

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 and collaborative and respectful organizational culture. 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 promote and strengthen the public trust in education, through transparent and democratic operations. Consistent with its objective to encourage the 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 "closed" 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 into "closed" session 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. Wards

- 1.1. The Ward structure of The High Prairie School Division, as established by M.O.#006/95, *The High Prairie School Division No. 48 [sic] Electoral Ward Order*, provides for representation of the electorate, provides for an advocate for the students and their families and represents the diversity across the Division. (See Appendix 7.1 Ministerial Order #006/95 The High Prairie School Division No. 48 Electoral Ward Order)
- 1.2. Within the stipulations of the Order in Council establishing High Prairie School Division, the Board has decided to provide for the nomination and election of trustees within the Division by wards, and electoral subdivisions where appropriate.
- 1.3. Two (2) trustees shall be elected from each Electoral subdivision, with the exception of Ward Three (3), where one (1) trustee will be elected.
- 1.4. All elections within High Prairie School Division will be governed by the Education Act and the Local Authorities Election Act.
- 1.5. If a vacancy occurs in the membership of the Board during the three years following an election, a by-election may be held. If the vacancy occurs in the fourth year a by-election will not be held. If two vacancies occur prior to the fourth year of the term of office, a by-election must be held.
- 1.6. The general elections nomination papers for The High Prairie School Division Trustee election will be in three locations as per Bylaw 01-2020 "Nominations Papers Locations Bylaw" (See Appendix 7.2 The High Prairie School Division Bylaw 01-2020 Nominations Papers Locations Bylaw).

2. Organizational Meeting

- 2.1. An organizational meeting of the Board of Trustees shall be held annually, and no later than four weeks following the announcement of the results of an election when there has been a general election.
- 2.2. Each individual 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.
- 2.3. The Superintendent of Schools 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.
- 2.4. The organizational meeting shall, in addition:
 - 2.4.1. elect a vice-chair;

- 2.4.2. create such standing or ad hoc committees of the Board as are deemed appropriate and delegate their authority;
- 2.4.3. establish signing authorities;
- 2.4.4. appoint an auditor for the upcoming fiscal year if the current contract expires; and
- 2.4.5. review Board member conflict of interest stipulations and determine the disclosure of information requirements.

3. Regular Meetings

- 3.1. At the organizational meeting of the Board, a schedule will be established for regular monthly meetings and additional meetings (as required). This schedule shall specify:
 - 3.1.1. day of the month;
 - 3.1.2. commencement time;
 - 3.1.3. adjournment time; and
 - 3.1.4. site.
- 3.2. Notwithstanding this schedule, 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 obtain authorization by resolution of the Board to do so; or 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.
- 3.7. Trustees may participate in a meeting of the board by electronic means if:
 - 3.7.1. the trustees and members of the public in attendance are able to hear each other.
- 3.8. Trustees participating in a meeting of the board by electronic means are deemed to be present at the meeting.

4. Special Meetings

- 4.1. Special meetings of the Board of Trustees may be held from time to time as provided for under Section 69 of the *Education Act Regulation 82/2019*, Sections 1-5.
- 4.2. 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.
- 4.3. Trustees participating in a Special Meeting of the Board by electronic means are considered present at the meeting.
- 4.4. A special meeting will be held annually to evaluate the Board and the Superintendent. All trustees and the Superintendent must be in attendance.

5. Committee of the Whole Closed Sessions

- 5.1. The Board reserves the right within the constraints of statute to hold Committee of the Whole (closed) Sessions. Such sessions shall be approved by a majority of the Board. The reason for the Committee of the Whole (closed) session shall be stated prior to its approval and shall be limited to discussion pertaining to the following stated reasons:
 - 5.1.1. individual students;
 - 5.1.2. individual staff members;
 - 5.1.3. The Superintendent;
 - 5.1.4. matters of collective agreements, negotiations with employees and other contracts and agreements;
 - 5.1.5. acquisition or disposal of real property or litigation brought by or against the Board; and
 - 5.1.6. a matter deemed by the Board to best be held in private, for the public interest.

