

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.

1. Elections

1.1 Wards

Within the stipulations of Ministerial Order 118/94 dated August 25, 1994, which resulted in the establishment of Black Gold Regional Division No. 18, and subsequent Ministerial Orders 003/2001, 008/2001 and 046/2006, 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 Each of the following is established as a ward of the Division:

1.1.1.1 Ward 1 – Leduc School District No. 297.

1.1.1.2 Ward 2 – Town of Devon.

1.1.1.3 Ward 3 – County of Leduc No. 25, further divided into the following electoral subdivisions:

1.1.1.3.1 Electoral Subdivision No. 1 – Town of Beaumont.

1.1.1.3.2 Electoral Subdivision No. 2 – County West.

1.1.1.3.3 Electoral Subdivision No. 3 – County Central.

1.1.1.3.4 Electoral Subdivision No. 4 – County East.

- 1.1.2 The number of trustees to be elected in each ward is as follows:
- 1.1.2.1 Two (2) trustees elected at large from Ward 1.
 - 1.1.2.2 One (1) trustee elected from Ward 2.
 - 1.1.2.3 Four (4) trustees elected from Ward 3, one (1) from each of the four (4) subdivisions.

1.1.3 All electoral subdivisions shall be as outlined in Bylaw 1-95 (Appendix A).

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

1.3 If a vacancy occurs in the membership of the Board during the three (3) years following an election, a by-election may be held, unless this vacancy occurs in the last six (6) months before the next election. If two (2) vacancies occur prior to the third year of the term of office, a by-election must be held.

2. Organizational Meeting

2.1 An Organizational Meeting of the Board shall be held annually, and no later than four (4) weeks following election day, when there has been a general election. The first official meeting of the Board following a general election shall be an Organizational Meeting.

2.2 The Superintendent or designate will give notice of the Organizational Meeting to each trustee as if it were a special meeting. The Superintendent or designate shall call the meeting to order and act as Chair of the meeting for the purpose of the election of the Board Chair.

2.3 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.

2.4 Upon election as Chair, the Board Chair shall take the oath of office and preside over the remainder of the Organizational Meeting. The Board Chair shall normally be elected for a period of one (1) year.

2.5 The organizational meeting shall, in addition:

2.5.1 Elect a Vice-Chair;

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 first meeting in September of each year.

- 3.1 All meetings will ordinarily be held in the Division Office in Nisku on a monthly basis, excepting July and August.
- 3.2 Notwithstanding the schedule established in September, the Board may, by resolution, 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 are absent from three (3) consecutive regular meetings shall:
 - 3.4.1 Obtain authorization by resolution 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.Failure to attend 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 be held without the Superintendent and/or designate(s) in attendance, unless the Superintendent's contract is being discussed.

4. Special Meetings

- 4.1 Occasionally, unanticipated or emergent issues require immediate Board attention and/or action.
- 4.2 Special meetings of the Board will only be called when the Board Chair, the majority of trustees, or the Minister is of the opinion that an issue must be dealt with before the next regular Board meeting.
- 4.3 A written notice of the special meeting including date, time, place and nature of business shall be issued to all trustees by registered mail (at least seven (7) days prior to the date of the meeting) or in person (at least two (2) days prior to the date of the meeting) unless every trustee agrees to waive in writing the requirements for notice.
- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 Special meetings of the Board shall be open to the public recognizing that specific agenda matters may be held in-camera.
- 4.6 Special meetings of the Board will not be held without the Superintendent and/or designate(s) in attendance, unless the Superintendent's contract is being discussed.

5. In-Camera Sessions

The School 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 require the Board to hold closed meetings.

5.1 The Board may, by resolution, schedule an in-camera meeting 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.

5.2 The Board may convene in-camera only to discuss matters of a sensitive nature, including:

5.2.1 Personnel

5.2.1.1 Individual students;

5.2.1.2 Individual employees;

5.2.2 Matters relating to negotiations;

5.2.3 Acquisition/disposal of real property;

5.2.4 Litigation brought by or against the Board;

5.2.5 Other topics that a majority of the trustees present feel should be held in private, in the public interest.

5.3 Such sessions shall be closed to the public and press. The Board shall only discuss the matter(s) that gave rise to the in-camera meeting. Board members and other persons attending the session shall maintain confidentiality and shall not disclose the details of the discussion at such sessions.

5.4 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.

6. Agenda for Regular Meetings

The Agenda Planning Committee is responsible for preparing an agenda for Board meetings.

