

POLICY 7

BOARD OPERATIONS

The Board believes that its 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 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.

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.

At the request of a Board member, in situations where it is not possible to attend a regularly scheduled or special meeting of the Board due to inclement weather, poor road conditions, and/or urgent personal and/or professional reasons, the Board Chair, or designate, shall approve participation by electronic means in a duly constituted Board meeting provided participation occurs within the geographical boundaries of the Northern Lights School Division No. 69 of the Board or its Committee.

When authorized, the Board member who participates in a meeting by electronic means is considered to be present at the meeting and will be recorded as in attendance at the meeting.

The Board believes 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.

At the request of a member of the public, including news media, the board will provide a reasonable opportunity for that member of the public to observe a Regular Board meeting via electronic means from an Northern Lights School Division No. 69 (NLS) designated facility. Access to Regular Board meetings using electronic means will be restricted to the public portions of the meetings, and will not include "in-camera" sessions. Members of the public accessing Regular Board meetings using electronic means will be expected to comply with the guidelines laid out in this Policy, including Section 9 – Delegation to Board Meetings and Section 10 – Recording Devices.

The Board further believes public interest can be enhanced by having members of the public make presentations at Board meetings.

The Board also believes that public forums dealing with specific educational topics and held on a regular basis in various communities within the Division can enhance communications and effectiveness of the Board.

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 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 for a period of one year.

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

- 1.1. Elect a vice-chair;
- 1.2. Establish or reaffirm a schedule (date, time and place) for regular meetings, and any additional required meetings;
- 1.3. Create such standing committees of the Board as are deemed appropriate, and appoint members;
- 1.4. Appoint Board representatives to the various Boards or committees of organizations or agencies where the Board has regular representation, as appropriate;
- 1.5. Approve trustee compensation rates; and
- 1.6. Review Board member conflict of interest stipulations and determine any disclosure of information requirements.

2. Regular Meetings

Regular Board meetings shall be as established at the annual organizational meeting.

All meetings will ordinarily be held in the Division Board office in Bonnyville.

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

3. Committee of the Whole

Committee of the Whole meetings shall be established at the annual organizational meeting and as required.

All meetings will ordinarily be held in the Division Board office in Bonnyville.

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

4. 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 in 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.

Electronic notification with a read receipt will be considered an acceptable response in addition to the requirements as outlined in the School Act.

5. In-Camera 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 in addition to trustees, the Superintendent, and the Associate and Assistant Superintendents. 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:

- 5.1 Individual students;
- 5.2 Individual employees;
- 5.3 Collective bargaining issues;
- 5.4 Litigation issues;
- 5.5 Acquisition/disposal of property; and
- 5.6 Other topics that a majority of the trustees present feel should be held in private, in 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.

6. Agenda for Regular Meetings

The Superintendent is responsible for establishing the agenda for Board Meetings in consultation with the Board Chair.

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.

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

- 6.1 By notifying the Superintendent or Board Chair at least six calendar days prior to the Board meeting.
- 6.2 By notice of motion at the previous meeting of the Board.
- 6.3 As a request from a committee of the Board.
- 6.4 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 may be made by a majority of those present.

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

The list of agenda items shall be posted on the Division website, in a place readily accessible to the general public.

The Board will follow the order of business set by the agenda. New items of an emergent nature can be added by agreement of the Board.

7. Minutes

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 (regular, special or committee);
 - 7.1.3 Name of presiding officer;
 - 7.1.4 Names of those trustees and administration in attendance;
 - 7.1.5 Approval of preceding minutes;
 - 7.1.6 A brief summary of the circumstances which gave rise to the matter being debated by the Board;
 - 7.1.7 All resolutions, including the Board's disposition of the same, placed before the Board, should be entered in full;
 - 7.1.8 Names of persons making the motion;
 - 7.1.9 Points of order and appeals;
 - 7.1.10 Appointments;
 - 7.1.11 Summarized reports of committees;
 - 7.1.12 Recording of the vote on a motion (when requested pursuant to Section 72, The School Act); and
 - 7.1.13 Trustee declaration pursuant to Section 80, The School Act.

- 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 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 Division are affixed to the concluding page of the minutes.
- 7.4 The Superintendent shall establish a codification system for resolutions determined by the Board which will:
- 7.4.1 Provide for ready identification as to the meeting at which it was considered;
 - 7.4.2 Provide for cross-referencing with resolutions of similar nature adopted by the Board at previous meetings; and
 - 7.4.3 Establish and maintain a file of all Board minutes.
- 7.5 All committees of the Board, unless otherwise directed, shall prepare and submit minutes or a report to the Board.
- 7.6 Upon adoption by the Board, the minutes shall be open to public scrutiny at the Board office.
- 7.7 Copies of the minutes adopted by the Board shall be posted to the website as soon as is practicable.