- 5.2. Such sessions shall be closed to the public and press. That such a session will be, or was held shall be recorded in the minutes of the preceding or subsequent regular meeting. Board members and other persons attending the session are honor bound not to disclose the details of discussion at such sessions. The Board may invite staff members or others to attend such sessions at its own discretion.
- 5.3. No official action shall be taken in Committee of the Whole (closed) sessions. The Board shall convene or re-convene a regular meeting to take action on any matter discussed.

6. Meetings by Electronic Means

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.

- 6.1. A Board meeting or committee meeting may be conducted by electronic or other communication means where weather conditions or specific needs require the use of electronic communications.
- 6.2. Trustees and the Superintendent or designate participating in an electronic meeting are deemed to be present at the meeting.
- 6.3. The communication means must enable all meeting participants to hear and view each other.
- 6.4. The communication means must enable the public to listen to the meeting, and if possible, enable the public to view the meeting and participants. Live streamed meetings will be accessible to the public.
- 6.5. One 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.
- 6.6. The Superintendent or designate must participate from the central and public-accessible site.
- 6.7. Reasonable steps must be taken to notify the public of meeting locations.
- 6.8. A trustee may participate from a location to which the public does not have access.
- 6.9. A trustee must ensure the means and location used to participate in the meeting will allow moving to a closed session and will meet all requirements of a closed session.
- 6.10. Through a Board motion, trustees may determine that a future meeting will be exempt from electronic communication.
- 6.11. A trustee requesting to participate at a regular Board meeting via electronic means due to an emergent issue may do so up to and including the day of the meeting.
- 6.12. A trustee requesting to participate at a regular Board meeting via electronic means due to a special circumstance requires a minimum of 48 hours prior approval of the Board Chair.

7. Agenda for Regular Meetings

- 7.1. The Board Chair and the Vice-Chair, in consultation with the Superintendent, are responsible for preparing the agenda for Board Meetings.
- 7.2. Items may be placed on the agenda by:
 - 7.2.1. notifying the Superintendent or Board Chair prior to the establishment of the agenda.
 - 7.2.2. notice of motion at the previous meeting of the Board.
 - 7.2.3. request from a committee of the Board.
 - 7.2.4. a quorum of the Board, prior to the approval of the agenda.
- 7.3. The agenda package, containing the agenda and supporting information, will be distributed to each trustee at least 4 work days in advance of regular Board meetings.
- 7.4. The list of agenda items shall be posted on the Divisional Website where an elector may inspect the agenda.
- 7.5. The Board Chair, at the beginning of the meeting, shall ask to have the agenda approved. Additions to and/or deletions from the agenda may be made by a majority of those present.
- 7.6. The Board Chair may change the order of items on the agenda in order to meet extenuating circumstances. In such cases, a trustee may challenge the Chair in accordance with the procedures adopted by the Board.
- 7.7. 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.

8. Minutes

- 8.1. The Minutes shall record:

- 8.1.1. a brief summary of the circumstances which gave rise to the matter being placed before the Board;
- 8.1.2. all resolutions, including the Board's disposition of same, placed before the Board; and
- 8.1.3. the votes, when and as requested, by a trustee.
- 8.2. The Minutes shall:
 - 8.2.1. be prepared by the recording secretary;
 - 8.2.2. be reviewed by the Superintendent prior to submission to the Board;
 - 8.2.3. be considered an unofficial record of proceedings until such time as adopted by a resolution 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 Director of Business shall:
 - 8.3.1. upon approval of the Superintendent as to the accuracy of the 'draft' minutes, prepare a copy of the unofficial minutes, marked 'Unofficial Draft -Subject to Ratification', for distribution to Divisional employees, the media serving the residents of the Division, School Councils, the local Members of the Legislative Assembly, and other interested persons.;
 - 8.3.2. establish a codification system for resolutions placed before the Board which will provide for ready identification of the resolution as to the meeting at which it was considered; and
 - 8.3.3. establish and maintain a file of all Board minutes.
- 8.4. The Board Chair shall:
 - 8.4.1. upon adoption by the Board, affix their signature to the concluding page of the minutes and initial each page.
- 8.5. When required by the Board, its committees shall prepare and submit minutes of the meetings to the Board.