6.1 The order of business at a regular meeting shall generally be as follows:

6.1.1 Call to Order

6.1.2 In-Camera Session (if necessary)

6.1.3 Approval of Agenda

6.1.4 Approval of Minutes

6.1.5 School/Student/Staff Recognition

6.1.6 Deferred Items

6.1.7 Business Arising

- 6.1.8 New Business
- 6.1.9 Policy Development
- 6.1.10 Reports
- 6.1.11 Appointments/Delegations
- 6.1.12 Information
- 6.1.13 Adjournment

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

- 6.2 The agenda will be supported 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 discretion.
- 6.3 Items may be placed on the agenda in one (1) of the following ways:
 - 6.3.1 By notifying the Board Chair or Superintendent at least six (6) calendar days prior to the Board meeting.
 - 6.3.2 By notice of motion at the previous meeting of the Board.
 - 6.3.3 As a request from a committee of the Board.
 - 6.3.4 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.
- 6.4 The 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.
- 6.5 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.
- 6.6 During the course of the Board meeting, the trustees present with unanimous consent may amend the agenda and place items before the Board for discussion. The Board may take action on such items.
- 6.7 The list of agenda items shall be posted on the Division website and be available in the Division Office. Any elector may inspect the agenda and request a copy.

7. Minutes for Regular or Special Meetings

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

- 7.1 The minutes shall record:
 - 7.1.1 Date, time and place of meeting;
 - 7.1.2 Type of meeting;

- 7.1.3 Name of presiding officer;
 - 7.1.4 Names of those trustees and senior administration in attendance;
 - 7.1.5 Approval of preceding minutes;
 - 7.1.6 All resolutions, including the Board's disposition of the same, placed before the Board, are to be entered in full;
 - 7.1.7 Names of persons making the motions;
 - 7.1.8 A brief summary of the circumstances which gave rise to the matter being debated before the Board;
 - 7.1.9 Points of order and appeals;
 - 7.1.10 Appointments;
 - 7.1.11 Receipt of reports of committees;
 - 7.1.12 Recording of the vote on all motions;
 - 7.1.13 Trustee declaration of conflict of interest pursuant to the School Act;
 - 7.1.14 Departure and re-entry times of trustees and administration; and
 - 7.1.15 The time of adjournment.
- 7.2 The minutes shall:
- 7.2.1 Be prepared as directed by the Superintendent;
 - 7.2.2 Be reviewed by the Superintendent prior to submission to the Board;
 - 7.2.3 Be considered an unofficial record of proceedings until such time as adopted by a resolution of the Board; and
 - 7.2.4 Upon adoption by the Board, be deemed to be the official and sole record of the Board's business.
- 7.3 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.
- 7.4 The Superintendent or designate will establish and maintain a file of all Board minutes.
- 7.5 As part of its ongoing effort to keep staff and the public fully informed concerning its affairs and actions, the Board expects the Superintendent to institute and maintain effective and appropriate procedures for the prompt dissemination of information about decisions made at all Board meetings.
- 7.6 The approved minutes of a regular or special meeting shall be posted to the website as soon as possible following approval. The Superintendent or designate is responsible to distribute and post the approved minutes.
8. Motions
- Motions do not require a seconder.
- 8.1 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.

8.2 Discussion on Motions

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

A Board motion or a recommendation from administration must generally 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. Motions may be submitted by any trustee, including the Board Chair.

8.3 Speaking to the Motion

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

The Board Chair will normally speak just prior to the last speaker who will be the mover of the motion.

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

When a trustee arrives 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.

8.4 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.

8.5 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 votes to elect the Board Chair or Vice-Chair, or to appoint committee members or Board representatives, which are by secret ballot.

8.6 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.

9. Delegations at Board Meetings

The Board believes in an open and transparent process to hear public delegations.

It is important that presentations occur within set guidelines and in accordance with prescribed procedures. Members of the public attending an open Board meeting as an approved delegation will be given an opportunity to ask questions of the Board with respect to the subject of the delegation.

- 9.1 Under usual circumstances a written request for a meeting must be received by the Superintendent or designate seven (7) days in advance of the scheduled Board meeting date. The request will outline the essential component of the presentation and will indicate the name(s) of the main presenter(s).
- 9.2 The Agenda Planning Committee, when setting the agenda for each Board meeting together, will accept or reject a request for a meeting with the Board. If a request is accepted, they will determine a date and time for the delegation to meet with the Board. A delegation will usually be allotted fifteen (15) minutes for its presentation.
 - 9.2.1 In an emergent situation these actions may be undertaken by the Superintendent and/or the Board Chair.
- 9.3 During the time of a presentation trustees may ask questions but will not express judgments concerning issue(s) raised.
- 9.4 Following a presentation to the Board, any discussions held will be in accordance to appropriate rules and regulation.
- 9.5 Any decision or other significant follow-up communication will be transmitted in writing by the Board/designate to the designated spokesperson.
- 9.6 Normally the Board will not meet with an individual or a group of concerned individuals unless the individual or group has attempted first of all to resolve the difficulty through contact with the Superintendent.
- 9.7 The Board prefers addressing concerns dealing with individual students at the level closest to the student. The Board favours a similar approach in dealing with a concern expressed by a group of parents or other individuals.

10. Audio/Video Recording Devices

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

11. Trustee Compensation and Expenses

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. Entitlements will normally be established at the next Board meeting following the

Organizational Meeting date. In addition, the Board believes that the Board's budget must be set, monitored and publicly reported as are all Division budgets.

