

POLICY 7

BOARD OPERATIONS

In order to discharge its responsibilities to the electorate of the Division, the Board shall hold meetings as often as is 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 that the business of the Board can be conducted in an orderly and efficient manner.

1. Organizational Meeting

An organizational meeting of the Board shall be held annually, and no later than four weeks following Election Day when there has been a general election. The Secretary-Treasurer 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 Secretary-Treasurer 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 election of the Board Chair shall be for a period of one year.

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

Elect a 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;

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.

2. Regular Meetings

2.1. There is no meeting in July. An organizational meeting followed by a regular meeting is held in August in a non-election year. All meetings will ordinarily be held in the Wolf Creek Public Schools Board office in Ponoka.

2.2. Notwithstanding the schedule noted in 1.2, the Board may, by resolution, alter the schedule in such manner as it deems appropriate.

3. Special Meetings

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

Special meetings of the Board may be held from time to time as provided for under section 67 of the School Act. These are public meetings.

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.

4. In-Camera Sessions

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 do require the Board to hold closed sessions.

Such sessions shall be convened only by proper resolution of the Board. Such resolutions shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board and shall specify those individuals eligible to attend. The reason for the In-Camera session shall be stated prior to its approval and shall be limited to discussion pertaining to the following stated reasons:

- 4.1. Individual students;
- 4.2. Individual employees;
- 4.3. Collective bargaining issues;
- 4.4. Litigation issues;
- 4.5. Acquisition/disposal of property; and
- 4.6. Other topics that a majority of the trustees present feel should be held in private, for the public interest.

Such sessions shall be closed to the public and press. The Board shall only discuss the matter which gave rise to the closed meeting. Board members and other persons attending the session are honor bound not to disclose the details of discussion at such sessions.

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

5. Agenda for Regular Meetings

The Board Chair, in consultation with the Vice-Chair and the Superintendent and his/her designate(s), is responsible for establishing the agenda for Board Meetings.

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 in the performance of its duties.

Items may be placed on the agenda in one of the following ways:

- 5.1. By notifying the Superintendent or Board Chair at least six days prior to the Board meeting.
- 5.2. By notice of motion at a previous meeting of the Board.
- 5.3. Request from a committee of the Board.
- 5.4. A quorum of the Board, prior to the approval of the agenda, may request that the Board Chair add an item.

The agenda package, containing the agenda and supporting information, will be distributed to each trustee at least three days in advance of regular Board meetings.

The list of agenda items shall be posted in the Divisional Office, in a place readily accessible to the general public. Any elector may inspect the agenda and request a copy.

Emergent 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 may be made by a majority of those present.

The Board will follow the order of business set by the agenda unless the order is altered or new items are added by agreement of the Board.

During the course of the Board meeting, the majority of trustees present may request that the Board Chair place items before the Board for discussion. The Board may take action on such items.

6. Minutes

The Board shall maintain a record of all proceedings of the Board and committees of the Board.

- 6.1. The minutes shall record:
 - 6.1.1. A brief summary of the circumstances which gave rise to the matter being debated by the Board; and
 - 6.1.2. All resolutions, including the Board's disposition of the same, placed before the Board.
- 6.2. The minutes shall:

- 6.2.1. Be prepared as directed by the Superintendent;
 - 6.2.2. Be reviewed by the Superintendent prior to submission to the Board;
 - 6.2.3. Be considered an unofficial record of proceedings until such time as adopted by a resolution of the Board; and
 - 6.2.4. Upon adoption by the Board, be deemed to be the official and sole record of the Board's business.
- 6.3. The Superintendent shall ensure, upon acceptance by the Board, that appropriate initials are appended to each page of the minutes, and that appropriate signatures and the corporate seal of the jurisdiction are affixed to the concluding page of the minutes.
- 6.4. The Superintendent shall establish a codification system for resolutions determined by the Board which will:
 - 6.4.1. Provide for ready identification as to the meeting at which it was considered;
 - 6.4.2. Provide for cross-referencing with resolutions of similar nature adopted by the Board at previous meetings; and
 - 6.4.3. Establish and maintain a file of all Board minutes.
- 6.5. All committees of the Board, unless otherwise directed, shall prepare and submit minutes to the Board.
- 6.6. Upon adoption by the Board, the minutes shall be open to public scrutiny at the Board office.
- 6.7. Copies of the minutes adopted by the Board shall be distributed to all trustees, schools, and other destinations; including the jurisdiction's website as soon as possible following acceptance by the Board.
- 6.8. The minutes shall record:
 - 6.8.1. Date, time and place of meeting,
 - 6.8.2. Type of meeting (regular, special or committee),
 - 6.8.3. Name of presiding officer,
 - 6.8.4. Names of those trustees and administration in attendance,
 - 6.8.5. Approval of preceding minutes,
 - 6.8.6. All main motions, whether adopted or lost, should be entered in full,
 - 6.8.7. Names of persons making the motion,
 - 6.8.8. Points of order and appeals,
 - 6.8.9. Appointments,
 - 6.8.10. Summarized reports of committees,
 - 6.8.11. Recording of the vote on a motion (when requested pursuant to Section 72, The School Act), and

6.8.12. Trustee declaration pursuant to Section 80, The School Act.

7. Motions

Motions do not require a seconder, except in rare instances as described below.

7.1. Notice of Motion

The notice of motion serves the purpose of officially putting an item on the agenda of the next or future regular meeting and gives notice to all trustees of the item to be discussed. A notice of motion is not debatable and may not be voted on.

A trustee may present a notice of motion for consideration at the next regular meeting of the Board or may specify another meeting date. A trustee may also provide the Superintendent with a written notice of motion and ask that it be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting and read at the meeting. The trustee need not be present during the reading of the motion, however if the trustee is not present, a seconder is required at the meeting at which the notice is given, otherwise the item will be dropped.

7.2. Discussion on Motions

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

A motion or recommendation from Administration must be placed before the Board prior to any discussion taking place on an issue. 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.

7.3. Speaking to the Motion

The mover of a motion first and every trustee shall have an opportunity to speak to the motion before any trustee is allowed to speak a second time.

The mover of the motion is permitted to close debate on the motion.

As a general guide, a trustee should not speak longer than five 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, or where discussion takes place prior to the acceptance of a motion.

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.

Should a trustee arrive at the meeting after a motion has been made and prior to taking a vote, the trustee may request further discussion prior to the vote. The Board Chair shall rule on further discussion.

7.4. 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.

7.5. Recorded Vote

The recording secretary shall, whenever a recorded vote is requested by a trustee before the vote is taken, record in the minutes the name of the trustees who voted for or against the matter. The recording secretary shall, immediately after a vote is taken and on the request of a trustee, record in the minutes the name of that trustee and whether that trustee voted for or against the matter or abstained.

7.6. Required Votes

The Board Chair, and all trustees present, unless excused by resolution of the Board or by the provisions of the School 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 the vote to elect the Board Chair or Vice-Chair, which is by secret ballot, unless there is unanimous agreement among the trustees to use a show of hands.

7.7. 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.

8. 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.

8.1. Individuals or groups wishing to make representation to the Board:

8.1.1. Shall advise the Superintendent of the nature of the matter to be discussed with the Board; and

8.1.2. Shall be granted by the Superintendent an appointed time on the meeting agenda in which to make representation, if, in the opinion of the Board Chair and the Superintendent, the matter is pertinent to Board business.

8.2. Normally, and accepting items raised pursuant to section 4 of this policy, the following procedures will govern the conduct of the hearing:

8.2.1. The delegation may make its presentation in writing and/or orally.

- 8.2.2. The delegation shall, during its meeting with the Board, observe the rules of parliamentary decorum.
 - 8.2.3. The delegation shall be entitled to complete its presentation, preferably within fifteen (15) minutes without questioning or comments from the Board.
 - 8.2.4. Upon completion of the presentation the Chairman shall allow, for a maximum of fifteen (15) minutes trustee questions of the delegation.
 - 8.2.5. Upon completion of the question period the Chairman shall inform the delegation when the decision will be made.
- 8.3. Notwithstanding the above, the jurisdiction residents or group, may appear before the Board at a regular meeting and request placement on the agenda without prior notice. The Board will determine whether or not the delegation will be added to the agenda.