9. Motions

9.1. Notice of Motion

- 9.1.1. The notice of motion serves the purpose of officially putting an item on the agenda of the next 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.
- 9.1.2. 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 will 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.

9.2. Discussion on Motions

- 9.2.1. A motion must be placed before the Board prior to any discussion taking place on an issue.
- 9.2.2. When a motion originates from the floor, the mover of the motion may be asked to provide a written copy of the motion to the Board Chair.

9.3. Speaking to the Motion

- 9.3.1. 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.
- 9.3.2. 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.
- 9.3.3. 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.

9.4. Reading of the Motion

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

9.5. Recording Vote

- 9.5.1. 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.

9.6. Required Votes

- 9.6.1. The Board Chair, and all trustees present, unless excused by resolution of the Board or by the provisions of legislation, shall vote on each question.
- 9.6.2. Each question shall be decided by a majority of the votes of those trustees present. In the case of an equality of votes, the question is defeated. A vote on a question shall be taken by open vote.

10. Delegations to Board Meetings

- 10.1. The Board of Trustees believes that public participation in the affairs of the Division strengthens and enhances the educational services made available to students. The Board will meet with delegations at regular Board meetings in accordance with the following procedures.
- 10.2. Individuals or groups wishing to make representation to the Board:
- 10.2.1. shall advise the Superintendent of the nature of the matter to be discussed with the Board; and
- 10.2.2. shall be granted, by the Superintendent, an appointed time on the meeting agenda at which to make representation.
- 10.3. The following procedures will normally govern the conduct of the hearing:
- 10.3.1. the delegation will be advised that they can have the presentation made in a public or "closed" setting;
- 10.3.2. the delegation will be asked if they object to their personal names appearing in the minutes;
- 10.3.3. the delegation may make its presentation in writing and/or orally;
- 10.3.4. the delegation shall, during its meeting with the Board, observe the rules of parliamentary decorum;
- 10.3.5. the delegation shall be entitled to complete its presentation, within a period of fifteen minutes, or as determined by the Board Chair without questioning or comments from the Board;
- 10.3.6. upon completion of the presentation the Board Chair shall allow trustee questions of the delegation for a period of fifteen minutes, or as determined by the Board Chair;
- 10.3.7. upon completion of the question period, the Board shall inform the delegation when the resolution of the matter will be deliberated and decided; and
- 10.3.8. the decision the Board makes will be communicated to the delegation in writing as soon as possible.
- 10.4. The Board of Trustees will serve as an appeal body for disputes and conflict resolution between the Principal and the school council. Disputes should be referred, in writing, to the Superintendent, who will schedule the Chair of the school council and the Principal as delegations to the next regular Board meeting. If requested by both parties in a dispute, the Superintendent will endeavour to mediate as a preliminary step in conflict resolution.

11. Recording Devices

- 11.1. The Board expects that anyone wanting to use recording devices at a public Board meeting shall obtain prior approval of the Chair.
- 11.2. The Board may record regular Board meetings and make them available to the public.

12. Acknowledging Territories of Indigenous Communities within Division Events

- 12.1. As it is important for our educational communities to pay full respect to the historical circumstances, traditional and existing lands, and cultural values of our First Nations and Metis people. Acknowledging the territory is a way of honouring and showing respect for groups of people who have been living on the land.
- 12.2. The Board Chair or designate for the purpose of chairing a board meeting will acknowledge territory.
- 12.3. Acknowledging territory will be initiated at the beginning of any public meeting.
 - 12.3.1. The general acknowledgement for meetings will be as follows:

“High Prairie School division would like to acknowledge we are meeting today in High Prairie and surrounding communities, located within the ancestral and traditional territory of the Indigenous people of this area. This land is and will continue to be home to the Cree, Dene, Métis, and other First Nations residing within the boundaries of treaty eight. We acknowledge the Elders and Knowledge holders that are still with us today and those that have gone before us.

