

Policy 8

BOARD OPERATIONS

The Board operates and governs itself in a manner that models respect for individuals and strengthens relationships within the education community. Within this framework decisions will be made that serve to ensure quality learning opportunities and maximize learning outcomes for all students of all ages.

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. A quorum, which is a majority of the number of trustees holding office, 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 public 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, the Board believes its affairs should be conducted in public to the greatest extent possible. Therefore, all meetings referred to herein are public meetings unless otherwise specified.

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.

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 information meetings dealing with specific educational topics and held on a regular basis within the District can enhance communications and the effectiveness of the Board.

1. Inaugural Meeting

The inaugural meeting of the Board shall be held on the third Tuesday in November of an election year (every four years) with the sole purpose being:

- 1.1 To make a prescribed oath of office, by oath or solemn affirmation; and
- 1.2 To elect the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board.

The Superintendent or his/her designate will give notice of the inaugural meeting.

Each trustee will take the oath of office immediately following the call to order of the inaugural 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 through to the election of the new Board Chair, at which time the duly elected Board Chair will assume the role.

2. Regular Meetings

- 2.1 The purpose of the regular Board meeting is for the Board to conduct its business. Meetings will be open to the public and representatives of the press.
- 2.2 The Board's regular (business) meeting will generally be held on the third Tuesday of each month during the school year (except for March) and as often as is necessary, consistent with efficient operation of the District. When circumstances necessitate rescheduling a meeting to another date, at least two (2) weeks' notice must be given of the change.
- 2.3 Meetings will normally be held at the Board Office, 1075 - 21 Street, West Vancouver, B.C., except when an alternative site is agreed to by a majority of Board members at least two (2) weeks in advance of the proposed meeting.
- 2.4 Meetings will commence promptly at 1900 hours and adjourn no later than 2200 hours.
- 2.5 An opportunity for questions to the Board will be provided.
- 2.6 Schedules for Board meetings are available on the District website.
- 2.7 The Board may, by motion, recess a regular meeting in progress for the purpose of meeting in closed session.

3. Special Meetings

- 3.1 All special meetings shall:
 - 3.1.1 Be called by the Chair, or, on written request of a majority of the trustees, by the Superintendent or designate.
 - 3.1.2 Be held either prior to, or following, a regular meeting of the Board, or at a time, date and place set by the Chair and with agreement of all trustees.
 - 3.1.3 Deal only with agenda items announced at the time the meeting is called, save that items may be added to the agenda with the unanimous consent of all of the trustees of the Board who are present at the meeting.
 - 3.1.4 Have as quorum a majority of the trustees holding office at the time.
- 3.2 The public is excluded from special meetings of the Board. (Decisions on financial matters will be made public.) In accordance with Section 72(3) of the School Act, the Board shall prepare a record containing a general statement as to the nature of the matters discussed and the general nature of the decisions reached at a meeting from which persons other than trustees or officers of the Board, or both, were excluded. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, examples of matters which will commonly be discussed at special in-camera meetings of the Board include the following:
 - 3.2.1 Specific personnel matters;
 - 3.2.2 Education and financial matters warranting private deliberations;

- 3.2.3 Matters concerning the acquisition or disposal of property or buildings owned by the District;
- 3.2.4 Legal matters relating to any of the above items.
- 3.3 The Board shall not rescind at a special meeting of the Board, a motion previously passed at a regular public meeting of the Board, nor pass a motion at a special meeting of the Board that contradicts, inhibits, ignores or is in any way inconsistent with the substance of a motion previously passed at a regular public Board meeting.

4. Agenda for Regular Meetings

- 4.1 Items may be placed on the agenda in one of the following ways:
 - 4.1.1 By notifying the Board Chair at least seven (7) days prior to the Board meeting.
 - 4.1.2 By notice of motion at the previous meeting of the Board.
 - 4.1.3 As a request from a committee of the Board.
- 4.2 The Board Chair and Superintendent shall establish items on the agenda for each regular meeting. The agenda shall generally follow the order outlined below:
 - 4.2.1 Board Highlight(s)
 - 4.2.2 Adoption of Agenda;
 - 4.2.3 Question and Comment Period;
 - 4.2.4 Approval of Minutes;
 - 4.2.5 Business Required as determined by the Chair;
 - 4.2.6 Board Committee Reports;
 - 4.2.7 Trustee Meetings and Events;
 - 4.2.8 Correspondence;
 - 4.2.9 Question and Comment Period;
 - 4.2.10 Adjournment.