8. Motions

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

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.

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.

8.2 Discussion on Motions

A Board motion 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.

8.3 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.

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 Recorded Vote

Whenever a recorded vote is requested by a trustee before the vote is taken, the minutes shall record the names of the trustees who voted for or against the matter. Immediately after a vote is taken and on the request of a trustee, the minutes shall record the name of that trustee and whether that trustee voted for or against the matter or abstained.

8.6 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.

8.7 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.

9. 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.

9.1 Individuals or groups wishing to make representation to the Board:

9.1.1 Shall normally submit a written explanation of the nature of the presentation or request to the Superintendent at least seven calendar days prior to the date of the appointment;

9.1.2 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; and

9.1.3 Shall identify a spokesperson for all group appointments.

9.2 Normally, and excepting items raised pursuant to section 5 of this policy, the following procedures will govern the conduct of the delegation:

9.2.1 The Board Chair shall outline the process.

9.2.2 The delegation shall, during its meeting with the Board, observe the rules of parliamentary decorum.

9.2.3 The spokesperson will be asked to present the position/request.

9.2.4 The delegation spokesperson shall be entitled to complete his/her presentation, within fifteen (15) minutes without questioning or comments from the Board.

9.2.5 The spokesperson may ask questions to gather specific information.

9.2.6 Upon completion of the presentation the Chair shall allow, for a maximum of fifteen (15) minutes, trustee questions of clarification of the delegation.

9.2.7 Upon completion of the question period the Chair shall thank the delegation for its presentation and inform them as to when the decision will be made.

9.2.8 When a decision has been reached it will be communicated to the spokesperson.

9.3 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 and at what time. The regular Board Meeting agenda will include a provision for public input as a standing item.

10. Recording Devices

The Board expects that anyone wanting to use a recording device at a public Board meeting shall obtain prior approval of the Chair and trustees will be informed.

11. Trustee Compensation

The Board believes that trusteeship, first and foremost, is a public service.

The Board recognizes, however, that the discharge of this public service often results in the trustee incurring financial expenses and incurs considerable time demands.

The Board, accordingly, intends that compensation for trustees be established and accepted within the spirit of trusteeship being a public service.

- 11.1 Compensation rates will be approved each year at the organizational meeting, but may be adjusted and discussed at other times by Board motion.
- 11.2 As prescribed in Motion No. 68 dated September 10, 2014, "... that annually on September 1, Trustee Meeting rates will be adjusted by the Alberta Average Weekly Earnings Index (AAWEI) rate, as determined on September 1 of that same year."
- 11.3 Where appropriate, trustees shall be eligible to receive:
 - 11.3.1 A "monthly" honorarium to reflect the time spent on incidental trusteeship;
 - 11.3.2 A "meeting" honorarium for each authorized Board or committee meeting attended;
 - 11.3.3 Reimbursement of meals and travel incurred in the performance of their trusteeship;
 - 11.3.4 Reimbursement of travel only when invited to functions to serve in an official capacity;
 - 11.3.5 A "preparation time" honorarium for each authorized full Board and Committee of the Whole meeting;
 - 11.3.6 Individual trustees will receive an additional honorarium for duties associated with the Board Chair, Board Vice-Chair, and Committee Chair.
 - 11.3.7 A Communication (internet/telephone) Allowance.
- 11.4 Trustees will be compensated to reflect the time spent on Board business. Trustee per day rate;
 - 11.4.1 Meetings and travel taking less than four (4) hours may be claimed at a half day rate;
 - 11.4.2 Meetings and travel taking over four (4) hours may be claimed at a full day rate;
 - 11.4.3 Meetings and travel taking over eight (8) hours may be claimed at a full day and a half rate; and
 - 11.4.4 The Chair and Vice-Chair have the authority to approve exceptions to the above under extenuating circumstances.
- 11.5 Trustees will be reimbursed for expenses at the rates established by the Board as follows:
 - 11.5.1 Actual expenses (by receipt) for lodging, parking, and Board telephone business, when required to stay overnight or a pre-determined flat rate which will not require receipt substantiation. Lodging and registrations will be

handled by individual trustees unless Board representation is requested for Division initiated Professional Development. Individual trustee requests which incur additional costs will be the responsibility of the trustee.

