

Policy 2

ROLE OF THE BOARD

The Board is a corporate entity established by the provincial legislature and given authority by the School Act, the Northland School Division Act and the attendant regulations. Board means Board of Trustees.

The Board is charged with the responsibility of providing an education system that is organized and operated in the best interests of the students and the communities it serves. It exercises this responsibility through setting of effective policies, clear strategic direction; the wise use of resources and good monitoring practices.

SPECIFIC AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

1. Accountability for Student Learning and Wellness

- 1.1 Provide overall direction for the Division by establishing vision, mission, beliefs and values.
- 1.2 Support & ensure the establishment of a welcoming, caring, respectful, safe and healthy learning and work environment.
- 1.3 Ensure Board policies are respectful of local cultural goals, values and traditions.
- 1.4 Enable each community to guide and shape the building of culture, values and traditions into their local school.
- 1.5 Enable supports for children regarding the impacts of residential school legacy.
- 1.6 Enable processes to support quality teaching.
- 1.7 Closely monitor the effectiveness of each school in achieving student success, established priorities and other key performance indicators.
- 1.8 Initiate school and program reviews as necessary to ensure the achievement of outcomes and student success.
- 1.9 Annually approve the process and timelines for the refinement of the Three-Year Education Plan.
- 1.10 In consultation with communities, identify Division priorities at the outset of annual Three-Year Education planning process.
- 1.11 Annually approve the “rolling” Three-Year Education Plan/Annual Education Results Report for submission to Alberta Education and for public distribution.

2. Engagement

- 2.1 Engage at least once within the 12 month period immediately following each general election with respect to the establishment of the Board’s strategic direction with:
 - 2.1.1 the wards;

- 2.1.2 First Nations, Metis, Municipalities and other communities with respect to which the board provides educational services;
 - 2.1.3 Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta;
 - 2.1.4 the Metis Settlements General Council; and
 - 2.1.5 The Council of School Councils.
 - 2.2 Meet with Council of School Councils (COSC) at least once a term.
 - 2.3 Enable and support the meeting of Ward Councils at least once each school year.
3. Community Assurance
- 3.1 Make informed decisions that represent the best interests of the entire Division, and honour community diversity.
 - 3.2 Establish ongoing plans for collaborative work between the Division and First Nations and Métis Settlements.
 - 3.3 Report Division outcomes to the community at least annually.
 - 3.4 Develop appeal procedures and hold hearings as required by statute and/or Board policy.
 - 3.5 Model a culture of respect and integrity.
 - 3.6 Maintain transparency in all fiduciary aspects.
 - 3.7 Ensure Board processes and procedures are respectful of local culture, values and traditions.
 - 3.8 School Facilities and grounds shall be kept to a high standard.
4. Accountability to Provincial Government
- 4.1 Act in accordance with all statutory requirements to implement provincial standards and policies.
 - 4.2 Perform Board functions required by governing legislation and existing Board policy.
 - 4.3 Ensure all students, teachers and Division leaders learn about First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives, experiences and contribution throughout history; treaties, and the history and legacy of residential schools.
5. Fiscal Accountability
- 5.1 Within the context of results-based budgeting, approve budget assumptions/principles and establish priorities at the outset of the budget process.
 - 5.2 Approve the annual budget and allocation of resources to achieve desired results.
 - 5.3 Approve, if any, annual fees for instructional resources, transportation and tuition.
 - 5.4 Approve expense reimbursement rates.
 - 5.5 Approve substantive budget adjustments when necessary.
 - 5.6 Enable the development of reciprocal partnership agreements to collectively enhance

supports and services for all students, including those attending First Nations operated schools.

