of value to the board in the performance of its duties. A recommendation on action items may be included at the superintendent's or designates discretion.

- 7.3 Items may be placed on the agenda in one (1) of the following ways:
 - 7.3.1 By notifying the Board Chair or Vice Chair at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the board meeting.
 - 7.3.2 By motion at the previous meeting of the board.
 - 7.3.3 As a request from a committee of the board.
 - 7.3.4 Issues that require board action may arise after the agenda has been prepared. The Board Chair, at the beginning of the meeting, shall ask for additions to and/or deletions from the agenda prior to agenda approval. Changes to the agenda to accommodate truly emergent items may be made by a majority of those present.
- 7.4 The electronic agenda package, containing the agenda and supporting information, will be provided to each trustee three (3) calendar days prior to the board meeting. Subsequently, information may be provided at the meeting; and further, the superintendent shall advise the Board Chair regarding the emergent nature of such information.
- 7.5 The list of agenda items shall be available on the division website for a minimum of one (1) year.

8. Minutes for Regular or Special Meetings

The board shall maintain and preserve by means of minutes a record of its proceedings and motions.

- 8.1 The minutes shall record:
 - 8.1.1 Date, time and place of meeting,
 - 8.1.2 Type of meeting,
 - 8.1.3 Name of presiding officer,
 - 8.1.4 Names of those trustees and senior administration in attendance,
 - 8.1.5 Approval of preceding minutes,
 - 8.1.6 All motions, including the board's disposition of the same, placed before the board, are to be entered in full,
 - 8.1.7 Names of persons making the motions,
 - 8.1.8 A brief summary of the topic of discussion,
 - 8.1.9 Points of order and appeals,
 - 8.1.10 Appointments,
 - 8.1.11 Receipt of reports of committees,
 - 8.1.12 Recording of the vote on all motions,
 - 8.1.13 Trustee declaration of conflict of interest pursuant to the *Education Act*,
 - 8.1.14 Departure and re-entry times of trustees, and
 - 8.1.15 The time of adjournment.

- 8.2 The minutes shall:
 - 8.2.1 Be prepared as directed by the superintendent or designate,
 - 8.2.2 Be reviewed by the superintendent or designate prior to submission to the board,
 - 8.2.3 Be considered an unofficial record of proceedings until such time as adopted by a motion of the board; and
 - 8.2.4 Upon adoption by the board, be deemed to be the official and sole record of the board's business.
- 8.3 The Superintendent or designate shall ensure, upon acceptance by the board, that appropriate initials are affixed to each page of the minutes, and that appropriate signatures are affixed to the last page of the minutes.
- 8.4 The Superintendent or designate will establish and maintain a file of all board minutes.
- 8.5 As part of its ongoing effort to keep staff and the public fully informed concerning its affairs and actions, the board expects the superintendent or designate to institute and maintain effective and appropriate procedures for the prompt dissemination of information about decisions made at all board meetings.
- 8.6 The approved minutes of a regular or special meeting shall be available on the division website as soon as possible following approval. The superintendent or designate is responsible to distribute and post the approved minutes.

9. Motions

9.1 Discussion on Motions

The custom of addressing comments to the Board Chair is to be followed by all persons in attendance.

An agenda item or a recommendation from administration must generally be placed before the board prior to any discussion taking place on an issue. The Board Chair may allow for every trustee to speak to a recommendation at least once before a motion is made.

Once a motion is before the board and until it is passed or defeated, all speakers shall confine their remarks to the motion or to the information pertinent to the motion. Motions may be submitted by any trustee, including the Board Chair and no seconder is required

9.2 Speaking to the Motion

The mover of a motion first, and every trustee shall have an opportunity to speak to the motion.

As a general guide, a trustee is not to speak longer than five (5) minutes on any motion. The Board Chair has the responsibility to limit the discussion by a trustee when such a discussion is repetitive or digresses from the topic at hand.

No one shall interrupt a speaker, unless it is to ask for important clarification of the speaker's remarks, and any such interruption shall not be permitted without permission of the Board Chair.

When a trustee arrives at the meeting after a motion is before the board and prior to taking a vote, the trustee may request further discussion prior to the vote. The Board Chair shall rule on further discussion.