9. Trustee Compensation, Memberships and Attendance at Conferences

The Board will pay reasonable expenses in accordance with rates established from time to time detailed in Administrative Procedure 514 and per diem for representatives to attend meetings and conventions in accordance with the following guidelines. Consideration of the overall benefit to the Board will be the criteria for approving requests to attend meetings, conventions and workshops.

- 9.1. Claim round trip mileage from the residence to the Administration office, Ponoka.
- 9.2. Travelling time is to be included in the per diem charge for the meeting.
- 9.3. All meetings are to be claimed to the nearest quarter day. Up to 2 hours - 1/4 day; up to 4 hours - 1/2 day; up to 6 hours - 3/4 day and up to 8 hours - full day.
- 9.4. Evening meetings are to be claimed as half day meetings.
- 9.5. Trustees may attend and claim mileage and per diem for the following meetings:
 - 9.5.1. Regular Board meetings
 - 9.5.2. Organizational meeting
 - 9.5.3. Special Board meetings
 - 9.5.4. Meetings of committees established by the Board
 - 9.5.5. Public information meetings
 - 9.5.6. School tours
 - 9.5.7. Official opening of new/modernized schools in Wolf Creek Public Schools
 - 9.5.8. A.S.B.A. Zone 4 meetings
 - 9.5.9. Officially representing the Board at graduations and other special school functions
 - 9.5.10. School council meetings (mileage only, unless officially representing the Board)

- 9.5.11. Municipal and provincial authorities
- 9.5.12. One internal workshop day per year per trustee.
- 9.6. 9.6 Trustees may claim mileage only for the following:
- 9.6.1. Distribution of recognition pins and other Board sponsored items to staff; and
- 9.6.2. Local graduation ceremonies where the trustee is a guest but not officially representing the Board.
- 9.7. Trustees appointed to act on behalf of the Board as directors or members of associations claim mileage and per diem for meetings if they are not paid by the associations.
- 9.8. Trustees attending workshops and conventions on behalf of the Board may claim mileage and/or convention allowances.
- 9.9. Trustees attending a meeting outside Wolf Creek Public Schools starting at 9:00 am or earlier are authorized to claim ½ day per diem and one night hotel costs to travel to the meeting the evening before. The same rule will apply to trustee travel required the evening before an event where adverse weather is forecast for the day of the event.
- 9.10. Where an event is scheduled to take place for an entire day and has planned events for the evening, the trustee may claim 1.5 days per diem for the day. The trustee must attend both the day and evening sessions to be eligible to claim the full per diem.
- 9.11. Trustees may attend and claim mileage and convention allowance for the following conventions and conferences.
- Alberta School Boards Association Fall General Meeting
 - Alberta School Boards Association Spring General Meeting
 - Public School Boards Association of Alberta Fall General Meeting
 - Public School Boards Association of Alberta Spring General Meeting
- 9.12. Trustees may attend and claim mileage and convention allowance for the following conventions and conferences.
- Local ATA Convention
 - Board Retirement Evening
 - Summer Institute
 - Support Staff Conference
- 9.13. Where trustees are required to attend conferences located outside the province of Alberta the trustee is entitled to claim one day of travel prior to, and after the conference as travel days. These days are in addition to the scheduled days for the conference. The trustee may also claim meal allowances for these two days.
- 9.14. Trustees will access the most economical form of transportation available from the airport to the conference hotel and return. Rental cars may be accessed where there is a demonstrated need and should be considered for approval prior

to leaving for the conference. Note that Wolf Creek Public Schools will not be responsible for the costs of additional insurance required on rental cars.