We also would like to acknowledge this land is also home to the four legged, the flying, crawling, and swimming things. It's also home to the rock beings and the plant nations. We share this land with many others and must walk carefully and be mindful of the impacts we have on those we share the sacred land, air, and water with. We borrow these lands from our future generations so we must leave them a healthy environment in which they can thrive.

It is a privilege and an honor to live, learn, work, play, and grow on Treaty Eight territory.”

- 12.3.2. The Chair will open the floor for personal acknowledgements.
- 12.3.3. The Chair will also open the floor to Indigenous attendees who wish to welcome the Board to the land.

13. Trustee Compensation and Expenses

- 13.1. Honoraria may be claimed for the following activities:
 - 13.1.1. Annual Meetings
 - 13.1.2. Organizational Board Meetings
 - 13.1.3. Regular Board Meetings
 - 13.1.4. Special Board Meetings
 - 13.1.5. Committee Meetings
 - 13.1.6. Zone or Provincial ASBA meetings or events
 - 13.1.7. Long Service Award Dinners
 - 13.1.8. School Council, Committee and other emergent meetings attended as a trustee
 - 13.1.9. Attendance at ceremonies (e.g. graduations, speaking, presenting awards)
 - 13.1.10. Signing accounts payable cheques (small runs or individual cheques would be grouped into a single one-half day claim per month)
 - 13.1.11. Other functions with prior Board approval
 - 13.1.12. Provincial PSBA and PSBC meetings or events
 - 13.1.13. Invitations to schools or Division facilities such as concerts or plays where the trustee attends as an observer
 - 13.1.14. Trustees are expected to engage in public relations as an elected official. These activities will not receive compensation.
- 13.2. Amount of honoraria for meetings (Refer to Appendix 7.3)

- 13.2.1. Honoraria shall be established for quarter-day meetings (less than 2 hours), half-day meetings (less than 4 hours), full day meetings (4 to 8 hours), and for meetings beyond 8 hours (1.5 times the full day rate). Travel (door-to-door) shall be added to the function and claimed as part of the meeting. At minimum, a Regular Board meeting shall be compensated as a full day meeting.
- 13.2.2. No trustee shall receive in excess of 1.5 times the full day meeting rate per day, regardless of the number of meetings scheduled in a day.
- 13.2.3. Each trustee, other than the Board Chair, shall receive a monthly honorarium equivalent to two full-day meetings for readings, meeting preparation and business. Additionally, trustees shall receive honorarium equivalent to one full-day meeting for readings in preparation for each of the following (to a maximum of nine days per calendar year):
 - 13.2.3.1. Strategic Planning
 - 13.2.3.2. Alberta School Boards Association Spring General Meeting
 - 13.2.3.3. Alberta School Boards Association Fall General Meeting
 - 13.2.3.4. Public School Boards' Association Spring General Meeting
 - 13.2.3.5. Public School Boards' Association Fall General Meeting
 - 13.2.3.6. School Reports to the Board (x4)
- 13.2.4. The Board Chair shall receive an additional monthly honorarium equivalent to four full-day meetings.
- 13.3. Reimbursement for Expenses (Refer to Appendix 7.3)
 - 13.3.1. Travel (door-to-door) shall be added to the function and claimed according to the honorarium procedures. For a mid-meeting day of a multiple day convention the duration will be from the start of the first function of the day until the completion of the last function of the day, plus any travel between the sessions and accommodations.
 - 13.3.2. Accommodation shall be reimbursed as per vouchers submitted, or in the case of private accommodation at a rate established by the Board.
 - 13.3.3. Kilometrage shall be paid at rates established by the Board.
 - 13.3.4. Meals shall be paid at rates established by the Board or at actual cost (alcohol is a personal expense).
 - 13.3.5. Trustees will be compensated for internet use at the rate determined by the division.
- 13.4. Professional Development (Refer to Appendix 7.3)

HPSD believes that individual trustees will best serve their governance role if they have ongoing professional development pertaining to their role as governors.