- 5.7 Approve tenders/purchases/contracts/lease agreements in excess of one hundred twenty five thousand dollars (\$125,000).
 - 5.8 Ensure fair tender and bid processes.
 - 5.9 Monitor the fiscal management of the Division through receipt of, at minimum, quarterly variance analyses and year-end projections.
 - 5.10 Receive and approve annual Audit Plan.
 - 5.11 Receive the Audit Report and ensure the management letter recommendations are addressed.
 - 5.12 Approve annually the Three-Year Capital Plan for submission to Alberta Education.
 - 5.13 Approve borrowing for capital expenditures within provincial restrictions.
 - 5.14 Set the parameters for negotiations after soliciting advice from the Superintendent and others.
 - 5.15 At its discretion, ratify Memoranda of Agreement with bargaining units.
 - 5.16 Approve the Superintendent's contract.
 - 5.17 Approve annually the signing authorities for the Division.
 - 5.18 Approve transfer of funds to/from reserves.
 - 5.19 Approve investment parameters.
 - 5.20 Ensure all non-instructional programs are regularly reviewed to test the relevancy, effectiveness and efficiency of the programs against desired outcomes.
6. Board/Superintendent Relations ("First Team")
- 6.1 Select the Superintendent; provide for succession planning as required.
 - 6.2 Provide the Superintendent with clear corporate direction.
 - 6.3 Delegate, in writing, administrative authority and identify responsibility subject to provisions and restrictions in the School Act.
 - 6.4 Respect the authority of the Superintendent to carry out executive action and support the Superintendent's actions which are exercised within the delegated discretionary powers of the position.
 - 6.5 Demonstrate mutual respect and support, which is then conveyed to the staff and the community.
 - 6.6 Annually evaluate the Superintendent, in accordance with a pre-established performance appraisal mechanism.
 - 6.7 Annually review compensation of the Superintendent.
 - 6.8 See also Policy 2 Appendix D Board and Superintendent Communication Guidelines

7. Board Development

- 7.1 Annually review and approve the Board work plan.
 - 7.2 Develop a professional development plan for governance excellence in fiduciary, strategic and generative engagement modes.
 - 7.3 Annually evaluate Board effectiveness in meeting performance indicators and set a Positive Path Forward.
8. Policy
- 8.1 Identify how the Board is to function.
 - 8.2 Develop/revise policies using an engagement process, when appropriate.
 - 8.3 On a regular basis monitor policy currency, relevancy and effectiveness.
9. Political Advocacy
- 9.1 Act as an advocate for public education and the Division.
 - 9.2 Identify issues for advocacy on an ongoing basis.
 - 9.3 Develop a plan for advocacy including focus, key messages, relationships and mechanisms.
 - 9.4 Promote regular meetings and maintain timely, frank and constructive communication with locally elected officials.
 - 9.5 Arrange meetings with elected provincial and federal government officials to communicate and garner support for education in local communities.

SELECTED RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board shall:

1. Acquire and dispose of land and buildings; ensure titles to or enforceable long-term interests in land, are in place prior to capital project construction.
2. Approve school attendance areas.
3. Establish entrance ages for student admission.
4. Approve locally developed/acquired courses for students.
5. Name schools and other Division-owned facilities.
6. Approve Division Calendar Framework and school calendar(s).
7. Provide for recognition of students, staff and community.
8. Approve leases, and agreements with municipal authorities; ensure leases are in place for all schools situated on Métis Settlement lands.

9. Approve all international field trips, and out-of-province field trips in excess of three (3) school days.

ORIENTATION

To ensure continuity and facilitate smooth transition from one Board to the next following an election, trustees must be adequately briefed concerning existing Board policy and practice, statutory requirements, initiatives and long-range plans.

The Board believes an orientation program is necessary for effective trusteeship.

1. The Board Chair and Superintendent are responsible for ensuring the development and implementation of the Division's orientation program for trustees.
2. The Superintendent shall provide each trustee with access to the references listed in Policy 3 Appendix "Services, Materials and Equipment Provided to Trustees" at the Organizational Meeting following a general election or at the first regular meeting of the Board following a by-election.
3. In the year of an election, the Division will host a preliminary orientation session for all elected candidates prior to the Organizational Meeting which will include a review of and an expression of interest in Board assignments and committees.
4. The Division will offer an orientation program for all trustees that provides information on:
 - 4.1 Role of the trustee, ward councils and school councils
 - 4.2 Board policies, agendas and minutes;
 - 4.3 The organizational structure and administrative procedures of the Division;
 - 4.4 Existing Division initiatives, annual reports, budgets, financial statements and long-range plans;
 - 4.5 Division programs and services;
 - 4.6 Board's function as an appeal body;
 - 4.7 Statutory and regulatory requirements, including responsibilities with regard to conflict of interest;
 - 4.8 Trustee remuneration and expenses.
5. The orientation program may also include:
 - 5.1 A tour of the offices and the opportunity to meet Division Office staff.
 - 5.2 A tour of the schools and the opportunity to meet principals and staff.
6. The Division will provide support within the Board governance budget for trustees attending provincial association sponsored orientation seminars.

Legal Reference: Section 45, 45.1, 56, 60, 61, 62, 63, 78, 113, 147 School Act
Local Authorities Elections Act
Northland School Division Act
Results-Based Budgeting Act
Disposition of Property Regulation
Early Childhood Services Regulation