9.3 Reading of the Motion

A trustee may require the motion under discussion to be read at any time during the debate, except when a trustee is speaking.

9.4 Required Votes

The Board Chair, and all trustees present, unless excused by motion of the board or by the provisions of the *Education Act*, shall vote on each question.

Each question shall be decided by a majority of the votes of those trustees present. A simple majority of a quorum of the board will decide in favour of the question. In the case of an equality of votes, the question is defeated. A vote on a question shall be taken by open vote, expressed by show of hands, except votes to elect the Board Chair or Vice-Chair. If one or more trustees request a recorded vote, the recording officer must record each trustee's name and their vote in the minutes. Votes by trustees attending by electronic means may be asked individually to announce their name and vote.

9.5 Debate

In all debate, any matter of procedure in dispute shall be settled, if possible, by reference to Robert's Rules of Order. If this reference is inadequate, procedure may be determined by motion supported by the majority of trustees in attendance.

10. Delegations at Board Meetings

It is the board's intention to hear the views and receive stakeholder input on educational matters. Nevertheless, in order for governance of the division to be effective, it is expected that appropriate channels will be followed in presenting information or concerns to the board including following the dispute resolution process. To facilitate this, the following procedures have been established for receiving delegations.

10.1 Groups or individuals who wish to appear before the board to make a presentation to or a request of the board will first discuss the request with the Superintendent of Schools or a designate. This provides the presenter an opportunity to clarify their understanding of division practices related to the presentation topic and determine what other assistance may be available through the administration.

10.2 If after meeting with the administration an appearance before the board is still desired, the delegation must make their request in writing to the Superintendent of Schools at least two weeks in advance of the preferred meeting at which they wish to appear. Notwithstanding the notice, the Superintendent of Schools may consider a request to waive the timelines if circumstances warrant; for example, if the board will be making a decision on the matter before the delegation is scheduled to present to board.

10.3 The board reserves the right to determine whether the delegation will be heard, and if so, whether it will be heard by the board or by a committee of the board. For matters clearly within the practice and mandate of the board, the board office in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools and Board Chair will make appropriate arrangements for the delegation to be heard.

- 10.4 Written materials of the information to be presented the delegation wishes to be considered by the board must be submitted to the board office at least five days prior to the meeting. The notice and the brief will be provided to each trustee with the notice of meeting at which the delegation is to appear.
- 10.5 In cases where a concern pertains to board policy or any other matter directly under the auspices of the board, the matter may be referred to the board through the channels outlined below.
 - 10.5.1 In cases where a concern pertains directly to a matter under the auspices of a committee of the board, the committee shall hear the presentation before the matter proceeds to the board.
 - 10.5.2 Where the matter relates to the administrative practices of the division or any of its schools or services, the matter shall not proceed to the board until all other avenues have failed to resolve the issue, as set out in the board policies.
- 10.6 A delegation may be permitted to make a presentation to the board or committee of the board. The procedure outlined below for scheduling delegations will be followed.
 - 10.6.1 Scheduling of representations to the board or committees shall be through the office of the superintendent or designate.
 - 10.6.2 Committees of the board or the board will try to accommodate an appointment time acceptable to the representative.
 - 10.6.3 Normally presentations are to be restricted to less than fifteen (15) minutes and may be followed by questions and discussion for clarification.
 - 10.6.4 Persons making representations are not to expect immediate disposition of their concern. The board or the committee will normally consider the matter later in the meeting and may arrange for further reviews before any decision is made.

11. Audio/Video Recording Devices

- 11.1 The board may record public meetings and make them available to the public.
- 11.2 Recordings will ordinarily be kept for one year; from the end of the fiscal year, however, the board by motion, may retain recordings for a longer period of time.

12. Board Governance Budget and Trustee Compensation

The board recognizes that trustees are entitled to some compensation for time and expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. The board also believes that as elected representatives of their community and advocates for children and education, trustee professional development is a valuable and necessary component of trusteeship. The board believes that the board's budget must be set, monitored and publicly reported as are all division budgets.

12.1 Board Governance Budget

- 12.1.1 The divisional fiscal year is September 1st to August 31st. Decisions made in the development of the board governance budget during spring budget planning sessions will take effect at the beginning of the next fiscal year.
- 12.1.2 The budget allocated to board governance is not to be exceeded.