Two (2) ten-minute public question periods will be held; the first early in the meeting and the second, at the conclusion of the meeting.

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.

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.

The agenda package, containing the agenda and supporting information, will be distributed to each trustee at least four (4) days in advance of regular Board meetings.

The list of agenda items shall be posted on the District website.

5. Minutes

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

5.1 The minutes shall record:

- 5.1.1 Date, time and place of meeting;
- 5.1.2 Type of meeting (regular or special);
- 5.1.3 Name of presiding officer;
- 5.1.4 Names of those trustees and district administration in attendance;
- 5.1.5 Approval of preceding minutes;
- 5.1.6 A brief summary of the circumstances which gave rise to the matter being debated by the Board;
- 5.1.7 All resolutions, including the Board's disposition of the same, placed before the Board, are to be entered in full;
- 5.1.8 Points of order and appeals;
- 5.1.9 Appointments;
- 5.1.10 Summarized reports of committees;
- 5.1.11 Trustee declaration pursuant to Section 56, 57 or 58 of the School Act.

5.2 The minutes shall:

- 5.2.1 Be prepared as directed by the Secretary-Treasurer;
- 5.2.2 Be reviewed by the Secretary-Treasurer prior to submission to the Board;
- 5.2.3 Be considered an unofficial record of proceedings until such time as adopted by a resolution of the Board; and
- 5.2.4 Upon adoption by the Board, be deemed to be the official and sole record of the Board's business.

5.3 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 District are affixed to the concluding page of the minutes.

5.4 The Superintendent shall establish a codification system for resolutions determined by the Board which will:

- 5.4.1 Provide for ready identification as to the meeting at which it was considered;
- 5.4.2 Provide for cross-referencing with resolutions of similar nature adopted by the Board at previous meetings; and
- 5.4.3 Establish and maintain a file of all Board minutes.
- 5.5 All committees of the Board, unless otherwise directed, shall prepare and submit minutes or a report to the Board.
- 5.6 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.
- 5.7 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.
- 5.8 Upon adoption by the Board, the minutes shall be open to public scrutiny at the Board office at all reasonable times.

6. Motions

Motions do not require a seconder.

6.1 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.

6.2 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 is normally 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 the Board Chair or any trustee.

6.3 Speaking to the Motion

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

A trustee may speak to a motion only twice, unless replying to a question, in which case the trustee may speak a third time. The mover of a motion may speak a third time and thereby close the debate on the question. The Board may, by majority vote, approve extended discussion of any subject.

If the Board Chair wishes to speak on a motion, s/he is to vacate his/her seat as Chair and ask the Vice-Chair to preside. The Chair will normally speak just prior to the last speaker who will be the mover of 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.

Amendments to the motion may be proposed at any time during discussion. No more than two (2) amendments may be before the meeting at one time. Discussion and voting on motions and amendments takes place in reverse order of their proposal.

Motions or amendments may be withdrawn only with the unanimous consent of the trustees present.

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.

6.4 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.

6.5 Entitled Votes

All members, including the Board Chair, are entitled to vote on all motions, except in the case of a conflict of interest, as defined by Section 58 of the School Act.

While all trustees are encouraged to vote on all motions, except in the case of conflict of interest, a member has the right to abstain from voting. An abstention shall not be considered a vote for or against.

6.6 Recorded Vote

At any meeting of the Board when motions are either "carried" or "defeated" which are not unanimous, dissenting votes and abstentions shall be recorded in the minutes.

6.7 Required Votes

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. The result of the vote is announced by the Board Chair.

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.

6.8 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.

A 'point of order' may be called by any trustee at any time. The 'point of order' must be stated definitively and conclusively. The Board Chair decides, without debate, whether the 'point' is well taken.

Any trustee may appeal a ruling of the Chair. The trustee states the reasons for the appeal; the Board Chair states the reason for the ruling. There is no debate. The Board Chair then asks, "Shall the decision of the Chair be sustained?" A simple majority decides the issue.