11.1 Budget

The Board governance budget will be developed and approved during the annual budget process subject to the following considerations:

- 11.1.1 The budget will specify allocations for the Board Chair, Vice-Chair and the trustees and general Board expenses.
- 11.1.2 The budgets allocated to the Board Chair, Vice-Chair and the trustees will cover trustee honoraria, per diems and expenses and are not to be exceeded.
- 11.1.3 The budget allocated to general Board expense will cover Board functions, Board directed activities and Board elections.
- 11.1.4 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.

11.2 Honoraria

Trustee compensation shall include a basic honoraria for trustees which provides for all services rendered by a trustee to attend:

- 11.2.1 Regular Board meetings.
- 11.2.2 Special Board meetings.
- 11.2.3 Board planning sessions.
- 11.2.4 Meetings of committees of the Board.
- 11.2.5 Attendance at meetings held by other organizations to which the Board appoints a representative.
- 11.2.6 ASBA and PSBAA general meetings.
- 11.2.7 AISI Conference.
- 11.2.8 ASBA Zone 2/3 meetings.
- 11.2.9 Meetings with Division staff and tours of facilities as planned by the Board.
- 11.2.10 Board sponsored events.
- 11.2.11 Attendance at graduation and awards exercises.
- 11.2.12 Attendance at extra-curricular school activities.
- 11.2.13 School Council and COSC meetings.
- 11.2.14 Other Division meetings on behalf of the Board.
- 11.2.15 Attendance at retirement functions.
- 11.2.16 Individual meetings with members of the public.
- 11.2.17 Optional attendance at concerts, plays and/or school functions.
- 11.2.18 Any other community involvement.

The Board shall pay the Chair and Vice-Chair honoraria in addition to the regular trustee honorarium.

11.3 Per Diem Allowance

Funds for trustee compensation shall be budgeted for on an annual basis to cover the following:

11.3.1 Meetings called by the Minister or by Alberta Education officials.

Trustees attending these meetings may claim per diems. Most often, this will involve the Board Chair or designate.

11.4 Professional Development

11.4.1 A separate budget amount will be established each year for each trustee to attend conferences or workshops of choice. This budget may be used for per diem, travel, meals, accommodation, and registration costs. This budget amount may be accumulated to a maximum of three (3) years.

11.4.2 The Superintendent or designate will maintain an ongoing record of expenditures for each trustee.

11.4.3 A brief report on each conference or workshop attended will be filed with the Board.

11.5 Reimbursement of Personal Expenses

Expense funds are to be used prudently and responsibly, with a focus on accountability and transparency.

11.5.1 Each trustee shall be reimbursed for registration, transportation, accommodation, meals and other personal expenses as per expense reimbursement rates in effect. Alcohol is not a reimbursable expense.

11.5.2 The reimbursement of personal expenses will, for the purposes of the Income Tax Act, be excluded from taxable income.

11.5.3 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. Taxis are the preferred method of ground transportation when the use of a personal vehicle is not feasible.

11.5.4 When the activity lasts more than one (1) day and the participant chooses to travel each day, the total daily claim for mileage cannot exceed the rate payable for standard room accommodation.

11.5.5 Travel costs shall be paid at the lesser of mileage or economy airfare, which is the booking class for all flights.

11.6 General Expense Allowance

11.6.1 One third (1/3) of the annual total honorarium (remuneration) paid to trustees shall be paid as a General Expense Allowance. This allowance is paid on a non-accountable basis to a trustee and is received by virtue of the position.

- 11.6.2 The General Expense Allowances will, for the purposes of the Income Tax Act, be excluded from taxable income.
- 11.7 Monthly pay claims shall be given to the Board Chair by the third working day of the following month. Detailed receipts are required. Payment will be issued in accordance with a published schedule of dates. If no pay claim is submitted, in addition to the basic honorarium, a minimum monthly amount will be paid out in order to cover benefit deductions.
- 11.8 If a pattern of non-attendance is observed, it will be addressed through the process defined in Policy 4 Appendix – Trustee Code of Conduct Sanctions. A per diem deduction may be made for non-attendance at meetings covered by the basic honorarium.
- 11.9 Individual trustee remuneration will be reported annually in the Division's audited financial statements.

12. 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.

- 12.1 The trustee is expected to be conversant with the relevant sections of the School Act.
- 12.2 The trustee is responsible for declaring him/herself to be in possible conflict of interest.
 - 12.2.1 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.
 - 12.2.2 Following the declaration of conflict of interest by a trustee, all debate and action shall cease until the trustee has left the room.
- 12.3 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.
- 12.4 The recording secretary will record in the minutes:
 - 12.4.1 The trustee's declaration;
 - 12.4.2 The trustee's abstention from the debate and the vote; and
 - 12.4.3 That the trustee left the room in which the meeting was held.

13. Board Self-Evaluation

The Board self-evaluation process shall be undertaken annually to reinforce alignment of purpose.

Legal Reference: Section 60, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 80, 81, 82, 83, 145, 208, 210, 261, 262 School Act
Local Authorities Elections Act
Income Tax Act (Canada)