11.5.2 Approved rates for required meals;

11.5.2.1 Where a trustee leaves home before 7:00 A.M. and/or arrives home after 7:00 P.M., appropriate meal allowances may be claimed;

11.5.2.2 Where the trustee is involved in two (2) or more meetings in one day, a meal allowance for the applicable time of day may be claimed;

11.5.2.3 Where the trustee is involved in a full day meeting, a lunch meal allowance may be claimed;

11.5.2.4 Where the trustee is sitting as a member of a committee with non-Board committee members and a meal break is taken, a meal allowance may be claimed; and

11.5.2.5 Where a trustee is attending an event and a meal is provided, no meal allowance can be claimed.

11.5.3 Travel by economy air fare, or

11.5.4 Travel by car: when trustees travel on Division business they shall use a Division vehicle if it is reasonably available. If the vehicle is available but the trustee chooses to use their own vehicle then the mileage claim shall be at the CRA rate to a pre-determined pick-up point (e.g. LaCorey Store, Division Office, Lac La Biche), then \$0.25/km for the remainder of the trip. If the Division vehicle is not available then the CRA rate shall apply. The CRA rate shall be examined once annually and become effective on September 1st. Vehicle travel is approved to the maximum rate of economy air fare.

11.6 Compensation will be contingent upon the completion of the appropriate forms and claims. Forms are to be submitted electronically to the Board Vice-Chair at least two (2) days in advance of the last Board meeting of the month. In all cases, Trustee compensation claim rates will be rounded to the nearest dollar.

11.7 Trustees will establish an annual operating budget for trustees in conjunction with the Division budget planning process. The detailed budget for trustee operations will be reviewed and passed within the budget cycle of each year.

11.8 Full honorariums for the trustee, Chair, and Vice-Chair are based on a 12 month (September-August) period.

11.9 Trustee duties and expectations shall fall into two separate categories for compensation purposes:

11.9.1 Duties and expectations of trustees that fall outside of regular and committee meetings, or official board events, are considered part of the monthly honorarium but trustees may charge mileage for these. If duties require more than four (4) hours, a trustee may request compensation through the Board Chair.

11.9.2 Where trustees are asked to represent the Division in an official capacity, such representation will be treated as a committee meeting. Official invitations should be directed through the Chair and official representation

approved by Board motion. When invitations are directed to an individual trustee between meetings, such trustee shall receive approval by the Board Chair to officially represent the Board and receive compensation.

- 11.9.3 Where a trustee does not receive approval for compensation under 11.9.2, then he/she may appeal to the Board.
- 11.10 Trustees are able to participate in benefit plans by paying 100% of the costs. Trustees will receive a monthly taxable allowance equivalent to the cost of single coverage under the Alberta School Employees Benefit Plan which can be applied toward this expense at their discretion.

12. 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 accept a position of public trust and 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.

- 12.1 The trustee is expected to be conversant with Sections 80 to 91 of the School Act.
- 12.2 The trustee is solely responsible for declaring himself/herself to be in possible conflict of interest.
 - 11.2.1 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.
- 12.3 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.

13. Board Self-Evaluation

- 13.1 The annual Board self-evaluation process will complement the Superintendent evaluation process.
- 13.2 The purpose of the Board self-evaluation is to answer the following questions:
 - 13.2.1 How well have we fulfilled each of our defined roles in relation to our mission, goals and objectives as a Board this past year?
 - 13.2.2 How do we perceive our interpersonal working relationships?
 - 13.2.3 How well do we receive input and how well do we communicate?
 - 13.2.4 How well have we adhered to our annual work plan?
 - 13.2.5 How would we rate our Board-Superintendent relations?
 - 13.2.6 How well have we adhered to our governance policies?
 - 13.2.7 What have we accomplished this past year? How do we know?

- 13.3 The principles upon which the Board self-evaluation is based are as follows:
 - 13.3.1 A learning organization or a professional learning community is focused on the improvement of practice.
 - 13.3.2 A pre-determined process for evaluation strengthens the governance functions and builds credibility for the Board.
 - 13.3.3 An evidence-based approach provides objectivity.
- 13.4 The components of the Board self-evaluation are:
 - 13.4.1 Review of Board Role Performance
 - 13.4.2 Review of Interpersonal Working Relationships
 - 13.4.3 Review of Board Representation/Communication
 - 13.4.4 Review of Annual Work Plan Completion
 - 13.4.5 Review of Board-Superintendent Relations
 - 13.4.6 Review of Board Motions
 - 13.4.7 Review of Board Governance Policies
 - 13.4.8 Creating a Positive Path Forward

Reference: Section 60, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 80, 81, 83, 145, School Act

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