A rejected motion is not to be re-introduced during the same meeting unless at least a majority of the trustees present approve a motion "That the question be re-considered". This motion is not debatable and calls for an immediate vote.

A motion to lay a question on the table shall not be subject to debate, but the question may be debated when it is lifted from the table.

7. Delegations to Board Meetings

As an elected body, the Board recognizes its responsibility to assure fair and equitable hearing times for the public.

- 7.1 Prior arrangement will be made with the Board Chair through the Superintendent or designate on or before 12 pm (noon) on the Wednesday preceding the meeting. Delegations are to be asked their reasons for requesting an audience with the Board. Upon request, the delegation shall provide to the Superintendent or designate a copy of its presentation or a precis for distribution to trustees in advance of the meeting.

- 7.2 When delegations notify the Superintendent or designate after the time set out, the Board Chair is permitted to set aside a time on the agenda for the delegation provided that the Chair has the Superintendent or designate notify each trustee of this change prior to the meeting time.
- 7.3 The Board will determine prior to hearing a delegation whether the delegation is to be heard "in private" or at a public meeting.
- 7.4 Up to two (2) delegations per meeting may appear before the Board, but both presenters must share the maximum presentation time of twenty (20) minutes.
- 7.5 Each delegation will be requested to name a spokesperson who will:
 - 7.5.1 Present the information to the Board.
 - 7.5.2 Act as a contact person for the Board if there is a need for the Board to direct a reply or decision to the group.
- 7.6 It is recognized that usually not all the information needed by trustees to assist them in making the most informed decision will be available at the time of meeting a delegation. It may therefore be desirable, if further information or deliberation is required, to delay decision and relay it to the delegation at the earliest possible time. Consequently, the Board will not make a decision in the presence of the delegation.

8. Correspondence to the Board

The Board believes that it is the delegated responsibility of administrative staff to act for the Board within the bounds of District policy. However, trustees are to be kept informed of non-routine items of business and are to be given the opportunity to seek further information on such matters.

- 8.1 A list of all non-routine correspondence addressed to the Board or received by the Superintendent or designate acting in their official corporate capacities will be kept and forwarded to the trustees.
- 8.2 A list of official correspondence received by the Board will be available at each regular meeting.
- 8.3 All correspondence or material addressed to a trustee in name or as chair of a committee will be forwarded to the Superintendent.
- 8.4 *When a trustee receives an e-mail of interest to trustees and/or senior staff:*
 - 8.4.1 *Respond to the e-mail by thanking the sender and advising you are forwarding the message to the Board Chair / Superintendent.*
 - 8.4.2 *Forward a brief response and the original message to the Superintendent, who will direct it to the appropriate person for response.*
 - 8.4.3 *The response will be copied to all trustees and Superintendent.*
 - 8.4.4 *The original email and response will be retained in a "correspondence" folder.:-*
 - 8.4.5 *If it is a message of interest to the community, it will be included in the "correspondence list" of letters sent out with the Agenda packages and available to the public.*

9. Audio/Video Recording Devices

The Board expects that anyone wanting to use an audio/or video recording device at a public Board meeting shall obtain prior approval of the Chair.

10. Trustee Remuneration and Expense Allowance

10.1 Under Section 71 of the School Act, a Board may authorize the payment of remuneration to be paid to trustees. The Income Tax Act allows part of this remuneration to be declared as a tax-free expense allowance.

10.1.1 The trustee remuneration will be adjusted at budget time.

10.1.2 A trustee remuneration as described in the School Act regulations will be paid to trustees on a monthly basis, one-third in the form of a tax-free expense allowance and two-thirds as taxable income.

10.1.3 The Superintendent or designate will arrange for direct bank deposit of cheques by having trustees complete the necessary banking authorization form.

10.2 The Board will set the rate to be paid for trustees who are required to use their own vehicles for Board business outside of the District and the method of payment of this allowance.

10.2.1 Remuneration for mileage accrued while on Board business for every trustee shall be paid monthly or at the end of the calendar year.