- 9.15. Trustees may claim per diem for three days per month to be called preparation time for other duties as a trustee.
- 9.16. The Chair and Vice-Chair may claim mileage and per diem for meetings with staff to prepare agendas for Board meetings.
- 9.17. The Board Chair may claim per diem for one day per month for other duties as Chair.
- 9.18. Claims for meetings, workshops, conferences and conventions other than those noted require authorization by the Board.
- 9.19. Convention allowances will be paid for the actual number of days a trustee is required to be away from home to attend authorized conventions or conferences. Allowable days for a particular function will be clarified by trustees at a Board meeting.
- 9.20. Trustee Health Benefits: Trustees may participate in the following health benefit plans and the Board will contribute toward the premium costs at the same rates as are provided for full-time equivalent Wolf Creek Public Schools support staff as contained in the Support Staff Employee Handbooks:

Alberta School Employee Benefit Plan:

- Life insurance – Plan 2 – Coverage is provided for \$25,000 of life insurance
- Extended Health Care – Plan 1
- Dental Care – Plan 3
- Vision Care – Plan 3

Where a trustee is not eligible to receive ASEBP benefit coverage due to having reached age 70 or other reason the trustee may secure benefit coverage from an alternative source and be reimbursed for the following benefits:

- Extended Health Care
- Dental Care
- Vision Care

Reimbursement shall be based on the actual costs of the alternative benefit coverage being accessed and will be provided monthly on the basis of a submitted receipt evidencing payment by the trustee.

Reimbursement will be limited to the lesser of the following:

1. The cost of the alternative benefit coverage being accessed by the trustee multiplied by the current reimbursement rate for trustees accessing ASEBP benefit plans; or
2. The cost of current ASEBP benefits for the same category of benefits multiplied by the current reimbursement rate for trustees accessing ASEBP benefit plans.

10. Trustee Conflict of Interest

The trustee is directly responsible to the electorate. Upon election to office, the trustee assumes a position of public trust. It is the responsibility of the trustee to conduct his/her business and financial affairs in a manner which will not impair the public trust.

- 10.1. The trustee is expected to be conversant with Sections 80 to 91 of the School Act.
 - 10.2. The trustee is solely responsible for declaring himself/herself to be in possible conflict of interest.
 - 10.2.1. 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.
 - 10.3. It shall be the responsibility of the trustee in conflict to absent him/herself from the meeting in accordance with the requirements of the School Act and ensure that his/her declaration and absence is properly recorded within the minutes.
11. Board Self-Evaluation
- 11.1. The annual Board self-evaluation process will complement the Superintendent evaluation process described in the document entitled *Superintendent Evaluation Process, Criteria and Timelines*.
 - 11.2. The purpose of the Board self-evaluation is to answer the following questions:
 - 11.2.1. How well have we fulfilled each of our defined roles as a Board this past year?
 - 11.2.2. How do we perceive our interpersonal working relationships?
 - 11.2.3. How well do we receive input and how well do we communicate?
 - 11.2.4. How well have we adhered to our annual work plan?
 - 11.2.5. How would we rate our Board-Superintendent relations?
 - 11.2.6. How well have we adhered to our governance policies?
 - 11.2.7. What have we accomplished this past year? How do we know?
 - 11.3. The principles upon which the Board self-evaluation is based are as follows:
 - 11.3.1. A learning organization or a professional learning community is focused on the improvement of practice.
 - 11.3.2. A predetermined process for evaluation strengthens the governance functions and builds credibility for the Board.
 - 11.3.3. An evidence-based approach provides objectivity.
 - 11.4. The components of the Board self-evaluation are:
 - 11.4.1. Review of Board Role Performance
 - 11.4.2. Monitoring Interpersonal Working Relationships
 - 11.4.3. Monitoring Board Representation/Communication

- 11.4.4. Review of Annual Work Plan Completion
- 11.4.5. Monitoring Board-Superintendent Relations
- 11.4.6. Review of Board Motions
- 11.4.7. Review of Board Governance Policies
- 11.4.8. Creating a Positive Path Forward

Legal Reference: Section 60, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 70, 71, 72, 74, 75, 76, 80, 81, 83, 145, School Act

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