
ROLE OF THE TRUSTEE

The role of the trustee is to contribute to the work of the Board as it carries out its mandate to govern according to its core values and achieve its vision, mission, beliefs and priorities. The oath of office taken by each trustee when they assume office binds that person to work diligently and faithfully in the cause of public education.

The Board of Trustees is a corporation. The decisions of the Board in a properly constituted meeting are those of the corporation. A trustee who is given corporate authority to act on behalf of the Board may carry out duties individually but only as an agent of the Board. In such cases, the actions of the trustee are representative of the Board, which is then responsible for those actions. A trustee acting independently has no authority or power other than that of any other citizen.

1. Specific Responsibilities of Individual Trustees

- 1.1 Become familiar with Division policies and how they inform Division operations.
- 1.2 Know what procedures are required to address stakeholder questions.
- 1.3 Prepare for meetings by carefully reading agendas and reports in order to effectively participate in Board business.
- 1.4 In alignment with Board Priority Community Engagement, invite input from stakeholders matters related to education.
 - 1.4.1 Liaise with designated School Council(s).
 - 1.4.2 Inform the Board of local issues and concerns prior to a Board decision.
 - 1.4.3 Advocate the needs of the community to the Board and the Board's actions to those we serve.
- 1.5 Refer administrative matters to the Superintendent via the Board Chair.
- 1.6 The trustee, upon receiving a complaint from a parent or community member about operations, will refer the parent or community member back to the school or department, and will inform the Superintendent, via the Board Chair, of this action.
- 1.7 Keep the Board Chair and Superintendent (via the Board Chair) informed in a timely manner of all matters coming to their attention that might affect the Division.
- 1.8 Personnel matters are to kept confidential be brought to the Board Chair and Superintendent only.
- 1.9 Support Superintendent (and inform the Board Chair) with counsel and advice, providing the benefit of the trustee's judgment, experience and familiarity with the community.
- 1.10 Attend meetings of the Board; participate in, and contribute to, the decision of the Board in order to provide the best solutions possible for education within the Division.

- 1.11 Support the decisions of the Board.
- 1.12 Ensure any statements made reflect the corporate opinion of the Board.
- 1.13 When delegated responsibility in committees, the trustee will adhere to the terms of reference.
- 1.14 Participate, subject to Board approval, in Board/trustee professional learning so that the quality of leadership and service in the Division can be enhanced.
- 1.15 Stay current with respect to provincial, national and international educational issues and trends.
- 1.16 Share the materials and ideas gained with fellow trustees following a trustee development activity or meetings in a timely manner.
- 1.17 Contribute to a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning and working culture both within the Board and the Division.
- 1.18 Attend Division or school functions when possible.
- 1.19 Become familiar with, and adhere to *Policy 4 – Trustee Code of Conduct*.
- 1.20 Report any violation of the Trustee Code of Conduct to the Board during an in-camera session. If practical, the issue is first to be reported to the Board Chair.

2. Board Orientation

As a result of elections, the Board may experience changes in membership. To ensure continuity and facilitate smooth transition from one Board to the next following an election, trustees must endeavor to learn about existing Board policy and practice, Administrative Procedure, statutory requirements, initiatives and long-range plans.

The Board believes a Division orientation program is necessary for effective trusteeship. All trustees are expected to attend all aspects of the orientation program.

The Superintendent is responsible for developing and implementing the Division's orientation program for trustees: see *Board Policy 3, Appendix A: Orientation, Services Materials, and Equipment Provided to Trustees*.

- 2.1 The Division will provide financial support for trustees to attend *Alberta School Boards Association, Rural Caucus of Alberta School Boards, and Public School Boards Association of Alberta* sponsored seminars and orientation events.
 - 2.1.1 The Division will provide financial support for trustees to attend *Alberta Education* sponsored trustee workshops or information sessions.
- 2.2 Incumbent trustees are encouraged to help newly elected trustees become informed about Board policies, advocacy, and initiatives, and to support their adjustment to the governance role.

Legal Reference: Section 33, 34, 51, 52, 53, 64, 67, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96 Education Act
Section 6 Commissioner of Oaths Act

Approved: November 2005

Amended: May 5, 2010, March 16, 2011, October 7, 2015, March 21, 2018, March 11, 2020, February 24, 2021, February 15, 2023