- 12.1.3 During the budget year, amendments to the specific allocations within the approved board governance budget may be made after consideration and approval by the board. The governance budget will cover trustee compensation and expenses, board functions, board directed activities and board elections.
- 12.1.4 The board may, by motion, adjust Policy 7 Appendix B Trustee Remuneration and Expenses in alignment with the budget allocated to board governance.

12.2 Trustee Compensation and Expenses

- 12.2.1 Trustee remuneration and expenses will follow Board Policy 7 - Appendix B Trustee Remuneration and Expenses (DRAFT) and payment will be issued in accordance with a published schedule of dates.
- 12.2.2 Trustee expense claims shall be submitted electronically, via the division financial software and within the month that the expenses are incurred. Approval shall follow the process of which the Chair approves for the Vice Chair and all trustees and that the Vice Chair approves for the Chair. Unusual expenses will require pre-approval by the Chair or Vice Chair and will be reimbursed with the submission of receipts.
- 12.2.3 Trustees will be enrolled in the division benefit plan as eligible.
- 12.2.4 Travel time to attend meetings is to be included in the time calculations for meetings.
- 12.2.5 Unless other arrangements are made, the superintendent or designate will handle registration and accommodation bookings. Otherwise, trustees shall be reimbursed for registration, transportation, accommodation, meals and other personal expenses, as per Board Policy 7 - Appendix B Trustee Remuneration and Expenses (NEW). Alcohol is not a reimbursable expense.
- 12.2.6 Expense funds are to be used prudently and responsibly, with a focus on accountability and transparency
- 12.2.7 When a personal vehicle is used, mileage shall be paid on a “per kilometer” basis from the trustee’s residence to the meeting location and return for all authorized activities as per Board Policy 7 - Appendix B Trustee Remuneration and Expenses (NEW). Carpooling and use of divisional vehicles are encouraged when possible.
- 12.2.8 Individual trustee remuneration will be reported annually in the division’s audited financial statements.

12.3 Trustee Development

- 12.3.1 Annual trustee professional development and conference attendance is decided during the development of the board governance budget during spring budget planning sessions
- 12.3.2 Board Policy 7 - Appendix B Trustee Remuneration and Expenses (NEW) will be updated accordingly
- 12.3.3 A brief report on each conference or workshop attended will be provided to the board.

13. Trustee Conflict of Interest

The trustee is directly responsible to the electorate of the division and to the board.

Upon election to office and annually thereafter, the trustee must complete a disclosure of personal interest statement and accept a position of public trust. The trustee is expected to act in a manner which will enhance the trust accorded the trustee, and through the trustee, the trust accorded to the board.

The board is of the firm conviction that its ability to discharge its obligations is dependent upon the trust and confidence of the electorate in its board and in its trustee members. Therefore, the board believes in the requirement to declare conflict of interest.

- 13.1 The trustee is expected to be conversant with the relevant sections of the *Education Act*.
- 13.2 The trustee is responsible for declaring themselves to be in possible conflict of interest.
 - 13.2.1 The trustee shall make such declaration in open meeting prior to board or committee discussion of the subject matter which may place the trustee in conflict of interest.
 - 13.2.2 Following the declaration of conflict of interest by a trustee, all debate and action shall cease until the trustee has left the room
- 13.3 It shall be the responsibility of the trustee in conflict to absent themselves from the meeting in accordance with the requirements of the *Education Act* and ensure that their declaration and absence is properly recorded within the minutes.
- 13.4 The recording secretary will record in the minutes:
 - 13.4.1 The trustee's declaration,
 - 13.4.2 That the trustee left the room in which the meeting was held and the trustee's abstention from the debate and the vote.

14. Board Self-Evaluation

The board self-evaluation process shall be undertaken annually to reinforce alignment of purpose except in the year of a general election.

Adopted/Revised: JUN 2016/MAR 2017/MAR 2018/SEPT 2018/NOV 2019/NOV 2020/APR 2022/NOV 2024

Legal Reference: Section 7, 53, 64, 65, 73, 74, 75, 76, 85, 86, 87, 88, 112, 123, 137, 144 *Education Act*
Local Authorities Elections Act
Income Tax Act (Canada)