 - 13.4.1. A separate budget amount will be established each year for each trustee to attend conferences or workshops of choice pertaining to board governance. This budget may be used for per diem, travel, meals, accommodation, and registration costs. This budget amount may be accumulated to a maximum of four (4) years. Refer to Appendix 7.3.
 - 13.4.2. The Superintendent or designate will maintain an ongoing record of expenditures for each trustee.
 - 13.4.3. A brief report on each conference or workshop attended will be filed with the Board.
- 13.5. Carpooling to meetings and conferences is encouraged.

14. Benefits

- 14.1. Trustees are eligible for enrolment in a medical benefit plan as determined by the Board. The following benefits are available:
 - 14.1.1. Life Insurance
 - 14.1.2. Accidental Death and Dismemberment
 - 14.1.3. Extended Health Care
 - 14.1.4. Dental
 - 14.1.5. Alberta Health Care coverage as determined by the Board
 - 14.1.6. Health Spending Account

15. Trustee Computers

- 15.1. Communication within the Division is carried out in a variety of formats and every attempt is made to choose the most appropriate in terms of effectiveness and efficiency. Very often computer technology and email is the most effective way of communicating and sharing information in a timely fashion. To facilitate this information flow and to enable Board members to fulfill their duties as trustees appropriate computer technology will be provided for their use while in office.
- 15.2. When the division provides a computer for a trustee this equipment is owned by the Division and is lent to trustees for the purpose of engaging in Division-related business, trustees must become familiar with and follow Administrative Procedure 140 – Use of Information Technology.
- 15.3. Hardware will be replaced consistent with the Division technology replacement plan, for laptop computers this is a four-year cycle.
- 15.4. Computers will have software consistent with the standard business software in use in the Division and will be upgraded from time to time to remain current with Division standards.
- 15.5. Trustees who supply their own computer for division use will be compensated at the rate set by the division. (Refer to Appendix 7.3) All computers must be able to handle the requirements of the trusteeship.
- 15.6. The Division makes available a computer purchase plan for the purchase of personal computers by individual trustees.
- 15.7. Each trustee will be provided with a Division email account and Internet access. Agenda preparation and much general communication will be conducted via electronic means. Securing an Internet Service Provider is the responsibility of individual trustees.
- 15.8. Basic training in the use of email, backing up files, antivirus software, and Microsoft Office software will be provided by system staff as needed.
- 15.9. General maintenance and upgrades of trustee laptops will be on an as required basis.
- 15.10. Trustees will have the option of returning the computer and printer at the end of their term in office or purchasing it at a fair market price as determined by the Superintendent or designate. Returned technology that still has use will either be passed on to the incoming trustee or cycled for use elsewhere in the Division.

16. Board Member Conflict of Interest

- 16.1. The Board member is directly responsible to the electorate and the Board. Upon election to office Board members assume a position of public trust and are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will not impair the trust accorded them or the Board.
- 16.2. The Board expects:
 - 16.2.1. Each trustee will be conversant with sections 85 to 88 of the Education Act.
 - 16.2.2. The trustee is solely responsible for declaring a position in conflict of interest and shall disclose such information as is required by Section 86 of the Education Act in the statement completed by each trustee at the organizational meeting.
 - 16.2.3. The conflict of interest shall be limited to the provisions of sections 85 and 86, Education Act.
 - 16.2.4. The trustee will make a declaration of conflict of interest in open meeting prior to Board discussions of the subject matter that may place the trustee in conflict of interest.
 - 16.2.5. The recording secretary shall record the declaration in the minutes.

- 16.2.6. Upon declaring a conflict of interest, the Board Chair shall excuse the trustee from participation in the debate and the vote on the issue. The trustee will leave the room in which the meeting is being held until discussion and voting on the matter is concluded.

Cross Reference

Policy 7 – Board Operations – Appendix 7.1 – Ministerial Order #006/95 – Electoral Ward Order

Policy 7 – Board Operations – Appendix 7.2 – Nomination Papers Locations Bylaw 01-2020

Policy 7 – Board Operations – Appendix 7.3 – Trustee Compensation and Expenses

Legal References

Education Act, Sections 7, 53, 64, 65, 73, 74, 75, 76, 85, 86, 87, 88, 112, 123, 137, 144

Section 69, Education Act Regulation 82/2019

Local Authorities Elections Act

Income Tax Act (Canada)

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