

POLICY 7 – BOARD OPERATIONS

BACKGROUND

The Board believes that its ability to fulfill its obligations in an efficient and effective manner is dependent upon the development and implementation of a sound organizational design. In order to discharge its responsibilities to the electorate of the Division, the Board shall hold meetings as often as is necessary. A quorum of the Board is a majority of the Trustees that must be present for every duly constituted meeting. According to Section 7(1) of the *Board Procedures Regulation*, no act or proceeding of a Board is binding unless it is adopted at a meeting at which a quorum of the Board is present.

The Board adopts and reviews Policies so that the business of the Board can be conducted in an orderly and efficient manner.

The Board believes that its 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 should be conducted in public to the greatest extent possible.

The Board believes there are times when public interest is best served by private discussion of specific issues at a closed sessions. The Board further believes public interest can be enhanced by having members of the public make presentations at Board meetings.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

An organizational meeting of the Board shall be held annually, and no later than two weeks following the date the statement of results of an election are announced or posted. The Superintendent or his/her designate will give notice of the Organizational Meeting to each Trustee as if it were a special meeting.

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.

The Superintendent shall act as Chair of the meeting for the purpose of the election of the Board Chair. Upon election, the Board Chair shall preside over the remainder of the Organizational Meeting. The Board Chair shall be elected to serve during the pleasure of the Board, for a period of one year.

The organizational meeting shall include but not be restricted to the following:

- Elect a Board Vice-Chair;
- Establish a schedule (date, time and place) for regular meetings, and any additional required meetings;
- Create such standing committees of the Board as are deemed appropriate, and appoint members as referred to in *Policy 8 – Committees of the Board*;
- Appoint Board representatives to the various Boards or committees of organizations or agencies where the Board has regular representation, as appropriate; and

- Review Board member conflict of interest stipulations and determine any disclosure of information requirements annually.

REGULAR MEETINGS

In alignment with *Robert's Rules of Order*, the Board shall establish its schedule for regular meetings at the annual Organizational Meeting.

- Unless otherwise specified by the Board Chair or designate, all meetings will ordinarily be held at the Division Board Office in Hanna.
- Notwithstanding the initial schedule, the Board may, by resolution (in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order*), alter the meeting schedule as it deems appropriate.
- Individual Trustees may attend regular and/or special meetings via video conferencing, provided such attendance is prearranged through the Chair.
- While the Board may opt to give notice of regular meetings, it is not strictly required under Section 2(3) of Alberta Regulation 82/2019 (Board Procedures Regulation).

ADVOCACY AND ACTION MEETINGS

Advocacy and Action Meetings are scheduled throughout the year as Committee of the Whole sessions to provide the Board with dedicated time to examine strategic matters, emerging priorities, advocacy initiatives, and other issues requiring focused discussion.

These meetings are closed to the public to support candid discussion, information sharing, planning, and the development of potential courses of action. An agenda identifying the matters to be discussed will be made available to the public in advance of each meeting.

Advocacy and Action Meetings are intended for discussion, direction-setting, and preparation only. No Board decisions, resolutions, or other formal actions will be made during these meetings. Any matter requiring a decision of the Board must be brought forward to a duly constituted public Board meeting for consideration and decision.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

Occasionally, unanticipated or emergent issues require immediate Board attention and/or action.

Special meetings for the Board of Trustees may be held at the discretion of the Board as provided under Section 3 of Alberta Regulation 82/2019, *Board Procedures Regulation*.

The nature of the business to be transacted must be clearly specified in the notice of the meeting. Unless all Trustees are present at the special meeting, no other business may be transacted. Items can be added to the agenda only by the unanimous consent of the entire Board.