10.2.2 No trustee shall receive mileage from home to Board Office to attend meetings.

10.3 Many conventions, conferences and seminars are held which are of interest and value to trustees during their term of office. Travel, board, lodging, miscellaneous living expenses and registration fees will be paid by the Board when a trustee attends a conference, seminar or convention. A trustee shall not exceed his/her allowance without approval of the Board. Annually, the Board shall establish an amount within the budget to cover expenses incurred by trustees related to their attendance at meetings, seminars and conventions. Expense claim amounts for travel will be regularly updated through Administrative Procedure 512.

10.3.1 Trustees will be expected to file an "Expense Report and Claim Form" on return showing totals for:

10.3.1.1 Accommodation.

10.3.1.2 Meals and incidental expenses.

10.3.1.3 Registration if not paid direct by the Board.

10.3.1.4 Transportation and parking.

Trustees will provide receipts for lodging and travel expenses other than by motor vehicle.

10.3.2 The budget designated by the Board for trustee expenses shall be divided into two (2) categories as follows:

10.3.2.1 Trustee Personal Development

Sufficient funds will be set annually to allow an individual trustee at his/her discretion to participate in conferences or meetings which provide personal development in the area of education. The budget would be set as an equal amount for all trustees..

10.3.2.2 Board Related Expense Activity

Sufficient funds will be set annually to cover expenses where normally all trustees participate, such as BCSTA and BCPSEA meetings, Board Retreats, meetings with Ministry of Education, etc.

The budget would be set as a global amount from which funds would be withdrawn and accounted for individual trustees based upon participation in an event.

- 10.3.3 A trustee who attends a convention or conference shall file a written report with the Board at a subsequent meeting.
- 10.3.4 Trustees may expend funds as allocated to them for attendance at meetings, seminars and conventions within the allowance set by policy at their discretion to the maximum of their budget amount.
- 10.3.5 No trustee shall exceed his or her budgetary allotment without express approval of the Board, nor shall the Superintendent or designate make advancements or borrow from other trustee's accounts without express approval of the Board.
- 10.3.6 Additionally, each Trustee will receive an annual internet allowance at a rate set by the Secretary-Treasurer.

11. Trustee Conflict of Interest

The trustee is directly responsible to the electorate of the District 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.

Elected officials must not have financial interests, liabilities or appointments which place them in a position of conflict of interest or opportunity for personal gain while representing the District.

The Board's ability to discharge its obligations is dependent upon the confidence the residents of the District place in the Board and in its trustee members.

- 11.1 The trustee is expected to be conversant with Sections 55 to 60 of the School Act.
- 11.2 The trustee is 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
- 11.3 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.

The Financial Disclosure Act requires all trustees and selected employees to disclose personal financial information as required under the Act.

- 11.4 In accordance with the Financial Disclosure Act all trustees shall file disclosure forms by January 15 each year.

12. Board Self-Evaluation

- 12.1 The Board self-evaluation process will complement the Superintendent evaluation process.
- 12.2 The purpose of the Board self-evaluation is to answer the following questions:
 - 12.2.1 How well have we fulfilled each of our defined roles in relation to our mission, goals and objectives as a Board this past year?
 - 12.2.2 How do we perceive our interpersonal working relationships?
 - 12.2.3 How well do we receive input and how well do we communicate?
 - 12.2.4 How well have we adhered to our annual work plan?
 - 12.2.5 How would we rate our Board-Superintendent relations?
 - 12.2.6 How well have we adhered to our governance policies?
 - 12.2.7 What have we accomplished this past year? How do we know?
- 12.3 The principles upon which the Board self-evaluation is based are as follows:
 - 12.3.1 A learning organization or a professional learning community is focused on the improvement of practice.
 - 12.3.2 A pre-determined process for evaluation strengthens the governance functions and builds credibility for the Board.
 - 12.3.3 An evidence-based approach provides objectivity.
- 12.4 The components of the Board self-evaluation are:
 - 12.4.1 Review of Board Role Performance;
 - 12.4.2 Monitoring Interpersonal Working Relationships;
 - 12.4.3 Monitoring Board Representation/Communication;
 - 12.4.4 Review of Annual Work Plan Completion;
 - 12.4.5 Monitoring Board-Superintendent Relations;
 - 12.4.6 Review of Board Motions;
 - 12.4.7 Review of Board Governance Policies;
 - 12.4.8 Creating a Positive Path Forward.