CLOSED SESSIONS

The Board may, by resolution, schedule a closed session at a time or place agreeable to the Board or recess a meeting in progress for the purpose of meeting in-camera. Such

resolutions shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board and shall specify those individuals eligible to attend in addition to Trustees and the Superintendent. The reason for the closed session shall be stated prior to its approval and shall be limited to discussion pertaining to the following:

- Individual Trustees, employees or students.
- Collective bargaining.
- Legal actions involving the Board.
- Contract negotiations related to items such as the sale or purchase of real estate, goods or services.
- Other topics that a majority of the Trustees present feel should be held in private, in the public interest.
- ASBA.

Such sessions shall be closed to the public and media. The Board shall only discuss the matters that gave rise to the closed meeting. Closed sessions shall be strictly confidential. Discussion and debate shall not be repeated outside the meeting.

The Board shall, during the closed session, adopt only such resolution as is required to re-convene the Board in an open, public meeting.

AGENDA FOR REGULAR MEETINGS

The Board Chair is responsible for establishing the agenda for Board Meetings, in consultation with the Board Vice-Chair and the Superintendent.

The agenda will be supported by copies of letters, reports, contracts and other materials as are pertinent to the business which will come before the Board and will be of value to the Board in the performance of its duties.

In accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, items may be placed on the agenda in the following ways:

- **Advance Notice** – By notifying the Board Chair, Board Vice-Chair, or Superintendent at least eight days prior to the Board meeting.
- **Notice of Motion** – By giving notice of motion at the previous Board meeting.
- **Committee Requests** – By submission from a Board committee.

If issues requiring Board action arise after the agenda is prepared, the Chair will, at the start of the meeting, invite additions or deletions before the agenda is approved. Changes to the agenda may then be adopted by a majority vote of those present, in alignment with Robert's Rules of Order.

MINUTES

The Board shall maintain and preserve by means of minutes a record of its proceedings and resolutions.

RECORDING DEVICES

The Board expects that anyone wanting to use a recording device at a public Board meeting shall obtain prior approval by the Board Chair.

MEETINGS BY ELECTRONIC MEANS

In accordance with Section 5 of the Board Procedures Regulation, and consistent with *Robert's Rules of Order*, the Board may hold meetings through electronic means, provided that the technology allows simultaneous aural communication. Specifically, each Trustee participating electronically must be able to hear all other Trustees (and be heard by them), and members of the public in attendance must be able to hear every Trustee's contributions.

Trustees who participate in such electronic meetings are deemed to be present for all procedural and voting purposes. However, when a possible first reading of a bylaw is on the agenda, each Trustee must have access to the bylaw in writing (either in printed or electronic form). If this requirement cannot be met, or if the Board Chair determines that an individual Trustee's electronic attendance does not satisfy the conditions set out by Section 6(3) of the Board Procedures Regulation, the Board Chair may refuse to allow that Trustee to join the meeting electronically, in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order* and applicable Board procedures.

DELEGATIONS TO BOARD MEETINGS

The Board believes that it has the responsibility to encourage members of the public to bring concerns relating to educational matters to regular meetings of the Board. The Board also believes it has a responsibility to conduct regular public meetings of the Board in an orderly and efficient fashion. The Board will receive representations and delegations on any subject pertinent to Board business provided the item has been placed on the agenda.

TRUSTEE CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The trustee is directly responsible to the electorate of the Division and to the Board. Upon election to office, 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 confidence the residents of the Division place in the Board and in its trustee members.

Legal Reference: Sections 33, 34, 51, 53, 64, 65, 66, 67, 69, 73 and 75, *Education Act*
Alberta Regulation 82/2019, *Board Procedures Regulation*
Alberta Regulation 91/2019, *Petitions and Public Notices Regulation*

Reviewed: June 2015
June 2022

Revised: December 2009
February 2010
December 2010
February 2011
March 2011
September 2011
October 2012

May 2013
December 2013
November 2014
October 2017
January 2018
February 2018
August 2019
November 2019
March 2021

Approved: August 2022

Revised: February 2023
November 2023
February 2025
May 2026
September 2026